

Action Steps for Creating and Sustaining Trust in Virtual Teams

Table 1 Action steps for creating and sustaining trust			
Stage	Trust	Manager's actions	Team leader's actions
1. Establishing the team	Dispositional trust Foundation for the development of trust	Choosing members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical/functional skills • Predisposition to trust Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and decision support software • Being virtual Reward structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative not competitive 	
2. Inception	Swift trust Build bonds of cohesion for the development of trust	Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd party testimonials concerning past accomplishments of team members • Validate technical/functional role in team • Establish 'rules of engagement' for communication and interaction 	Team-building exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abilities • Contribution to team • Personal/social component • Begin to establish bonds
3. Organizing	Trust in teammates' –Ability –Integrity	Evaluate participation in organizing activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include contribution to organizing activities in evaluation criteria • Recognize and encourage leadership while discouraging domination and cliques Evaluate communication patterns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include communication patterns in evaluation criteria 	Encourage participation in organizing activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participation from all members • Acknowledge and commend suggestions of individual members to the whole team • Do not exclude non-contributing members Monitor communication patterns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require timely and substantive responses • Prohibit unsanctioned subgroups from communicating without including entire appropriate group • Encourage social aspects of communication
4. Transition	Trust transition –From ability and integrity –To benevolence and integrity	Be available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support • Guidance 	Move focus from procedures to accomplishing task <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punctuate the end of the organizing stage and the beginning of the task with an 'event' • Change focus from individual to group
5. Accomplishing the task	Trust in teammates' –Benevolence –Integrity	Support members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release members from local activities • Emphasize that team activities have priority Evaluate participation in accomplishing the task <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward achievement of interim deadlines • Continue to include communication patterns in evaluation criteria 	Encourage supportive communication in accomplishing the task <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish interim deadlines and celebrate when met • Encourage members to express their appreciation of each other's contributions • Continue to encourage social aspects of communication • Continue to require timely and substantive responses

Reference:

Greenberg, P. S., Greenberg, R. H., & Antonucci, Y. L. (2007). Creating and sustaining trust in virtual teams. *Business Horizons*, 50(4), 325-333.