

# Trust

1. firm belief in the character, strength, or truth of someone or something
2. A person or thing in which confidence is placed.

## Trust-worthy

1. To demonstrate that others can trust us through our words and our action.

A \$65 billion dollar Ponzi scheme perpetrated by Bernie Madoff against innocent investors who trusted their money would be safe brought a new low in business trust and credibility for U.S. businesses. The headlines are full of similar breaches of trust, in business and in government. Trust is a value to which all should aspire and an attribute that is highly coveted in today's business world and it seems is in short supply.

### Two Components

Trust is made up of two components. The ability to trust, that is place confidence in others, and the ability to be trustworthy, or to demonstrate through actions and words that others can trust an individual.

Trustworthy individuals are able to foster strong and long lasting relationships. A person who is untrustworthy destroys relationships.

Relationships are the key to success whether at work, at school or at home. Being trustworthy is not an option. It is essential.

### Four Qualities of Trustworthiness

**Trustworthiness** begins with integrity. Integrity is the quality of having strong moral principles. It is about "walking the walk" not just talking the talk. Individuals with integrity are consistent in thought, words and deeds.

**Trustworthiness** is about being honest. Honesty is about what we say and do. The two cannot contradict. Honest people tell the truth, they do not lie, they do not misrepresent the facts, and

they do not tell half-truths or white lies. Intention is a key factor in truth. Being wrong about facts is a mistake. Intentionally telling a white lie to deceive or change an outcome is unethical and immoral.

**Trustworthiness** means people not only keep their word but also honor commitments. A trustworthy person will keep their promises, will pay their debts and return what they borrow. Trustworthy people state clearly what they will or will not do and make certain there is no room for misinterpretation.

**Trustworthiness**, finally, is about loyalty. Loyalty is standing behind someone and with them when needed. A trustworthy person can be counted upon regardless of the circumstances and even if, at times, it requires personal sacrifice. Loyalty

### Supervisor as Leader

The supervisor is the role model for student teams. Do your students see you as trustworthy and honest? How do you perceive them?

Integrity starts at the top. Supervisors should always tell the truth and keep all promises made even though at times it may be difficult to do so. Supervisors should be consistently honest in all communications.

Even the little things matter. Do you show up for work on time? Every day? Do you meet or exceed your job expectations and standards as set by the organization. Do you do what you say you will do?

Supervisors are responsible for setting the vision and the values for the team. Communicating openly and honestly with students as equal team members provides an artery for truth and a platform for building trustworthy employees.

As a trusted leader do you focus on personalities instead of issues? Are you willing to listen and consider other ideas with an open mind?

Holding yourself to the highest standard sets the tone for student success in learning to be trusted and trustworthy.

## For Students:

A trustworthy person makes these promises:

- I will keep every promise I make. My word will be gold.
- I will be loyal to my supervisor, my team and the organization as I know they count on me.
- I will be consistent in my word, my thought and my deeds.
- I will follow through and consider other's interest as important as my own.
- I will not repeat confidential information.
- I will always be authentic, never play games, and have no hidden agendas.

**Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom.**

**Thomas Jefferson**

## For Supervisors:

### Demonstrate Trustworthiness:

- Lead with positive values (in every situation)
- Demonstrate and expect respectful behavior (even when it's a challenge)
- Know your mindsets and assumptions (and be willing to change them)
- Show students you care (in big and small ways)
- Think long term (always doing what's most ethical in the long run)
- Extend an open invitation to talk (about ethics, about bad news, about good news)
- Show you care (about students and the success of the team)
- Communicate clear ethical values (and live them every day)
- Contribute to the well-being of the students you<sup>1</sup>

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<http://leadingincontext.com/2014/07/09/trustworthy/>