

Your 2023 Challenge: Form A New Trust Habit

| Why is your trustworthiness important to you?

 By **Yoram Solomon**, The Innovation Culture Institute™ LLC

It's that time of the year when you start planning your priorities for next year. There is one priority you should add to the list that would greatly impact you personally and professionally. Next year, be more trusted. You never focused on that in the past because you didn't have a plan or didn't know how to do it. This is about to change.

Why is Your Trustworthiness Important to YOU?

But first, what motivates you to be more trusted? Often, the focus is on the benefits of high trust levels to the organization. However, when you are trusted, research showed that you would feel 74% less stress, 40% less burnout, 106% more energy, 60% more job, and 56% higher job satisfaction. When your boss trusts you, you will get 67% higher autonomy to do your job. When a team member trusts you, they will allow themselves to be 240% more open and vulnerable with you and will be 106% more willing to give you the feedback you need to hear (rather than what they think you want to hear). That feedback is important to your growth, but you must be trusted first.

Eliminate Only One Old Behavior

Trust is the product of your trustworthiness, and your trustworthiness is the product of who you are and what you do or how you behave when you interact with the person you want to be trusted by. To be trusted, you have two options: **develop a new positive behavior, or eliminate one negative behavior that could be currently holding you back from being more trusted.** Research shows that people react

much stronger to negative events or behaviors than to positive ones. So, instead of developing one new positive behavior, you should identify one old negative behavior that is holding you back from being more trusted and focus on eliminating that.

Why only one? We often start the year with many challenges and goals, just to end it with nothing completely achieved. Achieving goals takes effort, and spreading the effort is a major obstacle to success. Besides, becoming more trusted is a journey you don't have to complete in one year. Next year, choose one old behavior that needs to change. You will have a much higher probability of success, you will increase your trustworthiness, and you can choose the next behavior the following year.

Form One New Habit

Knowing which old behavior needs to change is not enough. This behavior is likely already ingrained in you and will be hard to change. To change it, you must develop a new habit. Developing habits is not simple, easy, or quick; it takes effort over an extended period. There is no amount of money you can pay someone to form the new habit for you, just like you can't pay anyone to lose weight for you if you want to. You need a process. A plan. Just like the following.

The 7-Step Process

The process is highly prescriptive and structured and exists in the intersection between the sciences of trust and habit-forming. It is made of the following seven steps:



1. Focus on one relationship. Trust is relative. The same behavior that would cause one person to trust you could cause another person to distrust you. Nevertheless, the behavior that holds you back from being more trusted in one relationship could be doing the same in another. Choose a relationship in which the other person depends on you. If you eliminate the behavior in that relationship, you will notice the biggest increase in trust in you.

2. Select one old behavior that must change. There are many good (and bad) behaviors that affect that relationship. Either ask the other person or ask a third person to help you identify which of your old behaviors adversely impacts that relationship the most.

3. Identify a new habit that will change the old behavior. Sometimes, the new habit could simply be to stop the old behavior.

4. Make it SMART. The new habit cannot be vague or unclear, or it will not be actionable. It must be Specific, Measurable, Achievable (although not too easy), Relevant (and impactful in eliminating the old behavior), and Time-bound.

5. Make it stick. Do whatever you can to allow yourself to stick with it until it becomes a new habit and the old behavior is gone. Eliminate friction from the new habit (or add friction to the old behavior). Stack habits. Use technology where possible, and use extrinsic motivation (give yourself a carrot as long as you stick with the habit or a stick when you don't).

6. Appoint an accountability partner. Someone who regularly checks on your progress and holds you accountable to execute your plan. Meeting regularly with your accountability partner increases the probability of success by almost 50%.

7. Keep going until the new habit is established. There is no fixed amount of time it takes to form a habit, and there is also no hard line between a behavior being a habit or not. Different habits will take a different amount of time to form, and the same habit might take a different amount of time for different people to form. Keep going until the new behavior becomes automatic or until it is easier to keep doing it than to stop.

Your 2023 Challenge

And there it is: your 2023 challenge is to form one new habit that will change one old behavior that's holding you back from being more trusted in one (or more) relationships. It will have the biggest impact on your personal and professional success and enjoyment.



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