

**THIRD EDITION, REVISED AND UPDATED**

DENNIS REINA, PhD

MICHELLE REINA, PhD

# TRUST

AND

# BETRAYAL

# IN THE WORKPLACE

*Building **Effective Relationships**  
in Your Organization*



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## **More Praise for *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace***

"Better than anyone else, the Reinas are bringing the human side of the equation back into our organizations. They're showing us that trust isn't a feeling but a tangible element that influences how we interact. The Reinas have ventured into territory where no one has gone before in this third edition."

—**Eric Deschenes, Vice President, Canada Segments and Targeted Customers, and Vice President, Energy Business for Canada, Schneider Electric Canada Inc.**

"This third edition breaks through theory into our personal realities to reveal the possibility each one of us has to build or rebuild trust in our workplaces and lives. It is personal, universal, relevant to all aspects of life, and deeply empowering: a timely, accessible gift."

—**Katherine Armstrong, Director, Business Transformation, Volac International, United Kingdom**

"A powerful, insightful, yet accessible approach to understanding the impact when trust is broken—both at home and in the workplace. The Seven Steps for Healing provide a framework that empowers you to take responsibility, identify when and why trust was broken, and restore trust again. This third edition is filled with useful lessons."

—**Heidi Dross, Senior Director, Group Benefits, Aetna Health Insurance**

"In this third edition of *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*, both leaders and followers are given a fresh perspective on trust. This is not an update; rather, it's a new book written not only for management but also for every person in the whole organization."

—**Thomas C. Johnston, Dean, New England School of Communications, Husson University**

"In this latest edition, the Reinas have demonstrated that trust is the foundation for all relationships, both in the workplace and in our everyday lives. They've taught us how to make trustworthy connections so we can create an environment where teamwork flourishes and people want to work."

—**Landon Cobb, CPA, FLMI, Chief Accounting Officer, Fidelity & Guaranty Life**

"This third edition is a simple approach to a very complex problem. It's about leveraging your strengths to create alignment between who you are, what you love to do, and the relationships you value. This book is the answer to a great need."

—**Susan Harpster, Executive Director, Group Insurance—New Business and Administrative Risk Services, Aetna**

"This third edition of *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace* offers readers the opportunity to learn the value of trust, the danger of betrayal, and the path to healing and improvement. These concepts are essential to success."

—**Kevin W. Donovan, CEO, Mt. Ascutney Hospital and Health Center**

"In the third edition of *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*, Dennis and Michelle Reina present effective insight into the crucial role that trust plays in making an organization successful and sustainable. Trust creates an ethos of sanguinity and alliance that leads to a performance-driven environment. A compelling read!"

—**Dr. Saagarika Ghoshal, Director, Human Resources, Metro Cash and Carry, Bengaluru, India**

"Powerfully and beautifully written, this new edition of *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace* is full of valuable instruction, meaningful stories, and practical guidance, as well as being a real pleasure to read. After reading it, I am convinced that strengthening trust will allow us to unlock greater success in our workplaces."

—**Catherine Robinson-Walker, author of *Leading Valiantly in Healthcare***

"The third edition carries a powerful message: if you want more trust in your relationships with others, first change your own behaviors and actions. More than ever before, sustainable relationships based in trust are a crucial competitive advantage. *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace* provides actionable techniques to help you build and sustain trust."

—**Tim Mai, Senior Vice President, LPL Financial**

"This book helped me become aware of the subtle erosions of trust in my relationships and equipped me to respond with thoughtfulness and compassion. I'm certain the skills I've learned will give me an advantage when I enter the workplace after graduation."

—**Julia Rau, Sophomore, Echols Scholar, University of Virginia**

"In this third edition of *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*, you will find an insightful and understandable road map to help you, your colleagues, and your customers build trust and function at your highest levels. Well written and thoroughly relatable, this book is a must-read for any organization and its leaders."

—**Kevin McCarthy, President and CEO, PC Construction Company**

"Trust is the key issue for our times, and Dennis and Michelle Reina are the go-to experts on trust. Read their brilliant book before trust becomes an issue. You can trust their advice—I do!"

—**Jesse Lyn Stoner, coauthor of *Full Steam Ahead!* and *Leading at a Higher Level***

"In this new edition of *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace*, the Reinas remind us that leaders can't be the sole guides in creating trust: we all have a responsibility to practice healthy, trustworthy behaviors. The Reinas are on to something huge."

