

# 10 Leadership Trust Criteria

## ALIGNMENT

Leaders who create a sense of alignment shape and communicate a collective vision of what needs to be achieved in a way that engages and motivates team members. Such leaders establish a clear sense of direction for themselves and those they lead, and they co-ordinate and align the work of their team in a way that avoids confusion and disorganisation. They also align the work of their team with the strategic direction of the wider organisation.



### Stakeholders' Reactions for Low Alignment

- People feel free to pursue their own personal agendas
- Frustration about lack of co-ordination
- Sense that different people are pulling in different directions
- Having to rely on their own internal motivation to remain engaged and committed
- Less loyalty to the organisation and its purpose and values

### Stakeholders' Reactions for High Alignment

- Clarity about the collective direction and purpose
- Able to co-ordinate their work with others more effectively
- Motivated by the vision of where they are heading
- More likely to align themselves with the needs of the team and the organisation
- Greater ability to anticipate and plan for the future

## AUTHENTICITY

Leaders who are seen as having authenticity, set and maintain high professional standards. They will deliver on any undertaking given, or if they cannot then they will openly explain why they cannot meet the commitment. Such leaders tend to be honest and straightforward in their communications and treat others fairly and without prejudice. Their behaviour in the context of work matches their expressed values so that they avoid hypocrisy.

### Stakeholders' Reactions for Low Authenticity

- The leader is likely to be seen as insincere and hypocritical
- Passive resistance to change
- A culture of cynicism
- Less open interaction with the leader
- Reduced engagement and commitment

### Stakeholders' Reactions for High Authenticity

- More likely to accept the leader's authority
- Less constraint on open communication with the leader
- Greater loyalty and motivation to follow the leader
- Better workplace engagement and commitment
- Lower staff turnover



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## BENEVOLENCE

Leaders who demonstrate benevolence take a real interest in the welfare of other people, especially those they work closely with. They focus on and get to know individual team members and will typically listen and respond to their concerns and personal problems. They genuinely care about the welfare of their people in a way that goes beyond immediate self-interest.



### Stakeholders' Reactions for Low Benevolence

- Reluctance to share personal information
- Less open communication
- Interactions more formal and reserved
- Less caring and support for others
- Personal problems and concerns remain unresolved

### Stakeholders' Reactions for High Benevolence

- Feeling noticed and valued
- Creates a sense of loyalty towards the leader
- More openness and trust between people
- Supports a more caring climate amongst stakeholder groups
- Legitimises more 'inclusive' behaviours

## CAPABILITY

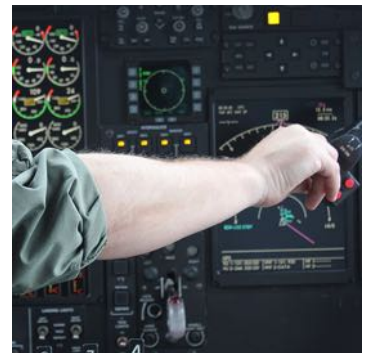
Leaders who are seen as capable have a good command of the professional and technical areas they are responsible for. They are likely to be well qualified and experienced in these areas so that they can offer guidance and assistance to the people they work closely with. Their knowledge enables them to ask relevant questions and they are unlikely to be deceived by false answers. Their track record of success as a leader will give their actions and decisions credibility.

### Stakeholders' Reactions for Low Capability

- More likely to challenge the leader's legitimacy
- Will involve the leader less and rely on own judgment more
- Less understanding of wider context for decisions
- Levels of productive dialogue with the leader more constrained
- Easier to get away with mistakes and poor performance

### Stakeholders' Reactions for High Capability

- Greater respect for the leader
- More likely to turn to the leader for advice and support
- Communication with the leader more open and productive
- The leader's wider perspective will be taken into account when making decisions
- Harder to excuse and cover-up mistakes



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## COMMUNICATION

Leaders who actively communicate with others in the workplace make sure their teams are well briefed. They share information in an accurate and timely manner, so that other people are well informed and able to work co-operatively with each other. Such leaders are typically persuasive and ready to generate and discuss ideas and not afraid to convey uncomfortable facts when necessary.



### Stakeholders' Reactions for Low Communication

- Suspicion that important facts are being kept secret by the leader
- Lack of understanding about what the leader is expecting from them
- Sense of confusion
- False rumours spread more easily
- Feeling excluded

### Stakeholders' Reactions for High Communication

- Impression of being in touch with relevant work issues
- More understanding and commitment to the overall sense of direction
- Easier to work co-operatively with others
- More opportunities to get involved in key decisions affecting them
- Sense of being up to date with changes and developments

## EMPOWERMENT

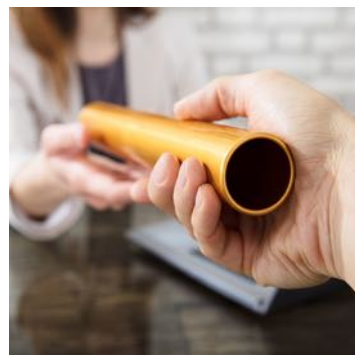
Leaders who empower the people they are responsible for, get the best out of them by clarifying objectives and setting high expectations. Then they leave them an appropriate amount of freedom to achieve their targets in their own way. They show trust in their people by not micro-managing them, whilst remaining available to get involved and provide help when necessary. The trust they show in others typically leads to a reciprocation of trust in them as leader. These leaders also typically show trust in team members by involving them in key decisions.

