The Speed of Trust: 
The One Thing That Changes Everything

(Stephen M.R. Covey)

Study Guide

https://gracelead.co
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The Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything
Stephen M. R. Covey

The purpose of this book is to enable you to see, speak, and behave in ways that establish trust.

This guide contains:
- summary points
- discussion questions
- exercises
- Bible verses to consider, with hyperlinks

You can find an edited version of the tools in the book stored individually on the Tools > Leadership Tips and Tools page of: https://gracelead.co

- Credibility Self-Assessment
- Trust Behaviors Self-Assessment (includes a My Trust Action Plan)
- Trust Behaviors Organization-Assessment (includes an Organization Trust Action Plan)
The One Thing That Changes Everything

- Trust affects the quality of every relationship, communication, project, and effort in which we engage.
- The ability to establish grow, and restore trust is vital to our well-being. It is a key leadership competency.

Nothing is as Fast as the Speed of Trust

- We can increase trust faster than we realize.
- Trust means you have confidence in a person or organization’s abilities.

Exercise

Think of a person you trust and a person you do not trust.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>with &gt;</th>
<th>Person You Trust</th>
<th>Person You Do Not Trust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How effectively do you communicate?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How draining or energizing is the relationship?</td>
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</table>

Trust as a Hidden Variable:

\[(S \times E) \cdot T = R\]

(strategy x execution) x trust = results

Example: If trust is low, there is a 40% tax. That means \(T = (1-.40) = .6\) reducing your performance to 60% of what it could be. If trust is present, there is a 20% dividend. That means \(T = (1+.20) = 1.2\) or 120% of what it would have been.

- Trust is a function of BOTH integrity and competence.
- You can destroy, create, or restore trust.

You Can Do Something About This!

Discussion Questions

- Who do you trust? What is it about that person that inspires your confidence in them?
- Who do you think trusts you? What is it about you that you think inspires their trust in you? (character / competence)

The Five Waves of Trust

1. Self Trust: (credibility) Your ability to set and achieve goals, keep commitments, walk your talk, and inspire trust in others.
2. Relational Trust: (consistent behavior) How well you establish and increase “trust
accounts” with others.
3. Organizational Trust: (alignment) Degree to which the organization creates structures, systems, and symbols of trust.
4. Market Trust: (reputation) Level of your organization’s reputation.
5. Societal Trust: (contribution) How well you create value for others and society at large.

See, Speak, and Behave

The purpose of the book is to enable you to see, speak, and behave in ways that establish trust.

- See = paradigm shift
- Speak = language shift
- Behave = behavior shift

The First Wave - Self-Trust

To build trust, we must begin with ourselves.

**Principle = Credibility**

**4 Cores of Credibility**

1. Integrity (root): acting in accordance with your beliefs and values
2. Intent (trunk): transparent motives and agendas
3. Capabilities (branches): knowledge, talents, skills, style
4. Results (fruit): performance track record

Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted with important matters.
- Albert Einstein

Take the Credibility Self-Assessment on the Tools > Leadership Tips and Tools page of https://gracelead.co

You don’t need to share your assessment with others. The important thing is to be honest with yourself and make a plan for improvement. [Wait until you’ve read the remainder of this chapter to get some ideas for your improvement plan.]

1-Integrity

The components of Integrity are:

- **Congruence**: acting in harmony with beliefs and values; authentic
- **Humility**: caring more about what is right than being right; caring more about building the team, than getting credit; caring more about principles than self-interest
- **Courage**: standing up for the right thing, even when it is difficult

If you suspect you have blind spots regarding your integrity, select one or two trusted people to give you feedback on how they perceive your integrity. (Use the questions from Part 1 of the Credibility Self-Assessment. Ex. Ask, “Have you ever seen or heard me spin the truth?”)

Accelerators that Increase Integrity

- **Make and keep commitments** to yourself. This will lay the foundation for you to make and keep commitments to others. It will also increase your confidence. Avoid making so many commitments that you set yourself up for failure. Take commitments to yourself seriously. Don’t make commitments impulsively. If you choose to not honor a commitment, it will eat away at your values and principles. (Jas 5:12)
● **Stand for something.** Identify your values. It helps to put them in writing. *(John 14:23)*
● **Be open.** Be willing to listen to and consider new points of view and ideas.

### 2-Intent

The components of Intent are:

- **Motive**: your reason for doing something (The motive of caring builds credibility and trust; however, pretending you care when you don’t destroys credibility and trust.)
- **Agenda**: what you intend to do (The agenda of seeking mutual benefit inspires trust. Hidden agendas destroy credibility and trust.)
- **Behavior**: what you do (The behavior of acting in everyone’s best interests inspires credibility and trust. Pretending you care will backfire on you and make things worse.)

