Getting Unstuck: Strategies to Repair Trust in Groups

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Dr. Wendy Fraser
1. Share your name, where you work, and what you do
2. Share one thing that is interesting or unique about yourself
3. Describe your definition of trust
Working Definition of Trust

Trust is a belief in the character, ability, reliability, and intentions of others and the willingness to risk vulnerability with them.

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Behaviors that affect relationships in groups

Trust Behaviors

- PURPOSE
  Why the Group Exists

- ROLES
  Who Does What Function

- CORE PROCESSES
  How Work Gets Done

- COMMUNICATION
  How People Share Information

- INTERPERSONAL DYNAMICS
  How People Interact

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Most Common Trust Violations

- **18%**: PURPOSE
  - Why the Group Exists

- **36%**: ROLES
  - Who Does What Function

- **61%**: CORE PROCESSES
  - How Work Gets Done

- **75%**: COMMUNICATION
  - How People Share Information

- **89%**: INTERPERSONAL DYNAMICS
  - How People Interact

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1. Think about a group that you believe is experiencing trust issues.

2. Briefly explore the current situation in your mind

3. Visualize a better future
Repairing Trust is About Hope

- Believe it IS possible
- Understand that you contribute to the current situation
- You are intentional about repair rather than punish
- You stick with it – it is often messy and uncomfortable
- Average time to repair trust: 6-36 months
Individual Complexity –
Everyone has a Different Trust Story

- Beliefs & Values
- Life History & Experiences
- Social & Cultural Upbringing
- Personal Choices
- Family Background

- Race & Ethnicity
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Identity
- Education
- Maturity Level
- Personality Style

- Spiritual Beliefs
- Age/Generation
- Hopes & Dreams
- Skills & Abilities
- Health
- Conflict Style

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Think...

Everyone has a trust story

What pivotal experiences have shaped how you trust others?
Trust Behaviors: **Purpose**

**Align** people, systems, and resources for success

**Determine** purpose, direction, scope, priorities, and boundaries
Trust Behaviors: **Roles**

**Establish** clear roles and responsibilities; mutual expectations; and accountability

**Set-Up** people for success; delegate well; and create support systems

**Honor** agreements, commitments, and confidentiality
Trust Behaviors: Core Processes

**Improve** operations, relationships, and results; be open to new ways of doing things

**Ensure** consistency, reliability, and responsiveness

**Engage** people; broaden decision-making; ask for input
Trust Behaviors: **Communication**

**Listen** openly without judgment or interruption; and tune into the quiet voices

**Check-in** on assumptions, intentions, and mutual understanding
Trust Behaviors: **Communication**

- **Seek** feedback, sound and current information, and new perspectives
- **Share** timely, relevant information, avoid surprises, be transparent and truthful
- **Foster** curiosity, open-mindedness, and engage in healthy challenges to conventional thinking

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Trust Behaviors: **Interpersonal Dynamics**

- **Strengthen Relationships and Connectivity** by investing time, resources, and energy into building others up; avoid gossip.

- **Respect** people’s unique contributions; honor differing perspectives and styles; be inclusive and welcoming.

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Trust Behaviors: **Interpersonal Dynamics**

**Invest** in the growth and development of others.

**Model** high standards, integrity, and vulnerability.

**Acknowledge** mistakes, impact on others, and sincerely apologize in a timely manner.
Behaviors that affect relationships in groups
Reflection

Key Learning & Action Item(s)
Trust Repair Model

REFLECT

1. Personal Reflection
   - My Contribution
   - Other’s Contributions
   - System’s Conditions

UNDERSTAND

2. a
3. Fact Finding
   - Apologize
4. Acknowledge

REPAIR

5. Engage in Repair Activities
   - Seek Feedback
   - Gauge Progress
6. Create Agreements

EVOLVE

7. Move Forward
   - Forgive
   - Learn, Grow and Evolve
   - Honor Agreements
   - Appreciate

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Reflect

1 Personal Reflection

• What just happened?
• Why am I feeling this way?
• What bothers me the most about the situation?
• Can I see the situation from another angle?
People have a tendency to talk about what others do. But, we need to look at ourselves first.