—**Jay Fayette, Senior Vice President, PC Construction Company**

"This new edition of *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace* is resourceful, timely, and practical. I continue to use the proven and thoughtful strategies in my work. This amazing book is a must-read!"

—**Jill C. Dagilis, Executive Director, Worcester Community Action Council, Inc.**

◁ Third Edition, Revised and Updated ▷

# Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace

***Building Effective Relationships  
in Your Organization***

*Dennis Reina, PhD, and Michelle Reina, PhD*



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# Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace

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*To Dennis's mother, Loretta,  
And Michelle's mother, Lorraine,  
For loving us  
And supporting us to explore life,  
Take risks,  
And learn how to trust in ourselves.*

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Trust Begins with You®

Trust Begins with Me®

For ease of reading, the ® symbols have been removed from  
the text of this book.



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# Preface

This book is about trust: the power when it exists, the pain when it's betrayed, and the transformation that occurs when it's been renewed. Our purpose in completely rewriting the third edition of this book is to help people at *all* levels—not just leaders—of *any* organization create, support, and, if necessary, rebuild trust within themselves and with others.

This book is about creating more productive, engaging, and rewarding work environments for everyone. It's about relationships that are built on trust and infused with spirit—relationships that inspire leaders and employees alike. The principles, tools, and techniques offered in *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace* apply to anyone, in any kind of relationship, at any level of responsibility, and in any kind of setting—both at work and at home.

More than ever, there is a need for trust in workplace relationships. Organizations and people face increasing challenges; some associated with growth and expansion, others with downsizing or restructuring. Although change and transition have become commonplace, our need for trust-based relationships endures. Why? Because of one simple truth: business is conducted through relationships and trust is the foundation of effective relationships.

Trust builds the bridge between the business need for results and the human need for connection.

Trust is foundational to how you bring yourself to your work and your relationships. Yet, trust is fragile. It takes time to develop, is easy to lose, and is hard to regain. Countless numbers of people in the workplace today suffer from the loss of trust. In fact, after decades of constant change—years of downsizing, restructuring, and reengineering, or of mergers and growth—trust among people at every organizational level is needed more than ever.

You're not immune to this reality. You've personally felt the pain of breached trust from minor letdowns and disappointments. You may even have suffered a major betrayal by another's self-serving action. Unmet expectations, letdowns, broken trust, and even betrayals crop up every day on the job. The hard truth is, these situations impact your performance and the performance of your colleagues.

You can counteract this downward spiral of broken trust and diminished effectiveness by learning to trust more in yourself and others. You can develop caring, genuine relationships based on mutually trustworthy intentions. You can benefit from inspired collaboration, improved performance, and a renewed ability to find joy in your relationships—both at work and at home. You can do these things. Trust begins with you.

## **Who Should Read This Book**

This book is designed to help anyone who has the desire to cultivate trusting relationships with the people with whom they work and live. You may feel that your workplace has a fairly healthy level

of trust and you want to build upon it because you know it will give you and your colleagues a competitive edge in the marketplace. Or you may see signs that trust is vulnerable in your organization. The “grapevine” may be in overdrive, relationships may be breaking down, people may not be following through on their commitments, climate survey results may be less than desirable, and people may be leaving the company. Your instincts may be telling you that “something is just not quite right” in your work environment.

Our focus is for anyone at any level of responsibility who values relationships and wants to understand what trust means—how it’s built, how it’s broken, and how it may be rebuilt in order to create more effective connections. We find that people want trust; they just aren’t sure how to go about fostering it. For many, building trust—and more importantly rebuilding it—may seem like an overwhelming task. Here, we help you, and we help you learn how to help those around you.

We explore the specific behaviors that build trusting relationships, pinpoint the behaviors that contribute to subtle and not-so-subtle breaches of trust, and explain the actions you can take to learn to trust again. *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace* will help you understand and appreciate the complex dynamics of trust and betrayal. Your understanding of trust will be improved—as will your awareness of the variety of ways betrayal occurs and its consequences. This book serves as a comprehensive reference and practical guide to building trust-based relationships between individuals, within and among teams, and throughout organizations—both in good times and in challenging times. You can use what you learn in this book both at work and at home, to connect with others, and to connect with yourself.

## **Overview of the Book**

Understanding the complexity of trust and betrayal is challenging work, yet necessary. We draw upon what we have learned firsthand from life experience, years of research, and work with thousands of people in hundreds of organizations around the world. The topic of trust is emotionally charged and means different things to different people. The Reina Trust & Betrayal Model provides an understandable framework for you to work through this complexity. We make trust concrete and actionable for you by giving you a common language to discuss trust-related issues and act on them in a thoughtful manner. You'll learn to use this language to create and take action to maintain healthy levels of trust in your organization.

