

Trust: Taxes and Dividends

Simply put, trust means *confidence*. The opposite of trust—distrust—is *suspicion*. When you trust people, you have confidence in them—in their integrity and in their abilities. When you distrust people, you are suspicious of them—of their integrity, their agenda, their capabilities, or their track record. It's that simple. We have all had experiences that validate the difference between relationships that are built on trust and those that are not. These experiences clearly tell us the difference is not small; it is dramatic.

Take a minute right now and think of a person with whom you have a high trust relationship—perhaps a boss, coworker, customer, spouse, parent, sibling, child, or friend. Describe this relationship. What's it like? How does it feel? How well do you communicate? How quickly can you get things done? How much do you enjoy this relationship?

Now think of a person with whom you have a low-trust relationship. Again, this person could be anyone at work or at home. Describe this relationship. What's it like? How does it feel? How is the communication? Does it flow quickly and freely . . . or do you feel like you're constantly walking on land mines and being misunderstood? Do you work together to get things done quickly . . . or does it take a disproportionate amount of time and energy to finally reach agreement and execution? Do you enjoy this relationship . . . or do you find it tedious, cumbersome, and draining?

The difference between a high- and low-trust relationship is palpable! Take communication. In a high-trust relationship, you can say the wrong thing, and people will still get your meaning. In a low-trust relationship, you can be very measured, even precise, and they'll still misinterpret you.

(Stephen M.R. Covey and Rebecca R. Merrill, *The SPEED of Trust: The One Thing that Changes Everything*)

40% Tax (Low Trust)

- ▼ In personal relationships:
 - Energy draining and joyless interactions
 - Evidence gathering of other party's weaknesses and mistakes
 - Doubt about others' reliability or commitment
 - Hidden agendas
 - ▼ In the organization:
 - Militant stakeholders
 - Political camps with allies and enemies
 - Many dissatisfied leaders and members
 - Bureaucracy and redundancy in systems and structures
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20% Tax (Trust Issues)

- ▼ In personal relationships:
 - Regular misunderstandings
 - Concerns about intent and motive
 - Interactions characterized by tension
 - Communications colored by fear, uncertainty, doubt, and worry
 - Energy spent in maintaining (instead of growing) relationships
- ▼ In the organization:
 - Some bureaucratic rules and procedures
 - Unnecessary hierarchy
 - Slow approvals
 - Misaligned systems and structures
 - Some dissatisfied employees and stakeholders

No Tax/No Dividend (Trust is Not an Issue)

- ▼ In personal relationships:
 - Polite, cordial, healthy communications
 - A focus on working together smoothly and efficiently
 - Mutual tolerance and acceptance
 - No worries
 - ▼ In the organization:
 - Healthy workplace
 - Good communication
 - Aligned systems and structures
 - Few office politics
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20% Dividend (Trust is a Visible Asset)

- ▼ In personal relationships:
 - Cooperative, close, vibrant relationships
 - A focus on looking for and leveraging one another's strengths
 - Uplifting and positive communication
 - Mistakes seen as learning opportunities and quickly forgiven
 - Positive energy and positive people
 - ▼ In the organization:
 - The focus is on work
 - Effective collaboration and execution
 - Positive partnering relationships with leadership team and members
 - Helpful systems and structures
 - Strong creativity and innovation
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40% Dividend (World-Class Trust)

- ▼ In personal relationships:
 - True joy in family and friendships, characterized by caring and love
 - Free, effortless communication
 - Inspiring work done together and characterized by purpose, creativity, and excitement
 - Completely open, transparent relationships
 - Amazing energy created by relationships
 - ▼ In the organization:
 - High collaboration and partnering
 - Effortless communication
 - Positive, transparent relationships with leadership team and members
 - Fully aligned systems and structures
 - Strong innovation, engagement, confidence, and loyalty
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