Jones, 2015
Reflect Phase

Get clear about

- What did I do to contribute?
- What did others contribute?
- What is happening in the group or organization that is affecting us?
The quality and productivity of any particular system is directly proportional to the quality of the connectedness within that system.

Broom & Seashore, 2013
Costs of Unresolved Trust – Personal Impact

• My physical health
• My emotional health
• My work quality and output
• My relationships
• My promotional opportunities
Costs of Unresolved Trust – Organizational Impact

• Customer satisfaction
• Legal risks
• Financial returns
• Group morale
• Work products and results
Choice Awareness Matrix

- **Aware**
  - Accountable
  - Automatic

- **Unaware**
  - Blame or Praise
  - Socialization

**Choice attributed to SELF**

**Choice attributed to OTHER**

Source: Edie Seashore
1. Use the Choice Matrix to explore your group trust situation.

2. What are some strategies to use the Choice Matrix to support trust repair?
Understand Phase

Work on getting clear about what happened.

Give each person a chance to share their perspective.

3 Fact Finding

4 Acknowledge

Apologize

Acknowledge your part and apologize as needed.
We dance around a ring and suppose, while the truth sits in the middle and knows.

Robert Frost
Sound and Current Data Characteristics

• Short life span
• Flows continuously, it is everywhere
• Complete sound and current data is not often available
• Easy to find, yet most abused
Sound and Current Data Problems

• Holding past experience as sound and current

• We think we can figure it out based on information we already have

• We treat our perceptions as reality

• We interpret nonverbals and behaviors without checking in
TOOL: Ladder of Inference

1. Observable “Data”
   I begin with observable data that a video recording could capture. For example, a person stands up and moves away from the meeting table.

2. Select “Data”
   I select some details about this behavior: the person looks down and then away from the group while standing up.

3. Add Meaning
   I add some meaning of my own: I remember this person doing this before when frustrated with the conversation and usually people who don’t want to be in a conversation, leave the table.

4. Draw Conclusions
   I conclude that the person is frustrated with the meeting and is disengaging in an abrupt manner to make a point.

5. Adopt Beliefs
   I believe that if people are so self-centered that they disrupt group work, that they should not be a part of the group to begin with.

6. Take Action
   The group should remove the person from attending.

We reinforce our beliefs by selecting data that support our world-views.
1. Use the Ladder of Inference to explore your group trust situation.

2. What are some strategies to use the Ladder of Inference to support trust repair?
Repair Phase

Repairing trust takes courage and a mindset that human beings can evolve and change...

Be intentional... Make new agreements.
✓ How does it serve me to hold onto the past?
✓ What is the toll this is taking on me?
✓ What do I need to move forward?
✓ What support do I need?
Critical: Psychological Safety

Critical: Each person must understand and be able to influence team norms

Key Team Norms: Turn taking and social sensitivity

Critical: Share a bit about yourself with each other

Important: Clear goals and a culture of dependability
### TOOL: Values Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Behaviors/Actions</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>“Brutally honest”</td>
<td>✓ Hurt feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Tell it like it is” without any filter</td>
<td>✓ Shock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Don’t want to work with that person anymore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leverage: Honor the core value

If you don’t like the results...change the behaviors
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>“Negotiate how to give and receive feedback”</td>
<td>✓ Improved communication and understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Check-in”</td>
<td>✓ Stronger relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Happier people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Use the Values Model to explore your group trust situation.**

2. **What are some strategies to use the Values Model to support trust repair?**
Evolve Phase

Having looked the past in the eye, having asked for forgiveness and having made amends, let us shut the door on the past—not in order to forget it but in order not to allow it to imprison us.

(Desmond Tutu)
Questions?

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“Trust Repair” book – est. December 2018