Chapter 1, "Trust Begins with You," provides an overview of the book. This overview establishes that people want trust, need trust, and deserve trust. We address trust's importance by exploring the business and human need for it; the price people and organizations pay when it's low; and the payoff when it's high. We clarify that in order to get trust, people must be willing to give it. Trust begins with the individual effort put forth by each one of us. Trust begins with you.

We devote Chapters 2 through 4 to discussing the Three Dimensions of Trust, commonly referred to as "The Three Cs of Trust"—Trust of Character, Trust of Communication, and Trust of Capability. We discuss the specific behaviors that build each type of trust and bring these actions to life through examples and vignettes culled from our decades of field research and practical experience. We also give you tools, techniques, and tips to practice the behaviors in your relationships on a daily basis.

Chapter 5, “Your Readiness and Willingness to Trust,” helps you explore your readiness and willingness to trust in yourself and others. Because trust begins with you, it’s vital you develop this understanding of your own Capacity for Trust. Chapter 6, “How You Trust,” takes you on a deeper exploration of how, when, and why you trust through the lens of four powerful questions.

In all relationships, trust will be built and trust will be broken. With trust comes betrayal. Chapter 7, “How Trust Is Broken: Betrayal,” discusses the word *betrayal* and shares why it’s important that you understand it. We talk about the big things as well as the subtle, unintentional, day-to-day occurrences that cause people to feel their trust has been broken. We explore the impact of these betrayals to individuals, relationships, and performance. Chapter 8, “How Trust Is Rebuilt: The Seven Steps,” takes you through proven steps to overcome the disappointment and pain of betrayal and learn to trust again.

Chapter 9, “How Trust Is Transformed: Transformative Trust,” examines the four catalysts that help you create Transformative Trust: conviction, courage, compassion, and community. We show you how they work, their value, and how you can amplify trust within your individual relationships, your team, and your organization.

Chapter 10, “Taking Trust to the Next Level,” takes you on an inner journey through four pathways to deepen your relationship with yourself. These pathways help you remove the barriers that stand between you and building more trust in your relationships. Trust begins with you. Your relationship with yourself is foundational to how you bring yourself to others, both at work and at home.

Throughout this book we guide you to build trust. We provide you with “how-to” charts and action steps; and each chapter concludes with questions enabling you to reflect on your experience and a Trust Tip. You’ll walk away with key points to remember and a game plan to put into action on your trust building journey.

## **Development of This Book**

This book first took root many years ago when we were working with organizations to design and develop teams, manage change, strengthen leadership credibility, and build managerial strategies. Leaders would ask us to help them understand why their development efforts were not producing results. When we reached out to their people for insight, again and again we would hear that lack of results were due to the breakdown of trust—a breakdown of trust among co-workers, with bosses, in teams, and throughout the organization.

We went on a search for solutions. Being doctoral students at the time, we each committed to studying elements of trust in our respective dissertations. We learned a great deal about trust and how central it is in relationships and organizations. We were, however, left with more questions than answers. Our quest continued.

The next phase of our research brought us to sixty-seven organizations in nineteen industries. We learned that it was not possible for people to talk about trust without talking about betrayal and the need to recover from it. The outgrowth of those early years of work experience and research gave birth to the Reina Trust & Betrayal Model, which served as the framework for the first edition of our first book. The purpose of the first edition of *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace* was to provide a working



construct of trust, betrayal, and rebuilding trust. The second edition was an expansion with a focus on helping leaders, in particular, learn to trust themselves and others more as they led organizations in a dynamic, complicated marketplace. Since the publication of the second edition, the cries for a trusting workplace have become louder and louder. We have listened and have dug even deeper to understand all aspects of trust.

Hands-on experience in hundreds of organizations and with thousands of leaders, managers, supervisors, human resource professionals, and front-line employees in a multitude of functions have taught us that although leaders do have significant responsibility to cultivate a culture of high trust, they do not have 100 percent responsibility. Each and every individual has responsibility for his or her part in building trust within their relationships throughout their organization. Trust begins with you. Trust begins with each and every one of us.

This third edition of *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace* has been rewritten and refocused for you—regardless of your rank or responsibility level in your organization. Our intent is to help you build sustainable trust in your relationships, in your teams, and throughout the organization you serve. The stories and quotes in the book come from the actual experiences lived by people and shared with us in our research and work. The names and locations of individuals and organizations have been changed to maintain anonymity and to protect their trust in us.

