

Trust is Like an Eraser

You will need people throughout your life and career whom you can trust. In turn, others need to be able to trust you. Trust in you is absolutely necessary before you can establish a reputation and build a strong network of people to help you.

So what, exactly, is trust?

Trust is the belief that you can depend on a person to behave in certain ways. It's a feeling that a person is loyal, reliable, consistent, and can be counted on. Trust is built in many different ways, including these:

- Telling the truth
- Admitting your mistakes
- Being loyal to your company and boss
- Keeping information confidential
- Following orders
- Showing an even temperament
- Doing what you say you will do
- Controlling your emotions
- Pitching in when needed
- Treating people consistently in different situations



Trust is Like an Eraser—It gets smaller and smaller after every mistake.

Has someone you know—a friend, coworker, boss—disappointed you? Hurt your feelings? Acted in a way that surprised you? No matter how hard you try to get back to your original feelings, it's a safe bet that your level of trust in the person is less than before.

The same thing happens in reverse. At work, you will be expected to behave in ways that people can trust, and if you act in a manner that causes others to lose trust in you, rebuilding the relationship you had before will be very hard. Think about these examples:

You call in sick so you can spend the day with a friend who is visiting from out of town, and a coworker sees you as you walk down the street.

You volunteer to proofread a report your team has finalized, but in a rush to get the job done, you overlook several mistakes, which makes the entire team look bad.

You exaggerate your technical abilities and coworkers learn they can't trust what you say.

Action: Add to the list of bullets three ways that you can behave so that you build trust among your coworkers and boss.

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Note to Instructors: Lessons on reliability, integrity, honesty, dependability and other features of trust are covered thoroughly in *It's for Real Workplace Ethics*. Titles of the 64 lessons are shown below.

It's for Real Workplace Ethics Lesson Themes

Honesty	Quitting a Job	Responsibility	Temper
Responsibility	Adaptability	Covering Up	Safety Violation
Excuses	Quality Work	Entitlement	Dishonesty
Punctuality	Work/Life Balance	Theft	Cheating the Employees
Personal Matters	Theft	Negligence	Favoritism
Intimidation	Gossip	Confidentiality	Unsupportive Boss