People tend to judge you on what you do rather than what you say.

**Accelerators that Improve Intent**

- **Examine and refine your motives.** Are you seeking to bless or impress? If your motives need work, seek role models, fill your mind with worthy thoughts, and do caring things. *(Php 2:3-4)*
- **Declare your intent.** When you declare your intent, it lets people know what to expect. It also holds you accountable to behave in ways that match your stated intent. Be honest about your intent. *(Eph 4:25)*
- **Choose abundance.** Believe it’s possible to find solutions that are good for everyone. Share credit and recognition. Be generous. *(2Cor 9:6-7)*

### 3-Capabilities

We can express the dimensions of capability as TASKS:

- **Talents**: natural gifts and strengths
- **Attitudes**: our way of viewing things
- **Skills**: things we can do well (even if we don’t enjoy them)
- **Knowledge**: what we’ve learned; our insight, understanding, awareness
- **Style**: unique approach and personality

**Accelerators that Increase Capabilities**

- **Run with your strengths and purpose.** Identify your strengths and focus on continuing to improve and leverage them. *(1Cor 12:4-6)*
- **Keep yourself relevant.** Engage in lifelong learning.
- **Know where you are going.** Have a clear vision of the contribution you want to make with the abilities you have.

Besides your technical capabilities, work on increasing your abilities to create and sustain trust.

### 4-Results

Without results, you have no credibility. Factors to consider with results:

- **Past, present, future**: Your track record plus current results plus people’s confidence in your ability to produce future results are all important.
- **What and how**: Credibility requires that you get results in a way that inspires trust.
- **Define results**: Other factors such as what you learn are as important as meeting specific numbers.
- **Communicating results**: If people aren’t aware of your results, they can’t factor those into their view of your credibility.

**Accelerators that Improve Results**

- **Take responsibility for results.** Trying is not enough. *Do or do not, there is no try. -Yoda*
- **Expect to win.** We tend to get what we expect. *(1Cor 9:24)*
- **Finish strong**: Results are all about finishing. *(2Tim 4:7)*
The Second Wave - Relationship Trust

Relationship trust is about interacting with others in ways that increase trust and avoiding ways that destroy it.

Good words signal behavior, declare intent, and create hope. To increase trust, you must follow those words with validating behavior.

Building Trust Accounts

Think in terms of Trust Accounts. When your behavior builds trust, you make deposits. When your behavior destroys trust, you make withdrawals.

- Interestingly, little things can have a disproportionally large effect. Never undervalue the importance of small gestures and courtesies.
- All deposits and withdrawals are not created equal. It is important to find out what builds trust in each person. A reinforcer for one person may not reinforce another. For tips on recognition, see the summary of I Saw What You Did on the Book Summaries > Leadership Books page of: https://gracelead.co

Things to Keep in Mind

- All 13 Trust Behaviors require character and competence.
- Too much or too little of a strength becomes a weakness.
- The 13 Trust Behaviors work together to create balance.
- Every interaction with every person is a moment of trust.

Behavior-1: Talk Straight

Principles: integrity, honesty, straightforwardness (Pro 12:25)

Opposite: lie, deceive (Tip: Don’t try to put makeup on a pig.)

Counterfeit: flattery, posturing, spinning, double-talk

Tip: Preface discussions by stating your intent.

Requirements to Talk Straight:
1. Integrity: courage
2. Intent: best interests of all involved
3. Capabilities: verbal and interpersonal skills
4. Results: focus on outcomes that build trust

Behavior-2: Demonstrate Respect

Pro: civil, appreciative, fair, kind
Con: over-protective, jealous

Tip: Preface discussions by stating your intent.
**Principles:** respect, fairness, kindness, love, civility, intrinsic worth of individuals (Mat 7.12)

**Opposite:** disrespect, lack of caring

**Counterfeit:** fake respect or concern, only showing respect to those who can benefit you

**Tip:** No matter how small a contribution is, that contribution is worthy of honor.

**Behavior-3: Create Transparency**

**Principles:** honesty, openness, integrity, vulnerability (Rom 9:1)

**Opposite:** hoarding, withholding, secretive

**Counterfeit:** pretending, hiding reality

**Tip:** Maintain appropriate confidentiality while keeping everything else in the open.

**Behavior-4: Right Wrongs**

**Principles:** humility, integrity, restitution (Psa 51:3)

**Opposite:** deny, justify, or rationalize wrongs

**Counterfeit:** cover up your wrongs

**Behavior-5: Show Loyalty**

**Principles:** integrity, loyalty, gratitude, recognition

**Opposite:** take credit for yourself, speak poorly of people behind their backs

**Counterfeit:** give credit and kind words to their face, but take credit and criticize them behind their back
Tips:
- Acknowledge people both for what they do and for their character.
- When you must speak about a person, do so in a fair way that aims to be helpful and not hurtful.
- If someone complains about another, say, “Have you spoken with them directly?” (Matt 18:15-17).

