# Trust Me: Developing a Culture of Trust is a Leader's Responsibility

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  I recently had the privilege of speaking to the leadership of a woman’s organization. The goal of my ice- breaker was to establish an atmosphere that could be tested for the individual to feel or not to feel a sense of trust with the person with whom they connected. They had three questions to ask of several people: name, how many siblings do you have and discuss briefly the hardest part of growing up. It didn’t take long for all to engage and engage they did. Actually, this was a group of women who said, at the end of the exercise, that they were able to open up freely with one another. We discussed the purpose of the activity and how a trusting relationship is needed to create a common bond or move toward accomplishing the goals of an organization. Also, “The most important aspect of an individual that will create a lasting presence in an organization ‘s culture is TRUST.” **What you must know, as a leader, is how to affect cohesiveness, commitment, accountability and trust needed to establish a shared, vision, mission and achievement of goals.** What plays into this is the importance of **Leadership Presence**: As referenced in Leadership Presence by Halpern and Lubar, “*Leadership Presence is the ability to connect authentically with the thoughts and feelings of others in order to motivate and inspire them toward a desired outcome.”* They use the acronym: PRES to make their point: **P**resence is being available and flexible, **R**eaching out, **E**motional, compassionate, and **S**elf-knowing (authentic) with strong uncompromising values. Kristie Hedges, in her book, The Power of Presence, uses the I PresenceÔ model-**I**ntentional, **i**ndividual and **i**nspirational. These qualities develop the leader’s credibility and power to move the group toward success. The cultures of organization vary and the members come with their own perceptions and conditioned attitudes. Even in families, we cannot always see eye-to-eye even for the good of the group. We as leaders may notice the inability to move forward and the root cause could be a lack of trust. Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team by Patrick Lencioni, uses a triangle model showing that the absence of the foundation being **Trust**, will cause a fear of **Conflict** not allowing for a **Commitment** that is then an avoidance of **Accountability** leading to inattention to **Results.** See model below**.** [](http://uniquepathways.websitehabitat.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2014/11/themodel.png) Lencioni says the role of the leader is to go first, mine for conflict, force clarity and closure, confront difficult issues and focus on collective outcomes. The impact of trust, or the confidence in someone to keep a commitment, show integrity and be reliable will create a following and acceptance to move up the triangle to avoid the Five Dysfunctions of a Team so goals can be realized in an effective and efficient manner. Stephen Covey stated that there are 13 Behaviors of High Trust Leaders Worldwide: These behaviors included demonstrating respect, righting wrongs, clarifying expectations, listening first, keeping commitments and extending trust to name a few.

### Assess your behaviors and become that leader who will establish the trust needed to advance your organization.