We all have experiences of trust and betrayal. In our service to organizations, we continue to learn about trust. What we've learned from our clients and our lives is shared with you in the pages of this book. We also share personal stories of our own. Our interest in trust is passionate. Our professional lives are devoted

to supporting the cultivation of trust in relationships all over the world. We believe that all human beings deserve to trust in themselves and to feel safe to trust in others. We wrote this book and continue our work to that end.

*Dennis Reina, PhD*

*Michelle Reina, PhD*

Stowe, Vermont

July 2014

## CHAPTER ONE

# Trust Begins with You

*Alex was head of a beverage manufacturing plant that was the lowest producer of thirteen plants nationwide.*

*By focusing entirely on bottom-line results, Alex had missed the biggest obstacle standing in the way of his organization reaching peak performance: a failure to build trusting relationships with his people. Although Alex cared a great deal about his employees, they didn't know it. He focused on the numbers and neglected to ask them what they needed to be successful in their jobs. They didn't think he cared about them, their issues, or their concerns. As a result, trust, morale, and production were at an all-time low.*

*Once Alex learned how to earn the trust of his employees and helped his employees learn how to build trusting relationships with one another, productivity soared. Within two years, the plant went from being the lowest to highest producer out of all thirteen plants. Alex and his team went on to win his organization's most coveted award, the Manufacturing Excellence of the Year Award.*

We're all challenged in our efforts to connect with our colleagues, bosses, and employees—especially when we feel that we can't

trust them or they don't trust us. You hold this book in your hands because your gut is telling you that in order to bring your work, relationships, and organization to the next level, you need to learn how to give trust, get it, and be equipped to repair it when it's been broken. You want trust. You need trust. You deserve trust.

The good news is, trust begins with you: with your attitudes, your intentions, and your behaviors within your relationships. This is good news because you're in control of these things, and this book will allow you to start working on them right away. You will gain a proven, practical, and comprehensive framework for understanding the behaviors you can practice to build and sustain trust. We're going to help you pinpoint the actions that test trust, and we're going to reveal the steps you can take to rebuild trust when it's been damaged or broken.

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***Trust begins with you: with your attitudes, your intentions,  
and your behaviors within your relationships.***

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You don't need to wait on your boss, colleagues, or employees to lead the charge in building trust. You can take steps and reap the rewards of trustworthy relationships *right now*. Building trust (or repairing broken trust) takes energy, dedication, and self-awareness. But when you give your best efforts and diligence to the process, you'll benefit from increased energy, commitment, and confidence in your workplace relationships. We guarantee it.

## **The Need for Trust**

When trust is present, there's a palpable buzz, a "can do" approach, and a belief that anything is possible. When people have confidence in one another's abilities, intentions, and

commitment, they're more willing and able to participate, collaborate, and innovate. They are inspired. Trust may be intangible, yet the effects of its presence are concrete—both in people's lives and in the bottom-line results of an organization.

These results are crucial to surviving and thriving in a competitive, globalized marketplace. Every day, people are asked to work smarter, faster, and better. They're asked to do more with less, create new opportunities from epic failures, and engage in the steepest technological learning curve in the history of mankind. Trust plays a pivotal role in peoples' abilities to meet these expectations. In order to operate at their highest levels, people must trust one another and themselves.

You may not be used to thinking about trust as a primary driver of organizational culture and business success. But when you consider the everyday metrics that you use, you realize those "hard" numbers are all driven by the business conducted through human relationships. Business is built through relationships, and trust is the foundation of effective relationships. Trust is an aspect of the workplace that high performance cannot live without. When people trust one another, they open their hearts and minds to one another, forge productive partnerships, and collectively lower their shoulders to move mountains. Without trust, they withdraw, hoard their mental and physical resources, and search for the first available escape route.

Trust may be referred to as a "soft skill" by some, but we caution you not to underestimate its power—both when it's present and when it's absent. Building a trust-filled workplace is as vital to an organization's survival as piping in clean water. To stock a workplace with top-tier talent, attract powerful investments, and keep pace with an ever-changing business climate, we all must rely on thriving, trust-filled relationships. Without them,

organizational spirits dehydrate and wither in the intense heat of a globalized marketplace.

## **Trust Is Tested**

Trust is at play in every relationship we have—both at work and at home. In all relationships trust is built, broken, and made vulnerable. We've all been hurt, disappointed, and let down by others. And others have been let down and disappointed by us. Our trust is tested by the people we love, live with, and work with. And sometimes, our trust is tested by the very process of life itself.

