

Improve Performance and Client Outcomes by Building High-trust Relationships

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Hello everybody, and welcome to today's webinar, Improve Performance and Client Outcomes by Building High-trust Relationships. I'm Susannah Gynther from Wolters Kluwer, CCH Learning, and I will be your moderator for today. I apologise for the small delay in starting this morning, just a few technical hiccups.

A few quick pointers before we get started. If you're having sound problems and can actually hear me, please toggle between audio and phone. Hopefully you can see this point on the screen regardless. If you are looking for your PowerPoint slides for today's session, they are available in the handout section of your GoToWebinar panel. Just a reminder that, shortly after the session, you will receive an email letting you know the e-learning recording is ready to be viewed. You can ask questions at any point by sending them through the questions box. I will collate those questions and ask them at the Q&A towards the end of today's presentation. CCH Learning also offers a subscription service, which many people have termed Netflix for professionals. It provides members with access to our entire library of recordings as well as live webinars, for a competitive flat fee. That's for over 500 hours of content. For CPD purposes, your viewing is logged automatically.

Your presenter today is Deborah Assheton, who is the owner and director of The Amplify Group, a business that uses best-practise frameworks to deliver very practical, high-impact leadership change, and interpersonal skill-building workshops, coaching and leadership programmes. Deb's passion is to help professionals deepen their self-awareness and embed behaviour that creates new levels of performance, engagement, and results for them. Deb offers executive coaching, leadership development programmes, short and public workshops. Deb has over 20 years experience in executive leadership positions where she has managed very large teams of more than 3000 people for some of Australia's best known and highly regarded companies, including Vodafone, Bupa, and OPSM. Deb holds a BA in psychology and a masters of organisational coaching from Sydney University. Deb's clients span the retail and wholesale property management industry, banking, legal, technology, transport and motoring, and telecommunications industries. I will now pass you over to Deb to commence today's presentation.

Deborah Assheton:

Thank you very much, Susannah. Hi everyone, it's wonderful that you're joining me today. Let me just set up my screen. Susannah, I'll just confirm that you are seeing that screen correctly?

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Yes, we are.

Deborah Assheton:

Perfect. So our topic today is building trust, and the impact that that has on client outcomes and general organisational performance, not to mention engagement. Trust is one of those wonderful and difficult unseen forces in the world. So it's not a tangible thing. We're going to talk about what it is today, obviously, but it has enormous tangible impact in the way that we work with other people, and the outcomes that we achieve. So we're going to cover the whole topic today. Within the topic of trust, there are lots of other big topics like integrity and competence. So we're going to look at a range of those, and obviously they're quite big topics in and

of themselves, there could be a whole other workshop in and of themselves. But I'm going to try and work through some of these key topics that underpin trust, and do that in a way that sets you up to consider how you might expand or think about those within the context of your workplace.

So we're going to cover quite a lot of ground, and there's quite a few slides in today's deck that will help you, as resources, going forward, I think. So what are we looking at? Well, we're going to just very quickly look at what is trust, first of all. We're going to look at the impact of different levels of trust, in the way that we behave, and in the outcomes that we see in organisations. We're also going to look at the four cores of personal trust, and then we're going to look at some features of high trust environments, specifically workplace environments. Then I'm going to finish by talking about how we build and rebuild trust when it's been broken or lost, or we are just dealing with someone who we maybe don't have high levels of trust with. So we're going to talk some practical application towards the end of the workshop.

We have a couple of polls that I'm going to be asking for your input, because that helps me to understand where trust is at for you. So we'll go to the polls in a moment, but I just want to talk about, first of all, what trust is. As I said, it's one of the unseen forces in the world, it's an aspect of character, and yet it's a really potent force for organisations across the board and teams. So trust is defined as a firm and hopeful reliance on the fidelity of something, or the ability of a person or thing. So it is a belief that gives us a sense of assuredness or confidence about whatever the object of the trust is, whether that's a person, or it could be a machine, it could be a thing, or it could be an organisation.

So we have a belief that can be based on many things. We have a belief about the trustworthiness of the other, whether that's a person, organisation, or a thing. That level of trust that we feel gives us a physical experience. So when we have a high level of trust, that's associated with a sense of confidence, often we feel calm, we feel assured, and everything that comes with that, that whatever we have been promised, or whatever we're trusting about is going to happen, or be delivered, or it's going to work. If we feel a low level of trust in the person, the thing, the machine, whatever it is of the organisation, we experience a different physical reality. Often we'll experience anxiety, we will be having a different internal dialogue, we'll often working on plans for what happens if it doesn't work, and so there's a different physical experience for us based on our belief about the trustworthiness or the reliability of the other, and that has tangible impacts for us.

