

Components of Trust Checklist

“Trust is a dicey subject, everyone wants to be trusted but only few people are willing to put in the work to show themselves trustworthy.”

Trust Equation

$$\text{Trust} = \frac{\text{Credibility} + \text{Reliability} + \text{Intimacy}}{\text{Self-Orientation}}$$

**Credibility
(words)**

It's more than having good credentials. Credibility is derived from what you know (Insight), and how well you communicate it (Impact).

**Reliability
(actions)**

Reliability is grounded in your track record – underpinned by consistency and a feeling of familiarity.

**Intimacy
(emotions)**

Intimacy refers to the safety someone feels sharing stories and challenges with you.

**Self-Orientation
(motives)**

This is most often seen as a significant opportunity for improvement. It is all about focus, more specifically, who you focus on – yourself or others.

Credibility is the quality of being believable.

- Understanding your customers' needs, priorities, and workflow. Have you researched their firm and read their website/annual reports? Have you been in contact with them enough to understand what business challenges they are having?
- Honest, objective, sincere, knowledgeable, confident.
- Demonstrate your credentials, experience and expertise.
- Professional qualifications.
- Industry awards.
- LinkedIn profile.

Enhance your credibility by:

- Enhancing your subject matter mastery.
- Be open, honest, accurate and transparent – people will come to know they can believe everything you tell them.
- Admitting when you do not know something – honesty.
- Ask smart and targeted questions aimed at understanding your client's goals/priorities/ challenges.

Reliability is how others perceive the consistency of our actions

- How our actions connect with our words – our integrity.
- On time behaviours, adherence to schedules.
- Use case studies & testimonials to demonstrate reliability.

Enhance your reliability by:

- Delivering on your promises/ meet deadlines.
- Avoid under promising and over delivering because constantly surprising your clients can come across as dishonest.
- Remember reliability actually requires repeat experiences over the passage of time.

Credibility and Reliability are rational and are about defining benefits and payoffs. They are metric friendly and do not require as much emotional energy.

We often lead with Credibility and Reliability because they are quantifiable, obvious and rational but most humans, and that includes clients, buy from the heart and justify with the head, that is why Intimacy and Self Orientation are so vital.

Intimacy is how secure or safe the client feels sharing and interacting with us and should be dealt with **carefully and respectfully**. This in itself is very personal, which is different to private (knowing your clients birthday/children's names).

- Personal is sharing the inevitable ups and downs they experience in the workplace.
- We all experience good days and bad, hopes, fears, ambitions, aspirations – these are personal and the ability to talk openly about these things is at the heart of intimacy.
- If your customer senses you have high intimacy, they are more likely to share workplace politics, what is at stake for them, why they feel the way they do.
- Does it feel like you care about me, my business, and my success?
- This can be more challenging to quantify because it is unique to a moment in time which connects two individuals in a relationship.

Enhance your **intimacy** by getting better at being vulnerable

- Lead by example then others will follow.
- It is ok to react to the emotions underlying what your customer is saying.
- Be prepared to take emotional risks. Learn to say “at the risk of...” then state what is on your mind. You will gain a lot with emotional candour.
- Intimacy requires courage and curiosity on your part.
- Demonstrate empathy (understand and share the feelings of another).
- Listen with the intent to understand and not with the intent to reply.

Self-Orientation. High self-orientation significantly drives trustworthiness down; the degree to which you drive your agenda rather than the customers.

When we are operating from high self-orientation, we do not hear others. We do not hear their questions, desires, fears, or emotions in general. The noise inside our own head drowns them out.

If your level of self-orientation is low, you can pay attention to someone else. If you pay attention to someone, they experience that as caring. If someone thinks you care about them, they are likely to trust you.

Conversely, if your attention is focused on yourself, others become acutely aware of it and infer that you do not care about them. Rightly or wrongly, they then decide you are untrustworthy.

It is hard to pay attention, therefore hard to care, and therefore hard to be trustworthy if your attention is all on yourself – your self-orientation is high.

- How much do you pay attention either by listening or through your actions.
- Within our customer interactions we are constantly going back and forth in our minds between our inner thoughts and directly connecting with the person in front of us.
- Be open to the other person to fully understand where they are coming from whilst maintaining our own sense of self to be able to continue the conversation.

How do you pay full attention to another person in a practical way?

1. Always be curious (questioning).
2. Relax and breathe before your interaction.
3. Share agenda in advance and at the meeting and ask if it is still relevant and appropriate.
4. Practice thinking out loud and say, 'I'm just thinking out loud here...' and do your thinking along with the other person.
5. Answer questions within 90 seconds or say you will find the answer and come back to them timely.
6. Check your time, be aware of how much time is left, are we still on track? to ensure your customer is still engaged.