While writing this third edition, we celebrated twenty-one years of marriage, milestones in our children's lives, and twenty-three years of business together.

Through those years, life has thrown us our fair share of curve balls and has tested our trust. Between the two of us, we've had three bouts of cancer: Dennis twice, Michelle once. We have lost both our fathers to cancer. And we have placed our faith in God that he would keep our youngest son, Will, safe while he served our country in Afghanistan.

We made sacrifices to support each other as we pursued our doctorates while raising two boys and starting our business. Our business has had periods of breakthrough growth and breakdown setbacks. We have experienced financial abundance and long periods of hardship. We have hired people who have come through for us while others took advantage of our good graces and betrayed us. We've had people tell us our work has changed their lives for the better, and we've had the wind knocked out of us when others have deceived us and taken credit for our research and work.

Our energies have soared through the presence of trust and have been depleted when it was broken. There have been periods when we were confident we could achieve anything and

periods when we wondered if we were on the right course. Working through the pain of all these challenges, we have grown the fullest. Like many of you, we've learned firsthand that relationships take work and that trust is a must for relationships to be vibrant and long lasting.

More often than not, others don't mean to break your trust, and you don't mean to break theirs. And yet, trust is tested and broken on a daily basis as people do business together against tight deadlines, high expectations, and fierce competition. You let others down. They let you down. You're asked to support others, and you ask them to support you through these painful periods.

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***Trust is tested on a daily basis as people do business together against fierce competition.***

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Most people associate broken trust with big offenses—major acts such as lying, stealing, or manipulating others. Your inner voice may say, *I don't do those things*. And the likelihood is, you don't. Few people do. The hard truth is, trust is most often eroded by subtle, minor, unintentional acts that happen every day—not the big things.

Fred is late on his deliverable. Kelly delivers tough news and is shot down. Anna rolls her eyes. Henry gossips about Jane. Tony cancels the meeting for the third time. David won't talk about the "situation." There is the meeting after the meeting. This department points the finger at that department. Someone takes credit for someone else's work. You have to ask for the same deliverable or piece of information over and over again. Sound familiar?

We've found that 90 percent of behaviors that break trust in workplace relationships are small, subtle, and unintentional. You both experience them and contribute to them. You don't mean

to behave in a way that breaks others' trust in you anymore than they do. You don't mean to disappoint them, hurt them, undermine their efforts, or overlook their contributions. But you do. We all do these things to one another. Trust is tested every day by the inherent messiness of business and human dynamics.

The problem is, these little, unintentional hurts and oversights build upon one another until you are forced to pay attention to them. When you reach this tipping point, you no longer just feel let down—you feel betrayed. You shift from questioning your trust to grabbing it back with both hands as quickly as possible. Feelings of betrayal resulting from the accumulation of small, daily breakdowns in trust are just as real—and just as damaging to relationships—as those caused by large, noticeable violations.

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***Ninety percent of behaviors that break trust in workplace relationships are small, subtle, and unintentional.***

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This is not easy news to hear. You may be bothered by the very word *betrayal*. It may represent a painful experience in your life you'd prefer to forget. Trust is highly complex, emotionally provocative, and it means different things to different people. It can take a long time to build and can be broken in an instant. You want trust in your workplace, on your team, and in your relationships. We will show you how to get it. In so doing, we will ask you to pause and consider your behavior and your approach to relationships. Trust begins with individual effort. It begins with you and your awareness of the fragility of trust in your relationships.

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***You don't mean to break others' trust. But you do. We all do.***

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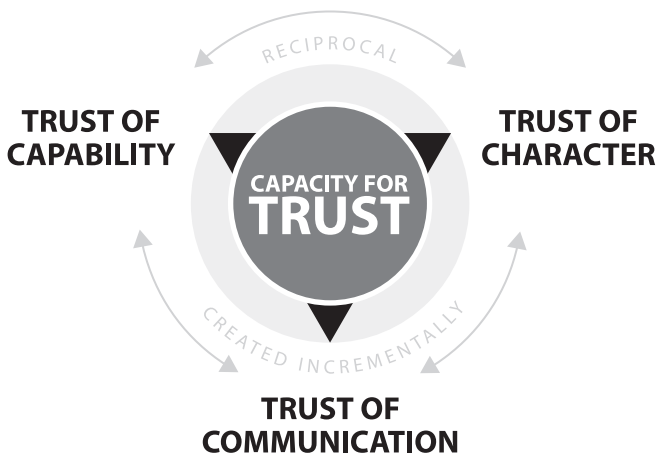
## Three Dimensions of Trust: The Three Cs of Trust