In organisations, there's a very big difference between a high trust organisation and a low trust organisation. That's true of teams, and it's also true of individual partnerships and relationships. So trust is very important, and I want to spend a bit of time this morning talking about some of the research around trust. One of the great things about trust is we have really solid research about it. I'm going to give you a couple of pointers for where to go for more information on trust, because there's some really practical and substantial research on it.

But let me start by asking you guys a couple of questions about your experience of trust. So Susannah, if you could open the first poll, please. I'd just love to understand, generally speaking, what is the level of trust across your workplace? I've given a couple of options here, high, moderate, inconsistent, or low, or none of these. So obviously I'm asking you quite a general question, and there is no doubt be some differences in trust across your organisation, but just generally speaking, where's it at in your workplace? So Susannah has opened the poll, as you can see in the panel. So I'd love you to choose a, b, c, d, or e. We'll just give you a chance to respond. Then I'm going to ask you a second question, which we'll open the poll for in a moment, it'll be on the next slide, about how your behaviour changes when you experience low trust. So what happens when your trust level in the person or the other or the thing or the machine is low. So Susannah, what do our results look like there for this first poll?

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Certainly. So let's have a little look. Okay, so it looks like 44% said there was a high level of trust, 33% said moderate, and 22% said inconsistent. Back to you, Deb.

Deborah Assheton:

Okay. Great, thank you. So what I might do, I'll talk about those responses in a moment. I'll do that while you fill out this second question. So this is a free text response, and Susannah will open that poll. So what I'm looking for-

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Are you looking... Sorry, Deb. Can I just say, if you can just write your answers to this one in the questions box, and then I will share them with everybody in the session. Thank you.

Deborah Assheton:

Perfect. Thanks, Susannah. So the question is, "When you have little or no trust in someone, how do you behave?" So you might say, "Well, if I have no trust in them, I don't give them any work to do." Or, "I follow them up." Or, "I ask them 55,000 questions." So we're just looking for statements about how you behave, not them. While you are filling out that with those responses, let's talk about the results. So it's wonderful that 44% of you are in a high trust environment. Fantastic, really glad to hear that. I'm also really glad to hear that nobody said that they were in a consistently low trust environment, which is fabulous. For those of you in moderate, which was 33, and inconsistent, which was 22, unfortunately, your experience of moderate inconsistent trust is pretty much what reflects the research around trust in organisations.

So the research around trust is that less than 50% of organisations are considered to be high trust environments. So in those instances, there is lots of opportunity to incrementally build trust. It doesn't mean that we are necessarily going to get to 95% high trust in a week. This takes time, as you know. But what I want to talk about today are some practical ways that you can elevate the level of trust, and also respond more constructively in environments where your trust is low or is compromised.

Okay, Susannah, what are some of the results? What are some of the statements that we're seeing?

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Okay, so Amir says their guard is up when they behave with this person. Corina mentioned they feel very on edge, very careful with what they say and how they say it. I had one from Michelle. Michelle says, "Don't give them difficult tasks, just give them the simple tasks."

Deborah Assheton:

Yeah. Okay.

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Yeah. Just had one more from Dave. Dave said they hold back and don't feel it's worth a lot of work. You don't put a lot of yourself into whatever it is that you're doing with them.

Deborah Assheton:

Yeah, okay, thanks very much for those responses. So you can hear that there's some consistency there around when we have low levels of trust, no trust, we hold back, our guard is up, we're on edge, we limit our exposure to risk by giving easy tasks or no tasks. So what we do, when we're in an environment or working with somebody that we don't believe we can trust, is that we try to limit our risk with that person. We do that emotionally by putting our guard up, or being edgy. We do that, from a professional perspective, by reducing what we share, and not giving them difficult or complex tasks, or tasks where they can afford to be a failure. So there's this practical implication for us, and it makes us... When we're in a low trust environment, it's uncomfortable for us. We constantly feel the need to compensate for it. So it's not great for us to be in a low trust environment, or to be working consistently with someone for whom we have limited or no trust.

So let's get in and talk about trust, and then we'll talk about how we build it. There are lots of myths about trust, and there's actually quite a lot of noise about it. But one of the benefits of the terrific research we have around trust is we understand the impact of trust very clearly, and there's also quite a lot of truth available to us about how trust reshapes, and can be reshaped, and elevated, and compensated for. So I want to talk through some of that now. There's nothing soft about trust. There's this kind of historical thing of seeing trust as a soft skill, but actually trust is very real, it's a very powerful potent force for relationships, as you know. It's observable, it's quantifiable, it's measurable, and it affects speed and cost and effectiveness.