### Stakeholders' Reactions for Low Empowerment

- Sense of loss of control in the work context
- Inclined to refer more issues up the chain of command
- Feeling of not being trusted by management
- Frustration at being micro-managed
- More fearful of experimentation and innovation

### Stakeholders' Reactions for High Empowerment

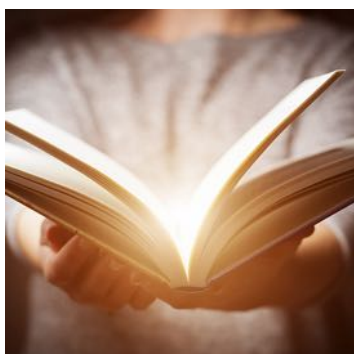
- Feeling trusted and valued
- Readiness to try new ways of working
- Increased sense of personal responsibility for work outputs
- Sense of being in control of their own destiny
- Greater readiness to learn and develop themselves



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## OPENNESS

Leaders who are open about themselves and aspects of their personal life in the work context demonstrate a trust in others that is likely to be reciprocated. They are willing to share and discuss their personal values and beliefs so that others can get to know and understand them and their motivations more clearly. Such leaders are prepared to make themselves vulnerable by showing emotions appropriately and by admitting to mistakes and learning from them.



### Stakeholders' Reactions for Low Openness

- The leader may be seen as aloof and distant
- No emotional connection with the leader as a person
- Less motivated to follow the leader
- Less willing be open about themselves in the work context
- Over-cautious as they are unable to judge the leader's reactions.

### Stakeholders' Reactions for High Openness

- Able to relate to the leader at a human level
- Easier to empathise with the leader and the different priorities he/she faces
- More open to be influenced by the leader
- Easier to develop trust and loyalty towards the leader
- Can be motivated by the leader's passion and enthusiasm

## PREDICTABILITY

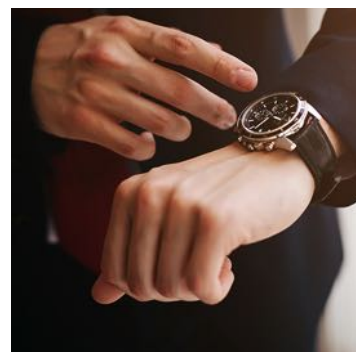
Leaders who are seen as predictable behave in a consistent way that can be anticipated over time and in different situations. There is a coherence in their approach to leadership that enables others to understand without being told what is expected of them in different circumstances. Their decisions will be carefully considered rather than instinctive and they may favour business processes to achieve consistency and quality. They are likely to be seen as reliable and dependable rather than impulsive or capricious.

### Stakeholders' Reactions for Low Predictability

- Possible frustration at frequent changes of direction by the leader
- Confusion and inefficiency due to lack of consistent direction
- Greater reluctance to take decisions
- More issues get referred upwards for decisions by the leader
- Less motivation to establish effective working practices resulting in poorer quality

### Stakeholders' Reactions for High Predictability

- Ability to predict what the leader's decisions will be in different situations
- Expectation of fairness and consistency from the leader
- Higher quality and consistency of work output
- More opportunities for order to emerge from day to day interactions
- Less need for re-working



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## RELATIONSHIP MINDSET

Leaders who demonstrate a relationship mindset make a point of networking and getting to know people from across the organisation and from external stakeholders. Building and maintaining good working relationships is a central aspect of their leadership approach that enables them to influence and gain support from a wide range of people. They also use their network of contacts to learn from others and to be well informed.



### Stakeholders' Reactions for Low Relationship Mindset

- The leader may be seen as weak and ineffective
- Formal processes replace trust-based relationships
- Sense of isolation from the wider organisation
- Alienation due to low priority given to the people aspects of business
- Less interest in building their own networks

### Stakeholders' Reactions for High Relationship Mindset

- The leader is likely to be seen as approachable and open to influence
- Feelings of being valued and listened to
- Encouraged to spend time developing their own relationships and networks
- Interest in learning about the wider business context
- Enhanced sense of power and importance within the organisation

## SAFETY

Leaders that are seen to create a working environment that feels safe do not to censure other people, especially members of their own team, in front of others or in a way that causes them to lose 'face'. They encourage rather than suppress experimentation and the exploration of new ideas. They do not censure people for genuine mistakes, and allow challenge without recrimination where it can lead to improvement. Such leaders typically promote and protect the interests of their own team and colleagues in the wider organisation.

### Stakeholders' Reactions for Low Safety

- People adopt defensive behaviours
- Possible development of a 'blame culture'
- Reduced self-confidence
- Less innovation and experimentation for fear of recrimination
- Quick to take offence at any loss of 'face'

### Stakeholders' Reactions for High Safety

- Readiness to discuss and explore new ideas
- Constructive challenge used to improve systems and policies
- More prepared to admit to mistakes
- Open to learning and self-development
- Increased levels of communication and information sharing

