

"Can I Count On You?" Reliability Builds The Trust You Need to Lead Others

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Trust - The Foundation of Leadership, which is earned slowly over time.

Reliability – The Basis of Trust. When you are reliable, people trust you quicker and will continue to trust you when mistakes and challenges happen. Can people count on you? How valuable is "your word"? Do you accomplish what you committed to do? The 3 attitudes and 3 actions of Reliable Leaders:

1. The Little Things Are Everything

- Examples: being on time, returning a borrowed item, calling back when promised, remembering birthdays, coming to work or meetings prepared, cleaning up, organized work area, filing correctly, proof reading, dressing correctly.
- If others can't count on you to be on time, remember to get a receipt, or return a call, why would they think you are "reliable" for anything "bigger"? Successfully accomplish smaller tasks so you can take on bigger tasks.
- Remember the story of the company that produced hundreds of jackets for Andy's school that had to take them all back to fix the mistake of ONE letter being incorrect on the school's name.

2. Honesty... and then Fix It!

- No one is perfect. Leaders make MORE mistakes than others. Accept responsibility! Don't pass off the blame through "little white lies". It's not the SCREW UP that infuriates people, it's the COVER UP.
- Apologize and then move to fix the problem right away. Former NBA player Manute Bol was famous for coining the phrase, "my bad". Be honest about your errors to others AND to yourself so you can improve!
- North America's oldest and largest investment firm, www.bvp.com/portfolio/antiportfolio actually lists its past mistakes! Why? It shows its clients that they can be trusted to be HONEST! It shows they try to learn from mistakes.

3. Share Your Care

- Put yourself in the shoes of those around you and get excited about other people's lives! Be an example of empathic listening to your friends, family, co-workers, and leadership team so you understand what is important to them.
- Reliability is "being there" for people. The exciting thing is that if you care about what is important to others, they are more likely to care about what is important to you! Be the "#1 Fan" of your family, friends, and workplace!
- You are INTERESTING when you show INTEREST in the lives of others! You do this by ASKING QUESTIONS. Your interest makes you interesting! You DON'T have to be the person that dominates a conversation by talking. **You control a conversation by asking questions!**
- Move from **SMALL TALK** to **SMART TALK** by asking "why?" "Tell me more about that" "how did that feel?"

4. Write It Down!

- The daily use of organization tools that allows you to note "to do's" in conjunction with a calendar. Arrive at the meeting or work prepared to take notes! Make note of leadership tasks, work, conversation topics and personal commitments to friends and family.
- Make sure as you speak to someone, write it down in your notes right away, even if it means taking a few extra seconds and saying, "Hang on, let me write that down".

Write it Down! Continued,

- Let's say you have committed to a date in your notes to get back to a friend about social plans or co-worker with a price quote. The day arrives but you are still waiting on an answer. Still contact them to tell them the situation. This way you're viewed as being reliable enough to meet your commitment even though you don't have an answer yet.
- Every time you are talking to someone new, whether it's personal or for work, note that person's/company's contact information in your planner/smart phone. Include notes to help you remember them.
- Homework: Are you happy with your calendar/priority list/to do list tools? Ask others what they use.
- Beginning of the day. Before you leave home, look at your to do list. Anything to bring? What are today's priorities?
- End of the day. Review your to do list and ensure all non-completed tasks are moved to another day.

5. Make Others Look Reliable

- Reliability key #4 is when you write down your commitments to others. In point #5, you make the jump to leadership by noting other people's commitments to you. People will often commit to you a date by which they will contact you with an answer on an item. Be organized for others and note those commitments on the dates they promised!
- Example, for Oct. 20th, you note, "Did Julie confirm meeting time? Did Evan submit quotes for the t-shirt order?" If Julie or Evan have not shared this information with you, you would take time to meet/call/email them.
- When doing follow up avoid saying "remind" as it implies, they've forgotten. Use statements like "how it's coming with" or "what's going on". If something goes wrong or gets delayed because someone didn't get back to you, ask yourself this question: "did I help their reliability by providing friendly reminders?"

6. The Three R's: Remember, Reply, Return the Favour.

- When people contact you, write it down and return the text/email/call as prompt as possible! A quick reply works! Have an "attitude of gratitude" - send notes of thanks and personally approach people and share sincere appreciation. Create thank you cards unique to your school/group/organization and have readily available.
- Return the favour and help others, especially when you haven't been asked! When someone receives thanks, favours, and kind and thoughtful actions from you, they are far more likely to be reliable for you in the future.
- What's most important is that it's a fantastic way to live life: an attitude of "servant leadership" of helping others!