I'm going to talk about some of that research. Trust doesn't have to be slow and take time. We can actually elevate trust pretty quickly and intuitively if we're working with a decent baseline of trust, and I'll talk more about that. Once trust is established, it has a liberating effect. So everything moves, generally speaking, faster and more smoothly. Trust is built on integrity is a myth. Actually it is important, and integrity is actually one of the cause of trust, but so is competence. So integrity is a function of character. I'm going to come back and talk about integrity specifically.

The competence is the other piece that is vital for trust. So I can be somebody who you perceive has a really strong character and operates with deep integrity, but if you know that I'm not competent, and you give me a job that you don't feel I have the competence for, my character values and the benefits of my character become much less important. So competence is actually one of the key evaluators for trust, and it sits independent of character. Trust doesn't have to be black and white. We often make trust black and white, because we harden up and we don't want to be hurt or put at risk. But actually, trust is fluid. It can be built, it can be destroyed, it can be moderate, it can be high, it can be low. It's quite a fluid function. Once lost or broken, trust cannot be restored, is a bit of a blanket rule.

Actually, as you probably have learned from your life experience, trust can be restored with certain people at certain times. We want to make sure that we don't become somebody who's very black and white, and fixed in our views about trust, because we're missing out if that's the case. Trust can be rebuilt. Luckily, for us, because we all make mistakes, often well intended. Trusting people is risky, actually operating with a low or no trust, as a general character rule, it has a far greater cost for us as individuals. We are better to invest our time in building trust as much as possible, than we are in maintaining low trust.

Talk more about that. Trust is established one person at a time. Trust can actually be established with groups, and it can be established simultaneously with teams and groups of people. Generally speaking, what builds trust, one person at a time, are the same characteristics that build trust with a group or a team. So we'll talk more about that, but what works for one, generally works for the mob, so to speak. So let's have a look at some of this research around trust, and I'll just put this up and just talk through it. So there are some fabulous, really good sources of learning more about trust. One of those is *The Speed of Trust*. It's a book by Stephen M.R. Covey. So

that's Stephen Covey Jr. He is an expert on trust and is really focused on that. The Speed of Trust is a really good book that is highly regarded for the level of its research, that it also explains trust really, really well.

The other piece of work that's very highly regarded around trust is the work of Patrick Lencioni on The Five Dysfunctions of a Team. His website is The Table Group. When he looks at the dysfunctions of a team, the level of trust, in this case, low levels of trust is the foundation of any other dysfunction. So what he argues and what his research shows is that, once trust is low across the team, there are a whole heap of other dysfunctions that will kick in because people are always compensating for the low levels of trust, which is certainly my experience, and it aligns with the research from Covey as well.

So what we know is that employees, who are working in high trust organisations, enjoy greater levels of productivity, energy, collaboration, and they tend to stay longer than in low trust companies. In low trust companies, there is a greater exposure to chronic stress and lower performance. So there's this needing to compensate, as you guys said, in your experience of working with somebody who you don't trust, all the time when we're an environment of low trust, that creates chronic stress over the long term. There are also other benefits that are very tangible. So, for example, in high trust organisations, there's significantly fewer sick days, and that has a really direct relationship. Low trust environments, higher sick days. Burnout is also higher in low trust environments.

The returns to organisations and their shareholders are much higher, over time, in high trust cultures than in low trust cultures. This is what Patrick Lencioni talks about in his work, that trust is an enabler. So high trust enables performance, engagement, and an energised culture. Low trust enables a whole heap of other dysfunctions that bring down culture and ultimately performance. So trust affects the organisation and the team, both internally, and then also has a direct flow into client and customer and shareholder outcomes. I want to just talk about the relational piece of trust in a little more detail. So we know that trust is a key driver of relationship quality. Relationships can only grow to the extent that trust is growing. So relationships exist on a spectrum, from dysfunctional through to what are called united. These are relationships that are one-on-one, but can also be a business to business, or client to organisation.

I just want to go through the levels of these. I'm going to put them up, and then we can talk through them. At the lowest end of relationship quality, we have dysfunctional relationships. In a business to business environment, these often end up in legal disputes, the relationships feel very severed, there's zero confidence of the ability to recover or repair. Other options are being sought, and the disconnect is beyond salvage. So these are environments where we have no trust. The trust is, in the minds of those working in those environments, completely broken. We see this internally in firms between teams. So there can often be high levels of disconnect between different departments. Some of the work I do in my organisation, I work with dysfunctional teams. The dysfunctional teams are usually interdepartmental breakdown between sales and marketing, or finance and another group, or it could actually be between a whole range of teams.