The solution to the vulnerability of trust is consistent, deliberate, trust building action. Practicing trust building behaviors signals to others—and yourself—that you and they are trustworthy. There is no shortcut to trust: it's achieved and maintained through visible consistency and alignment between what you *intend* to do and what you *actually* do. We've identified the Three Dimensions of Trust that are foundational to your trust building efforts and pinpointed the behaviors that build each dimension. We call these dimensions The Three Cs of Trust: Trust of Character, Trust of Communication, and Trust of Capability.

The Three Cs of Trust provide you with a common language and shared understanding of what *trust* means, so you can discuss trust-related issues with others and take action on them. As you explore each dimension, you'll learn specific trust building behaviors that, when practiced consistently, expand the level of trust in your relationships. Your trust in yourself and others will

### Three Dimensions of Trust

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be increased, and you'll benefit from others' expanding trust in you: trust begets trust. The Three Cs of Trust are the foundation for your trust building activities.

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***There is no shortcut to trust: it's achieved  
only through consistent action.***

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The first dimension of trust, Trust of Character, is the trust of mutually serving intentions and the starting point for all relationships. You build this dimension of trust when you manage expectations, establish boundaries, delegate appropriately, keep agreements, work the “win-win,” and behave consistently. As you practice Trust of Character behaviors, you substantiate yourself as a generally trustworthy person who can be counted on—even in tough situations. Others learn that you do what you say you will do, that you establish healthy boundaries and expectations, and that you support them as they strive to learn, develop, and thrive in your organization. This is perhaps the most selfless form of trust, yet is rewarding to achieve. You know when you've arrived at a high level of Trust of Character when people in your organization start relating to you as a person they can rely on and depend upon.

Trust of Communication is built when you share information, tell the truth, admit mistakes, maintain confidentiality, give and take feedback, and speak with good purpose. As you build this dimension of trust, you become known as someone who speaks the truth and encourages others to do the same. Moreover, you become a trusted confidant as people realize you can be trusted to give and share key information—and know when it's ethical

and appropriate to do either. As you learn to build Trust of Communication, you no longer engage in gossip or feed the rumor mill. You compassionately bring issues and concerns directly to the individual concerned. You work it out. You start to become the go-to “gut check” in your organization for people at all levels of responsibility.

The final dimension of trust, Trust of Capability, is most aligned with your unique competence. You build this dimension of trust when you acknowledge others’ skills and abilities, express appreciation for work well done, involve others in making decisions, and encourage learning. At the highest level, Trust of Capability teaches others that they can trust you to know what you’re doing, to ask for input when you don’t, and to identify and develop the value that others could be adding to you and the organization. As you practice the behaviors that lead to high Trust of Capability, your confidence in your own innate talents grows, as well as your awareness of and comfort with your shortcomings. You become positioned as a resident expert, trusted subject matter coach, and a deeply competent professional.

The Three Cs of Trust are mutually reinforcing and reciprocal in nature. That is, as you begin practicing one set of behaviors, you notice that the other sets naturally develop. Additionally, you’re rewarded as other people in your organization begin to pick up on and model how you manage expectations, communicate, and delegate. Trust begets trust.

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***Practicing The Three Cs of Trust behaviors lets others know they can trust your character, your word, and your abilities.***

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## What Happens When Trust Is Broken

How do you respond when your trust has been broken? When you feel betrayed? Do you shut down? Check out? Pull back? Seek retaliation? Do you withdraw your spirit and energy from your work? Do you simmer and seethe? Simply go through the motions?

How do you respond when you learn that *you* have let someone down—either intentionally or unintentionally—and *they* feel betrayed? Do you defend, rationalize, or justify your behavior? Do you excuse it? Do you secretly think the other person overreacted? Or do you assume responsibility, reflect on why you chose to behave the way you did, apologize, and make amends?

When The Three Cs of Trust aren't practiced consistently, trust becomes vulnerable. Because you're human—and subject to the everyday pressures of life—it's understandable that you slip up and fall back into old patterns. Hurts, disappointments, letdowns, and breaches of trust are natural parts of relationships, including those with whom you spend the majority of your time. Even in high-functioning work environments and in healthy life relationships, trust can be vulnerable.

