



**STRAIGHT TALK**

# Building Sustainable Trust

## *The Invisible Thread*

December 4, 2019 by Louise Francis

### **The Invisible Thread**

Do you find it difficult to delegate and know the best person to lead each project or complete each task? Do you work well with and trust some team members more than others? Do you get frustrated or impatient when others don't meet your expectations?

There are many inputs and criteria we can use to help us work more collaboratively and effectively within and across our teams. But one thing underlies them all: the invisible thread of sustainable trust, which runs through every market, every business, and every team.

Just as our invisible 'thread of health' extends beyond our body to the food we eat, our relationships, and our environment, this invisible thread of trust, which shapes our team and company performance, extends beyond our daily work to our partners, customers, and the market.

### **A Frayed Thread**

When we continuously eat the wrong foods, have toxic relationships, or live in stressful environments, our body and mind stop functioning optimally and our thread of health is frayed. As the process is often slow and hidden, we may not be aware of this disharmony until we see obvious external signs. Only then, once the issues are engrained, might we increase our efforts to change our lifestyle and 'be healthier'.

In the same way, no matter how hard we might work to get the right people, or implement the best systems and strategies, if the invisible thread of trust is damaged or broken, our efforts will be wasted.

When the thread is whole, the team and business will naturally hum with energy, excitement, and productivity. Customers, talent, ideas, and opportunities are attracted with little effort.

*"The reputation of every brand, team, and person is built on the factors people trust them for the most."*

### **Building Our Reputation**

Sustainable trust is based on reputation, which is determined by our consistent behaviour and performance. Trust can be for a number of different (and opposite) factors, such as trust in the reliability of a product or person, or trust in their disruptive nature.

A person, team, or brand cannot build its reputation by trying to be trusted in everything and trying to be all things to all people. We must know ourselves deeply and be aware of what we find most effortless and what we find most challenging; where we will accelerate flow and where we will become the bottleneck.

Many leaders confuse trust with likeability. They try to 'be friends' with their direct reports, thinking they will trust them more. However, if we want someone to trust us, it's not enough that they like us or think we have good intentions. They have got to believe we're capable and have what it takes to actually get the work done. If we're working out of flow, they will lose trust in our ability to perform.

## Create and Maintain the Thread of Trust

With a deeper understanding of our own talents, leadership style, and preferred ways of working, we can re-organise our time and energy to ensure we are frequently **working in flow**, building a positive reputation, and gaining the trust of others. We will know which tasks to focus our energy on and which tasks to "eliminate, automate, or delegate".

Then, as we learn the unique value of each person and how they can contribute to building a high performing

team, we can distribute tasks accordingly, rather than only trusting the team members we like or who are similar to us.

Just as we need a diet consisting of diverse nutrients offered from an array of foods (along with the absence of toxic foods) for optimal health, an organisation or team needs the diverse skills and mind-sets of individuals working in harmony in order to flourish.

If you find that you have difficulty trusting someone to do a particular job, chances are that's not where their natural strengths lie.

When each member of our team is doing what they are naturally inclined to do and even can't help doing, we can always trust them to do that thing and to do it well.

As we discover natural strengths and passions and allow our teams to focus and channel their energy into what is most natural for them, and encourage and support them in these areas, the level of trust, reliability, performance, and fulfillment is multiplied.

## Discover Natural Talents

### 1. Take some time to reflect on your career history

Which roles have you been attracted to?

Which roles have you thrived in?

What would be your ideal role?

### 2. Gain more clarity on your strengths and struggles

Think about the day-to-day tasks which take up most of your time.

Which tasks do you look forward to doing and which tasks do you enjoy less?

Which tasks or ways of working do you have a reputation for being good at (e.g. working on big picture strategy or being in the thick of the day-to-day action)?

Are there tasks you do only because there is nobody else, or nobody you trust, to do them?

### 3. Manage your current levels of flow

How often are you **working in flow**?

How can you increase this time by eliminating, automating, or delegating out-of-flow tasks?

### 4. Take the Talent Dynamics™ profile test

With this business development profiling tool and the **Team Dynamics** programme you can learn to 'tune into' the natural (and diverse) strengths and talents of yourself and each person in your team and leverage these in order to add real value and build a high level of sustainable trust.

To take this test or find out more about it, drop me a line: [louise@growingorganisations.com](mailto:louise@growingorganisations.com).

For more information on how you can increase the performance and fulfillment of your people and accelerate trust, flow, and growth through our Team Dynamics Programme (taster sessions available), contact the **Growing Organisations team**.



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