The number one issue is trust. Poor is where we see there's a decline happening, and what we want to do if we're in this environment is kind of alleviate the issues, and try and stop the slide into complete dysfunction. So, in a poor environment, we see threat-based motivation, we see the use of formal power, so, "The policy says this." In formal power and structures, we see the bringing in of more senior people. It's kind of, "Computer says no," type environment. The focus is on self-protection, there's regular disputes, and there's often dysfunctional interactions. So this is where trust has slid again to the point we're getting into, the point of no repair.

Average is where we start to see it tip into there being some trust, but everybody's got their guard up, as per Amir's example earlier. So there's this focus between formal and informal relational power, and that's a compensation for this declining trust. There's tension, there's disputes, and execution and performance will already be lagging at this point. Again, in the work I do with dysfunctional teams, I see this quite a lot, and the

work here is to arrest the decline. Again, we start with the work on trust. When we get into functional, strong, and unified, we're getting into environments of high trust. So when trust is taken off the table, because it's there, then we can get into these much more high functioning type relationships. So functional is where we've got really solid amounts of trust. The compliance is as per the contract or the agreement, the party's goals are understood and considered, execution is effective so things are working well, there's a solid degree of trust.

Strong and unified, where we get into unusual territory. Strong is where we've got clear alignment on each party's goals, and the parties work together proactively with all the stakeholder interests in mind. So we're high trust here. Performance is strong, execution is effective, the parties will generally expand interaction, so we get more work, and both parties are benefiting equally. When we get into unified, these are quite rare, they exist internally in organisations. Externally, and out in the business world, there's not too many examples, but we definitely... There's one example that's cited of a unified relationship globally, and that is the five, maybe six-decade old relationship between McDonald's and Coca-Cola, globally. This is one that they both talk about as being at this level of relationship trust and strength.

So this is where the parties share a single goal. Their alignment is at the level of principle, it's very long-term horizons, these are trust-based agreements, and there's explicit unity at multiple levels of the relationship. So there's multilayered stakeholder alignment, and the focus is on mutual benefit. So when trust is elevated to its highest level, the relationship quality is reshaped completely. So there is so much benefit in working to build trust, if only to avoid sliding into dysfunctional, poor, and average. But also, if you're at a functional level with someone, to move into strong and potentially unified, or if you were at a functional level with another team in your organisation, to move into strong and unified.

The upside of high trust is game changing. So let's have a look at the summary of the research around trust. This is a great little slide that, again, comes out of a large study on trust done by Patricia Aburdene who is from Harvard, and here's what she found. She basically found that the higher the trust, the faster the speed, and the lower the costs, in a team and in organisations. The lower the trust, the lower the speed, and the higher the cost. So low trust slows us down and drives up cost. Low trust acts like a gloom that makes it really hard to get speed and traction, and it drives up a lot of cost. We'll talk about the practicalities of that, because I know that you already get it.

So let's have a look at trust in practise. There are four cores of personal trust, and we're using Stephen Covey's research for this slide. So what makes a person trustworthy is integrity, intent, capability, and results. Notice the focus of the first two is on character. The focus of the last two is on capability and experience. We need both. I'll talk more about that. In organisations, there's eight practises that drive high trust and create and cultivate high trust. I'm not going to talk about all eight today, I'm going to talk about a couple of these, where you can make wins quite quickly, and then I'm going to reference some of the others.

So let's start by talking about integrity. Integrity is a character value, and it's not about honesty, it's more than that. To be a person who has integrity means that you are integrated. That means that you are a person who's congruent on the inside and on the outside. So you walk the talk, and you talk the walk. So it means that there's no part of yourself, that's floating out, that's not integrated. So the more integrated a person is, the more we would say they're in integrity. They act in alignment with their values and beliefs. What does this mean in practise? Well, it means that we see consistent constructive behaviour from a person. The only way you can exhibit integrity is to demonstrate it. You can't declare it.

Let me talk more about that. I use this model, and those of you that have attended my webinars before will have seen me use it. It's a great way to understand whether we're in integrity or not, whether we are behaving in a way that's trustworthy or not. It's a very simple model, not my model, called Above or Below the Line. So this model asks us to imagine that we have a line, and it's a line of thinking and behaviour, and we can behave below

the line or above the line, we can think below the line, above the line. We can be thinking below the line, but behaving above the line. When we're behaving above or below the line, we are actually behaving differently. When we're below the line, we're in some form of defensiveness. We're either blaming, we're denying, we're manipulating, we're justifying, we're defending, we're acting defensively. That puts us into a cycle of reactivity, of drama. There's actually a level of immaturity about constantly being defensive as well. That is a demonstration that we are not trustworthy, because we're going to blame, we're going to deny.