You let others down, and they let you down, either intentionally or unintentionally. We all know what it feels like to need to be forgiven. When you accept that you're human and embrace the fact that hurts, disappointments, and letdowns come with the territory of relationships, you're on the road to connecting with others on a deeper level. The key to unlocking your colleagues' passion, ingenuity, and commitment is not to expect perfect behavior from one another, but to have the tools, approach, and language in place to expedite healing when breakdowns do occur.

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***We all know what it feels like to need to be forgiven.***

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When trust breaks down, people tend to pull back and withdraw. They begin to question, *Is this the place for me? I thought I belonged here. Now I'm not so sure. I thought I had what it took. Maybe I was wrong.* They begin to lose confidence in their own skills and abilities. Some may go through the motions. Some do only barely enough to get by. Some become the “walking wounded.” Others become victims. We hear the same story again and again as we work with clients: *My heart isn't in this place anymore* or *I just look out for myself* or *We've stopped thinking big and taking risks.* People of these low-trust companies report “a real loss in energy, passion, and creativity.” When trust in a workplace remains broken and unaddressed, no one wins. Not organizations. Not teams. Not individuals. And not you.

Trust is a workplace's competitive advantage when it's present and its Achilles' heel when it's absent. As subtle instances of broken trust accumulate, people begin to feel betrayed—by their organizations, by their co-workers, and by their own responses to the situation. Their confidence, commitment, and energy diminish. Their ability to trust contracts. At a time when a competitive edge can collapse in days or weeks instead of months or years, no one can afford to ignore the role that trust plays in energizing—or destroying—meaningful productivity.

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***Trust is a workplace's competitive advantage when it's present and its Achilles' heel when it's absent.***

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You see the power of trust when it's present in your personal relationships—and the devastating impact when it's lacking. What happens when you find out your spouse has racked up thousands of dollars in credit card debt that you knew nothing about? What do you do when you discover that your friend has been hiding

an addiction? How did your child respond when you were out of town on business for his birthday or missed her soccer game . . . *again*? What happened when your teenager lied to you about his whereabouts Saturday night? When a colleague took credit for your work? When your employee skimmed from the register? When you continue to treat your college-age kid like you did when he or she was in high school? When your boss gave vague direction about an important, time-sensitive initiative, then took off for a round of golf?

These experiences test the strength of your ability to trust others. When your trust has been breached or betrayed by a specific person, you can't help but call into question the entire relationship. You need to pay attention to broken trust and feelings of betrayal because not paying attention to them—and *not* dealing with them—comes at a cost to you. Betrayal creates a continuous leak of your energy. Eventually, the truth about how the betrayal has affected you will come out as your performance at work and quality of life at home suffers.

Broken trust—and the feelings of betrayal that occur when trust is repeatedly broken—is at the core of the human condition and is the heart of the struggle in human interactions. This means that betrayal offers a tremendous opportunity to pause your activity, reflect, listen, and learn. Betrayals can be gifts and teachers if we allow them to be. They serve as catalysts to assess your trustworthiness and strengthen your relationships. When your trust is tested or broken, you learn about the darkest corners of your soul and gain the opportunity to become a better version of yourself—both at work and at home. But that can happen only if you proactively engage the experience, acknowledge your own role in the breakdown, and integrate the lessons you learn into your future interactions.

Restoring trust is not a spontaneous process. It takes time, hard work, courage, and compassion, but the payoff is tremendous. We know this to be true because we've lived it for the past twenty-plus years. The most poignant example of our commitment to our specific, proven healing process occurred a year after the first edition of this book was published in 1999:

*We were facing a crisis. Diagnosed with kidney cancer and hospitalized, Dennis had trusted Michelle to carry out their professional obligations on behalf of us both. Michelle reached out for help to a trusted colleague, who offered to step in and support a critical client project with a promise to deliver by the client's deadline. At the last minute, Michelle discovered her colleague did not deliver as promised and had failed to communicate her shortcoming. Michelle was left feeling confused, angry, and hurt by her colleague's behavior.*

*Michelle realized she needed to take action . . . fast. She fully acknowledged the situation, got the support she needed and an extension on the deadline, reframed the experience, and took responsibility for her role in the breakdown of communications before the deadline. Later, her colleague apologized and disclosed that her daughter had overdosed on drugs, and she had to take her to a treatment facility during the project's critical timeframe. She'd felt so ashamed that she felt like hiding, which she did. Once she was aware of the mitigating circumstances of the breakdown, Michelle readily and compassionately forgave her friend. She knew how challenging the situation had been because she had witnessed her own brother's fight with addiction. With Michelle's forgiveness, her colleague could begin to forgive herself.*

