

Pillar 6: Connection

People can forget what you say, they can forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel.

At its core, trust is about relationships. It is a way to measure how we feel about our interactions with the people we and organizations we relate with. People like to do business with friends and friendship starts with a connection. In fact a study was done by a marketing firm that showed that 86.9% of people trust a friend's recommendation for a product over a professional review. Friendships are a strong form of connection, people you can spend time with, and have good conversations.

Great Leaders are those who inspire a vision and earn trust. They encourage people to engage in the vision. Individuals and organizations can invite people to engage by encouraging input and feedback. Providing opportunities for engagement is important for connecting with others. As the connections grow in number and in depth (stronger), movement towards achieving the goals inspired by the vision begins to happen.

Leaders who inspire vision and earn trust are those who are willing to go the extra distance to encourage other members of their organization, their staff, or clients, depending on their situation. A trusted leader does not have to understand all the details and complexities of the organization or business they are involved in, but they do need to understand trust and the importance of connecting with his or her people.

When others see your commitment and enthusiasm for your work or your ministry, people will drawn to you.

An example to learn from

David Horsager shares a story about a local business. A young couple started a small coffee and bakery type of business. It is a place where people can either buy coffee and a biscuit to take with them or small tables where they may sit and talk or at times open their laptop computer and do some work out of the office. Below is an image of a one of their locations.



The couple started the business with one small shop in the town where they lived, in a few years the company grew to over 450 locations across the country. How did this happen? It needs to be understood as well that this was not a new type of business, these “coffee shops” are common and have been around for many years, so what did they do that made so successful? Connection.

David tells about how he will often stop and get a coffee on his way to work and occasionally he likes to get out of his office so he can write without office distractions. After he had been to the shop a couple of times he said that by the time he reached the place to give his order, his coffee was already waiting for him and they called him by name.

When he would go in to sit and write, they learned that he enjoyed a glass of water along with his coffee. On those days he said

that by the time he chose a table and set his briefcase down, a person was already bringing him a glass of water. He writes in his book that there are many times it is difficult to even find an empty chair to sit in as they have so many customers. The company trained their staff to “connect” with customers with intention, learn their names and makes sure they feel cared for and special. This created an environment that developed a strong customer loyalty.

People are drawn to people they trust

A magnet is a material or an object that produces a magnetic field. This magnetic field is invisible but is responsible for the most notable property of a magnet: a force that pulls on other ferrous metals such as steel and iron. Magnets draw these metals to themselves.

People can be a magnet as well but in a different way, we can draw people to ourselves like magnets attract iron, but we can also push people away as well. A quality found in trusted leaders is having magnetic personalities, people who possess qualities that attract people to their cause or their business, people that other want to be around. The following table lists some opposing traits that can make a leader either a person who draws people to themselves or pushes people away.

Magnetic Traits vs. Repellent Traits

Grateful vs. Thankless
Good Listener vs. Talker only
Talks about ideas vs. Talks about people
Sees the positive side vs. Constantly complaining
Optimistic vs. Pessimistic
Encouraging vs. Critical
Honest/Genuine vs. Exaggerating

Connection

- Trust is all about relationships.
- Engagement with people builds connections, connections build trust.
- Ask great questions, listen.
- Care beyond yourself, going back and review Compassion – will help build connections.
- Collaborate, co-laboring or working together builds connections.
- Be genuine, being sincere makes people feel comfortable with you and builds connection.
- Be grateful — gratitude is the common trait of the most magnetic people on earth.
- Avoid complaining if possible, it pushes people away.
- Insincere apologies destroy trust.

Some questions to start discussion.

- **How can you more intentionally connect and collaborate with others?**
- **If you met prospective Integrity Group members, what would you ask them first?**
- **What 3 to 5 things in your life that you are grateful for?**
- **What is one “magnetic” trait you would like to increase?**
- **What is one trait that may push people away that you would like to stop?**
- **If you must apologize are you sincere?**