What are we blaming or denying? We are blaming or denying any responsibility. So when we're above the line, we are demonstrating responsibility. This is where we are learning, we are taking responsibility, we're reflecting on our role, we're demonstrating self-awareness, and we're demonstrating appropriate workplace vulnerability. Now that is not being a crying puddle on the floor, that is saying, "I made a mistake." "I don't know the answer." "I need some help." "I'm not sure what we should do." "I didn't do what I said I was going to do. I'm sorry." That's vulnerability that's appropriate for the workplace.

When we demonstrate that we're above the line, that we're somebody who can take responsibility, we demonstrate good intent and integrity. It cannot be in integrity and be below the line. So it doesn't mean that we start taking responsibility for things that are not our responsibility or outside our control, but where we are involved in something, we take responsibility for that, and that makes us a trustworthy person. So a trustworthy intent, along with sharing your intention and making that explicit, is a very strong demonstrator of trust. So let me talk through that.

So we said... I'll just go back a slide. We said that the four cores of personal trust... Sorry, everyone. Were integrity and intent. So I want to show you the relationship between this integrity, and being above the line, and how we couple that with intent. So intention can be shared, and what builds trust is where we make our intention visible. Now it's visible through our behaviour and people can infer that we have a good intent, but what helps to elevate that and to demonstrate our intent, is to share it. So a great way that we do that is that we start sharing our thinking, and what that does is make our motives explicit. It takes the guesswork out of it, for the people that we work with.

So how do we do that? Well, it's actually pretty simple. If you think back to maths at school, it's very similar to that. So you know your maths teacher would say to you, "Don't just give me the answer, show me how you got there. Show me you're working out." When you are sharing your intent, you're doing exactly the same thing. You are sharing your thinking. So what that means is, when you're making a decision, or when you are thinking a certain way about something, instead of just saying, "I've decided to do this," or, "My opinion is x, y, z." What you can say is something along the lines of, "My opinion is x, y, z because I'm thinking a, b, c, d." Or, "I want to go in this direction because of a, b, c, d." Or, "Let me share my thoughts, and I'd love to get your feedback on them." "My thoughts on this experience are a, b, c, d."

It doesn't mean you go into a 45 minute long diatribe about every thought you've ever had. It's a summary of your key thoughts that sit behind a decision that you're making or a way that you're perceiving something. When you demonstrate integrity and intent, you allow somebody in, and it enables high degrees of trust, because they're not just seeing the outcome, they're seeing the thinking that went into it, and they can align with it. So it elevates trust. Generally speaking, we're not great at being explicit about sharing our thinking. So whilst our intent is good and people can usually see that after they've worked with us for a while, if you want to speed up the degree of trust, or you want to establish trust with someone you've just met, share your thinking, it's much faster, it's great.

Okay. When we share information broadly, when people feel informed, and they feel like they understand, it reduces anxiety, stress, and it diminishes any sort of pervasive distrust that people might have about your motives. So when you share your thinking, and you do that well, this is how you elevate and speed up the degree of trust. If you get in the habit of doing that consistently, it opens up communication for people to share their intent with you. They learn from you how to do it, and share their thinking, and so we end up with conversations that are about the outcome and how we got there. So really, really powerful.

All right. I want to keep moving now and talk about the other two, which was about capability and results. So I can have the best intent, and I can be the most integrated person, but if you know that I don't have competence, your degree of trust in my ability to do something is going to be low. But it's the same as if you really liked me, and you knew that I was a person with a really strong character, but you gave me a job that you know is outside my competence, you are going to feel distrust, not in me as a person, but in my ability to deliver, and the outcome of low trust is the same.

So our capability is our power or ability to do something. Again, what builds trust here is not a declaration. So we don't want to walk around saying, "I can do this. You can trust me. I've got this." Right? That actually doesn't build trust. In fact, for many people, that would be a warning, a red flag, that maybe you're compensating for not having it. So declarations, when it comes to trust, are not great. They can often backfire, particularly if the person you are working with or dealing with suffers from low trust. You are much better off to demonstrate. So the way we do that is we share our track record. So, "I feel confident about delivering this for you because I've done it in the past." "I've done it 365 times in the past." Or, "I've done this in scenarios that are similar to these. I'm happy to share the experience with you so that you have some confidence about my ability to do this." So you share your track record.

Where you're working with someone, and you're not sure about their ability to do something or your ability to do something, ask questions. So what we tend to do is we tend to hold back. Now, it's good to pay attention to that vibe that you have, that maybe there's an absence of trust here, but try not to let it shut you down. What you can do is notice that you've got some issues, you don't feel confident, and use questions to help you either fill in or confirm the gaps. So, "Can you tell me about when you've done something similar before?" Or, "What are you thinking about how you're going to approach this?" Or, "I've explained the task to you, what questions do you have?" Or, "Now that you understand the task, what risks do you see?"

