

# Why is Trust Important for Work Relationships?

When trust is lacking in work relationships, people don't confide and share information easily, they don't feel able to step out of their comfort zone to take risks and they won't feel comfortable to speak up and voice problems.

When we do trust someone, we think of them as being reliable. We feel safe around them, both physically and emotionally, which gives us the peace of mind to be ourselves. At work, where we're expected to take calculated risks and share confidential information, trust is a crucial element in the relationships we have.

As a leader, our ability to inspire and motivate employees is based on trust. When people trust us, they have confidence in the decisions we make. Even in uncertain and difficult times people are able to act if they have trust in their leadership.

Further research on importance of trust in organizations shows that trust has an impact on  
the relationships between the perceived support of leaders and turnover intentions  
the commitment rate to the organization  
job satisfaction  
and the distribution of justice and information sharing

## The three Levels of Trust

### **1. STRUCTURAL LEVEL**

At this level, people say "I trust the company". Structural trust stems from formal systems that enforce behaviors.

### **2. EXPERT LEVEL**

This is where people say, "I trust your expertise". Expert trust exists when there is confidence in the person's competency.

### **3. PERSONAL LEVEL**

At this level people say, "I trust you". Personal trust stems from the perception of a person's character. It is typically shaped from first-hand interactions with them.

Trust relationships at work are affected by all three levels of trust. To effectively collaborate, the relationships we have at work must be built on mutual trust.