**Behavior-6: Deliver Results**

**Principles:** responsibility, accountability, performance (Matt 5:33)

**Opposite:** failing to deliver results

**Counterfeit:** being busy, but not productive

**Tip:** Clarify expectations before beginning.

**Behavior-7: Get Better**

**Principles:** learning, continuous improvement (Luke 14:28-30)

**Opposite:** entropy, deterioration

**Counterfeit:** learning, but never producing

**Tips:**
- Seek feedback and use it for improvement. (ex. a Continue/Stop/Start inquiry)
- Use mistakes as feedback.

**Behavior-8: Confront Reality**

**Principles:** courage, responsibility, awareness, respect (Eph 4:29)

**Opposite:** ignore problem

**Counterfeit:** busywork, avoid real issues
**Tip**: Know why you avoid confronting reality and work on overcoming your fears.

**Behavior-9: Clarify Expectations**

**Clarify Expectations**

- **Too Little**
  - unclear
  - insufficient detail
  - not in writing
- **Sweet Spot**
  - put in writing
  - verify that they understand
  - achieve “win/win” expectations
- **Too Much**
  - too much detail
  - untrusting tone

**Principles**: clarity, responsibility, accountability (1Cor 14:9)

**Opposite**: undisclosed or undefined expectations

**Counterfeit**: give lip service to expectations, but fail to provide specifics

**Tip**: Make sure expectations are realistic and will work from both points of view. Put it in writing.

**Behavior-10: Practice Accountability**

**Practice Accountability**

- **Too Little**
  - fail to admit you are responsible
  - fail to create a system to hold people accountable
- **Sweet Spot**
  - hold yourself accountable
  - create a system to hold people accountable
  - accept blame for things you can’t control
- **Too Much**
  - use system to punish people

**Principles**: accountability, responsibility, stewardship, ownership

**Opposite**: fail to take responsibility

**Counterfeit**: blame others

**Tip**: First demonstrate that you hold yourself accountable, then hold others accountable. (Mat 7:1-3)

**Behavior-11: Listen First**

**Listen First**

- **Too Little**
  - fail to listen
  - speak before listening
- **Sweet Spot**
  - listen before you speak
  - use your eyes and heart to listen
  - don’t presume you understand
- **Too Much**
  - listen but never come to a decision

**Principles**: understanding, respect, mutual benefit (Jas 1:19, Mat 12:36)

**Opposite**: fail to listen, speak before listening

**Counterfeit**: pretend you are listening while you think of what you want to say, listen without trying to understand

**Tip**: When a person is communicating with high emotion, it’s an indicator that the person doesn’t think you understand their point of view. Listen more carefully.
**Behavior-12: Keep Commitments**

**Principles:** integrity, performance, courage, humility  
(Mark 7:6)

**Opposite:** break commitments, violate promises

**Counterfeit:** make vague commitments

**Tip:** Be sure your commitments are realistic.

**Behavior-13: Extend Trust**

**Principles:** empowerment, reciprocity  
(Luke 16:10)

**Opposite:** withhold trust

**Counterfeit:** give responsibility while withholding authority and resources, pretend that you trust

**Tip:** To avoid having your trust betrayed, be clear on expectations and hold yourself and others accountable.

**Create an Action Plan**

Think of a relationship for which you want to increase trust. Take the Trust Behaviors Self-Assessment on the Tools > Leadership Tips and Tools page of https://gracelead.co

You don’t need to share your assessment with others. The important thing is to be honest with yourself and make a plan for improvement.

Use the My Trust Action Plan that accompanies the assessment to document your plan for improvement.
The Third, Fourth, and Fifth Waves

The last three waves are about Stakeholder Trust.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WAVE</th>
<th>PRINCIPLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>internal</td>
<td>Organizational Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external</td>
<td>Market Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Societal Trust</td>
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**Third Wave: Organizational Trust**

Define “organization” at a level that is actionable to you. (ex. your team or department)

**Exercise**
- As a group, make a list of words that describe a low-trust organization.
- As a group, make a list of words that describe a high-trust organization.