So ask questions. You don't have to ask 50, you can just ask two or three. That will give you a sense of whether you can trust or should trust, or whether you need to actually moderate your trust and perhaps check in more often, or come back and revisit this, or take some strategies that compensate for the lack of trust. That's what we want to do there. Resist the impulse to self-enhance. So we want to resist the impulse to talk ourselves up, if you think people have low trust in you. It actually backfires. You all know this. So you really want to not do that. One thing you can do is say to people, "What is your level of trust in me?" Or, "What can I do so that you feel confident about my ability to do this? What would you need to see?"

So you don't have to always mention the word trust, but if you're feeling the absence of it, open up a discussion about what would build trust. Remember that soft skills are capabilities too. So people's ability to find out, people's ability to learn, should also give you either a stronger or a lesser sense of trust. So again, you can ask questions. You can say to somebody, "Can you give me an example of where you've had to learn something really important really quickly before?" Because that will help me give confidence that we're able to do that this time around. So think about it that way. So what we want to do is bring together intention and integrity with capability and results, and those four characteristics are what gives us a deep sense of trust in a person. I want to move on now and talk about some of the aspects that build trust in environments.

So one of the things that builds trust for teams is a focus on the goals and results. It's interesting that it sounds really obvious when you say it that way, or when I say it that way, but many teams are focused on keeping their leader happy, or their manager happy. It's not written that way, that's not the written policy, that's not what's in the job description, but that's how the leader or manager runs the show. So team member A, B and C in this example are focused on making their leader happy, doing what their leader needs, keeping the leader happy. That's not the same. In high performance environments, we tend to see this type of orientation. We've still got team member A, B, and C, and you've still got a leader and a manager, and the written structure will be the same. But the leader structures there team not around keeping me happy as the leader, but around achieving the goal. The goal is usually about delivering for clients, or whether they're internal or external.

This is a much higher trust orientation, and the trust gets built in this space when we are working together to collectively achieve a goal, which is the far greater stronger purpose than it is to keep one person happy. If you've got an environment where you're trying to keep your leader happy, it often breeds competition and dysfunction among team members, because it's an approval-based culture, which is a fear-based culture. In an environment where there's high trust, we can get together and focus on achieving the goal, and it takes people out of winning and losing approval, it reduces the amount of fear in the environment and competition in the environment, and creates a sense of team, particularly if that goal is really meaningful and impactful. So that, yes, the goal can be about making more money. But if it's about delivering amazing client outcomes, or innovation, the kind of goals that really fan up, meaning that is very powerful, and the trust then acts in a way that gets us into that strong and unified levels of relationship. So think about your goal orientation.

The other one that's really powerful, and I know it's really simple, but recognising excellence. Now, not excellence as in, "I love what so-and-so did," because that's about you. But excellence in terms of the goal, particularly if the goal is hard, or it was a breakthrough. So when we talk about recognising excellence, when we recognise well, it has a huge impact on trust, but it's got to be done in a certain way. Again, we don't want to sanitise recognition to the point where we lose this impact on trust. So recognition is most impactful on trust when the recognition is timely, as in almost immediately after goal achievement, like within a week, even better if it's within a few days. It comes from peers. So remember, back to the previous slide, the recognition is not just coming from the leader, the manager, it's coming from team members A and B to team member C, and vice versa.

It's tangible. So the recognition is public, it is specific, it is goal-related. So it talks about character, intent, competence, results. So those four cores of trust. When you recognise someone, talk about all four. Don't just talk about the outcome or the task, talk about what it was about Deb that broke through, how she demonstrated integrity and character, and how the results are benefiting clients, and her competence is visible to everyone. So talk about all four, and that makes what makes it personalised. When you do that, you build trust in Deb, publicly, for everyone, because you demonstrate that she's trustworthy, but you also build an environment that recognises they're the four things that we want to see from everybody here. So it has a direct impact on trust, when we recognise excellence in a way that calls up the trust that was involved to deliver it.

The other thing that helps to provoke and stimulate and spark trust, funnily enough, is inducing what's called challenge stress. Now, challenge stress is not anxiety type stress. So there's two types of stress in the world. Again, I know that you all know this, but I want to talk about the relationship of stress and trust. Hindrance stress is where we feel stressed. These are demands that are perceived as hindering progress, they are stressful. Excuse me. They trigger cortisol, and they intensify our fight, flight, or freeze response. We often feel a hindrance stress when we're working with someone with whom we have low trust. That's the fight-flight, that's the holdback response. So we don't want to induce that type of stress, that diminishes trust in both ourselves and in others.