## You Have a Choice: Seven Steps for Healing

You want to have trust in your relationships. To have that trust, you need to be able to heal each time your trust is broken. Failing to do so will result in mounting frustration, doubt, and depleted energy. Our Seven Steps for Healing will provide you with a framework to not only recover from the deepest betrayals, but also restore your Capacity for Trust and work productively with those who betrayed you. These steps are more than a theoretical construct. They are a tested, proven, straightforward set of tools that work at individual, team, and organizational levels. As you acknowledge betrayal, allow your feelings to surface, get support, reframe your experience, take responsibility, forgive, and let go and move on, you free yourself from the shackles of doubt, fear, and destroyed confidence that betrayal can impose.





By utilizing our own Seven Steps for Healing, we were able to not only survive this experience, but learn from it, build strength into our relationships, and gain further confidence that the only way to approach betrayal is with compassion, intention, and courage. We knew that we couldn't avoid breakdowns in trust from happening again. Because we were equipped with the tools we needed to heal in the aftermath, we didn't need that security. We knew we'd be able to work through our hurt and disappointment constructively, and recover even more quickly the next time.

## **Transforming Your Culture of Trust: Transformative Trust**

Building and sustaining trust can transform your workplace relationships into more than the sum of their parts. As you and your colleagues practice trust building behaviors with conviction, courageously acknowledge and address issues when trust is broken, and extend compassion and understanding to one another, you notice your efforts create an intense alchemy of broader organizational trust. You connect at a deeper level, trust one another more, and produce your best work. When trust reaches this critical threshold in your workplace, it expands exponentially, creating a new climate of caring fueled by a foundation of Transformative Trust.

The results speak for themselves in organizations rich in Transformative Trust. Suggestions for product and process improvements skyrocket. Productivity increases. Impressive results become the new standard and a source of organizational pride. Profitability follows suit, and everyone reaps the benefits of a thriving, exhilarating, compassionate workplace.

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***Everyone reaps the benefits of a thriving,  
exhilarating, compassionate workplace.***

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In these high-trust work environments, you feel safe to talk about and share concerns without recriminations and to admit your fears. You feel secure enough to speak up about challenges and have the courage to ask for what you need to perform beyond expectations. And you feel empowered to willingly take risks, admit mistakes, and learn from them. You support your colleagues and know that you are in turn supported to go above and beyond in the pursuit of your organization's goals. A pervading sense of compassion establishes your organization's culture as not just an HR metric, but as a community filled with people who recognize, respect, and appreciate one another as human beings.

As you learn more about Transformative Trust, you're able to create a more trusting workplace through tapping your inner conviction, courage, compassion, and sense of community. You're seen, heard, and understood for who you are and what you contribute. Your skills, abilities, and knowledge are utilized and respected. Your co-workers have confidence in you and you have confidence in them. Moreover, you have confidence in yourself. You take pride in your work, your co-workers, and your company. Trust transforms you. Trust begins with you. The power is in your hands.

## **Taking Trust to the Next Level: The Four Pathways**

Taking trust to the next level in your relationships and in your workplace means you must first strengthen the most important relationship you have—the one you hold with *you*. Your ability to trust others is directly rooted in your ability to trust yourself. When you enjoy a strong connection with *you*—with your

physical body, your mind, and your spirit—you're more able to trust in yourself and extend your trust to others.

You deepen your Capacity for Trust through walking four pathways—Take Care of Yourself, Believe in Yourself, Make Room for Yourself, and Be a Friend to Yourself. Through these pathways, you learn to listen to the important signals your body is giving you about what it needs to be healthy. You learn to graciously accept and internalize the positive feedback you receive from others. You learn to claim the time and space you need to rejuvenate your mind and spirit. And you learn to extend the same kindnesses to yourself that you give so freely to those you most love and respect.

Through walking the four pathways, you deepen your connection with yourself and gain access to the energy, insight, and commitment you need to build, sustain, and transform trust in your relationships, both at work and at home. Trust begins with this connection. Trust begins with you.

### Trust Building in Action

#### *Reflecting on Your Experience*

1. What extraordinary achievements have you seen made possible because people trusted one another?
2. How has betrayal affected your personal and professional aspirations? Can you identify any silver linings to these experiences?

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**Trust Tip ►** *Business is conducted through relationships, and trust is the foundation of effective relationships. Trust builds the bridge between the business need for results and the human need for connection.*

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