**Discussion**

Discuss your experiences in the organization that influence how you see it as low-trust or high-trust. (This may be a blend.)

**Building Organizational Trust**

Organization Trust comes from how well the systems, processes, and symbols align with the 4 Cores and 13 Trust Behaviors. *(Psa 1:1-2)*

**Step 1:** Assess how well your organization aligns with the 4 Cores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>TIPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-Integrity</td>
<td>Do we have integrity? Create a culture of honoring our stated values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Intent</td>
<td>Is our intent win/win? Create systems that foster win/win.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3-Capabilities | Do we have the right people in the right roles? Create systems that attract the right talent. Provide ongoing training.
4-Results     | Do we deliver what we promise? Account for your results. Hold one another accountable.

**Step 2:** Take the Trust Behaviors Organization-Assessment on the Tools > Leadership Tips and Tools page of [https://gracelead.co](https://gracelead.co) You can take this as a group in a discussion or take it individually and have someone average the results.

Use the Organization Trust Action Plan that accompanies the assessment to document your organization’s plan for improvement.

**Consider the Taxes and Dividends**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low-Trust Taxes</th>
<th>High-Trust Dividends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Redundancy</td>
<td>1. Increased Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bureaucracy</td>
<td>2. Accelerated Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Politics</td>
<td>3. Enhanced Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Discouragement</td>
<td>4. Improved Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Turnover</td>
<td>5. Stronger Partnering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Fraud</td>
<td>7. Heightened Loyalty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Remember:** Whatever your organization (work, home, volunteer), the way you design and align it with the 4 Cores and 13 Trust Behaviors will strongly affect trust levels.
Fourth Wave: Market Trust

On every level, in every relationship, your reputation makes a difference. (Pro 22:1)

For the Market Trust wave, look through the glasses of your own actionably-defined organization (ex. team, department).

Exercise: Our Organization’s Reputation

As a group, answer the following questions about your organization.

1. **Integrity**: When it comes to honesty and courage in addressing issues, what reputation do we have with those outside our organization?
2. **Intent**: When it comes to working toward win/win solutions, what reputation do we have with those outside our organization?
3. **Capabilities**: When it comes to competence, excellence, and continued improvement, what reputation do we have with those outside our organization?
4. **Results**: When it comes to delivering what we promise, what reputation do we have with those outside our organization?

If you don’t know your organization’s reputation with others, ask some of them, then complete the exercise.

Remember

The reputation that you are able to generate as an organization is a result of the credibility that you create individually.

Fifth Wave: Societal Trust

Societal trust hinges on the contribution that you make as an organization. (Jer 29:7)

Individual Choice

Making a contribution to society begins with individual choices in all areas of our lives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Is my intention to give back to society?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Do I establish structures in my family that support giving back to society?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Organization |  - As an organization, is our intent to give back to society?  
|            |  - Do our capabilities make a difference to society?  
|            |  - Do we produce results that benefit both shareholders and society? |

Remember

The 4 Cores and 13 Trust Behaviors are the tools that establish and repair trust in every context.

Tip:
Before you have a confronting conversation, think through how the person likely views your 4 Cores and how you view theirs. Acknowledge the Cores for which they have built credibility with you. Leverage the Cores for which you have built the most credibility with them.
Extending Smart Trust is a function of two factors:

1. propensity to trust (a matter of the heart): degree of suspicion related to the other’s credibility
2. analysis (matter of the mind): opportunity, risk of trusting vs. not trusting in this case, likelihood of outcomes, credibility of those involved

How to Inspire Trust

1. Demonstrate your own credibility (4 Cores).
2. Behave in trust-building ways (13 Trust Behaviors).

Restoring Trust When Lost

- Don’t take trust for granted. Sometimes you do something stupid or make an honest mistake that damages trust. Remember, people will judge you by your behaviors rather than your intent.
- You can’t make someone trust you; however, you can focus on the 4 Cores and 13 Trust Behaviors to demonstrate that you are serious about trust. (Eph 4:1-3, Col 1:10)

When others lose your trust:
- Don’t be quick to judge. (Mat 7:1-4, Rom 14:10)
- Forgive (not the same as trusting). (Eph 4:32)
  - Cleanse yourself of anger and vindictiveness.

Response to Trust

The way we get things done and solve problems is through people. Most people respond well to trust. Extend Smart Trust whenever possible.