We want to induce challenge stress. Challenge stress is where we feel the gap, we feel the heat, but we think we can close it. So that's the opportunity for learning and growth. That's the invigorating stress that enables us and energises us, it triggers oxytocin. It's got to have an endpoint, and we've got to be able to measure progress. So the key thing to think about with challenge stress is progress and endpoint. If it doesn't have either of those, it tends to fall into hindrance stress. What happens with challenge stress is that the progress is what demonstrates competence and capability, and it calls up the best parts of ourselves to stay the course when it's hard. So when we have a challenging environment that... Particularly if we're working with a client on a challenging project, if we can stay in the challenge stress with the client, or with the other team, that helps to build a really strong unified environment, very high trust because we're doing it together, and it calls up character and competence, both characteristics. So it's very good for us.

The other one that's excellent for building a high trust environment is job crafting. Now, I'm not going to suggest that you give your team four days a week to go off and do their own job crafting, but actually when we talk about job crafting, we talk about giving people as much discretion in the way that they work as you can. The more competent somebody is, the more personal discretion becomes a must have for them, because that's how they exercise competence. A low trust manager diminishes our ability to exercise competence because they're constantly checking in, they're looking over our shoulder, they're telling us the way to do everything, we get micromanaged, and it's suffocating. What it suffocates is competence.

High trust managers love your competence, and want you to live and breathe it. So they're hands off, appropriately. Hands off, they delegate, they give objectives, they help solve problems, they get out of the way so that your competence can run the show. Now, the more that you can give people discretion to use their competence, the greater levels of trust that they build in themselves, and that you will have in them. So this is where you find yourself saying, "You've got this. I know you can do this. I know that you have the competence to do this." Even when the person's a little bit, "Oh, this is a bit of a stretch," right?

So you want to bring this together with the challenge stress. Challenge stress, job crafting, goal orientation, and then recognise the progress and the excellence, is how we create an environment where trust is elevating and getting better all the time. And then you get the benefits across the organisation. So if you start to think about trust as being demonstrated in the way we work together, and what we recognise being focused on competence, this is how we start to build a high trust environment, because you can't... Trust is like humility, right? Many of the character values are like this. You can't just say, "I want an environment of high trust," and assume that it's there. You can say, "I want us to operate in a way where we have high levels of trust, and this is how I propose we do it." You have to do it together and it has to be demonstrated.

So think about it from a demonstration point of view. Where are you, both, demonstrating trust, sorry, and where are you also giving trust, recognising it? So there's some questions here for you to think about. Where are your opportunities to recognise excellence? Where are your opportunities to deliver effective challenge stress? These are things that then build trust. So trust is an outcome of personal integrity and competence, and an environment that enables competence and trust. So let's just have a look... And I've run a little bit over time, so I'm going to move through this quickly. Let's just have a look at what you do when you find yourself in an environment with low trust, or working with someone with whom you have low trust.

So the first thing is you want to notice your level of trust, always. It's there, it's happening inside you, you can witness it. "Ooh, I'm feeling low trust." Or, "I'm feeling no trust." Or, "Actually, I really have a sense that this person's trustworthy." Notice what's going on in yourself. You don't have to share low or no trust. In fact, sometimes I recommend that you don't share. But you have to know that you've got low trust, and then act from that understanding. Now it doesn't mean that you say, "I don't trust you." It's generally not helpful. But what you want to do is let it inform how you work with this person. There's lots of things you can do that are listed here. Set clear expectations, check for understanding, ask more questions, check in more often, make sure that you

balance positive and constructive feedback, don't put off giving feedback, don't shut yourself down, but manage your emotions tightly.

The most important matters, put them into writing, but be explicit, share your thinking, expectations, commitments, minutes, do it verbally, and then put it in writing. So we do have to compensate where you feel low levels of trust, but do it in a way where you stay above the line, where you stay trustworthy yourself, and you're demonstrating competence yourself. Try and find common ground where you can. You may get there over time. What do we do in environments where we've got a trust breach? So where somebody, or some group, or a company has breached your trust. Unfortunately, this happens all the time. Again, you want to notice that you feel the breach, and it's a very difficult experience having your trust broken. It feels and it is a deep betrayal, and we feel it very deeply, and it's quite a powerful, very difficult emotion to process. So stay with it, and process the difficult emotions, and then decide what you're going to do.

So you don't have to call out a breach in trust, you don't have to lose it and start saying, "You breached my trust. I can't believe it." Right? You don't want to do that. You can state that there's been a breach of trust, which I've got some examples of. But again, when you do that, you want to do it constructively. You don't want to make it an accusation, you don't want to demonstrate that you are below the line. So you don't have to state it. Where there's been a breach of trust, I generally recommend that you do, but it's not set in stone. So where there's low trust, and you state it, you can say something like, "Although I understand it wasn't your intention in this situation and this act, and it has impacted my level of trust in you, I would like us to rebuild that." Or, "I would like to rebuild that, would you?" Most people, who have the kind of character that you would hope that they have, will say, "Yes, I'd like to make repair for that mistake or that error." So then there starts a new process.

Where you have breached somebody's trust, I suggest you say this, "It wasn't my intention, and I understand though that I have breached your trust, and can I make it up to you? Can I make this right? Tell me how." So just own it and rebuild from there. If you don't think it can be rebuild, then you go back to the previous slide and use those strategies where you have to keep working with someone. So what we never want to do is let our lack of trust in another person make us behave in a way that is equally untrustworthy. That's the recipe for dysfunction, and we don't want to go there.

So I hope you found today valuable. Unfortunately, we've got three minutes for questions. I do apologise. I'm happy to stay on the line. If anybody wants to ask more questions, and we're out of time, equally, I'm very happy for you to email me with any questions that you have that we don't get time for today. Back to you, Susannah.

CCH Learning:

Thank you very much for that, Deb. Yes, we will be spending the next few minutes taking questions, so please, just a reminder to type them into the questions pane. To give you some time to type those up, I will mention our upcoming webinars. So coming up, we're looking at Contractors v. Employees, Avoiding the Tax and Super Pitfalls. We're also going to be looking at How to Charge your Worth (and get it). In honour of Valentine's Day, we're going to love our superannuation and SMSFs. We've got our second in our FBT 2024, also coming up on the 14th of February, although as I can see the date is not there, in FBT Return Preparation. We're also going to be looking at What is Hot and What is Not in 2024? In regards to Financial and Sustainability Reporting. Of course, our monthly Tax Technical Update for January and February coming up soon on the 20th of February.

If you are interested in these, or any of our sessions, please head to the CCH Learning website, have a look and see if they would be right for you. So let's have a little look at our questions. So I have a question from Sarah. Sarah was asking, "How do I know if my team is a high trust team?"

Deborah Assheton:

Good question, Sarah. I suggest that you have a discussion about trust, and you can start by talking about the trust levels across the organisation, and then bring it into the team. What aspects of the team are high trust, and where do your team feel that there's low levels or moderate levels of trust? So I suggest you open it up. You can say, "Look, I attended a workshop on trust. I'm just really thinking about it." And open up for further feedback, one-on-one, about trust. I suggest that you can also, in your one-on-ones, ask about whether people find you trustworthy, and if so, why? So you can deal with it directly like that. You can also just notice behaviour, and you'll get a sense of low trust or high trust from your team through their behaviour and how open they are with you. Good question.

CCH Learning:

Thank you very much for that, Deb. I hope that helps you with your team there, Sarah. I also have a question from Michael. Michael was asking, "What if I'm the person who has broken the trust? What do I say to help rebuild it?"

Deborah Assheton:

Yeah, Michael. I mean, obviously we all need to be ready to say something when we break trust, because eventually we do, often unintentionally break someone's trust through a poor judgement or a poor decision that we make. So, on the final slide that I just went through, I suggest that you do own that you've broken someone's trust, albeit unintentionally, and say, "Look, I know that this just may well have impacted your trust in me. I'd like to rebuild the trust. I really enjoy being trusted by you. What can I do to make this right?" So you've got to acknowledge the breach really quickly, and not accuse the person of overreacting or anything like that. Just literally suck it up and say, "Okay, I'm sorry I've had that impact on you. What do I need to do?" So don't let your ego get involved, and ask what you can do to repair or make it right.

CCH Learning:

Thank you very much for that, Deb. I hope that helps you there, Michael. Well, that does bring us to the end of our questions for today, but as Deb said, her details are there on the screen, so please reach out, and I'm sure that Deb will be able to help you with your questions. So in terms of next steps, I'd like to remind you all to please take a moment to provide your feedback when exiting. We have asked you a couple of questions about today's webinar, so it's really important for us to hear your opinions. It's also a reminder that, shortly after today's session, you will be emailed, when enrolled into the e-learning recording, which can be watched multiple times, and will have access to the PowerPoint transcript, and of course the CPD Certificate.

I would very much like to thank Deb for the session today, and to you, the audience, for joining us. We hope to see you back online for another CCH Learning webinar very soon. Please enjoy the rest of your day. Thank you very much.

Deborah Assheton:

Thanks everyone.