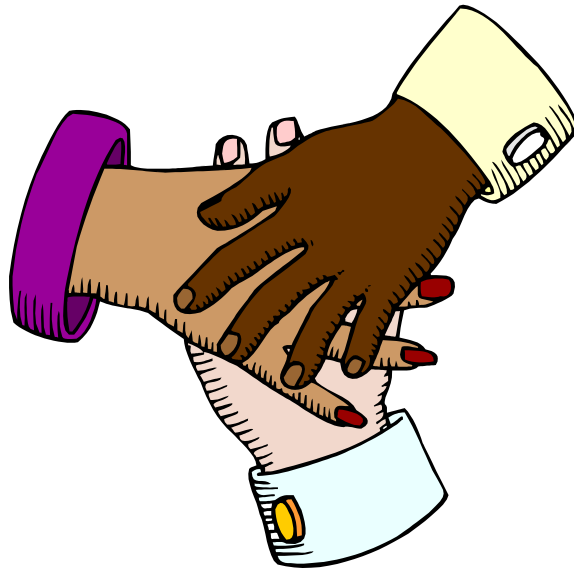


Communication and Teambuilding



Dr. Pamela Shockley-Zalabak
Chancellor and Professor
Department of Communication, UCCS

YOUR PROUDEST MOMENT IN A UNIVERSITY GROUP

Looking back over your university career, what is the moment you are most proud of as a member of a university group?

YOUR WORST MOMENT IN A UNIVERSITY GROUP

Just as all of us have enjoyed success, we've also experienced the pain of team failure. As you review your university career, what was your most disappointing experience as a member of a university group?

TEAM LESSONS

Based on the team successes and failures noted, what are some team lessons that can be identified?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Adapted from: Noel Tichy and Eli Cohen, *The Leadership Engine*, 1997.

What is Organizational Trust?

Although we often know intuitively when there is and when there isn't trust in an organization, we all may define and describe trust differently. While we can all agree that trust is important, we may disagree at times about what builds or destroys trust in our organizations. Sometimes we label a behavior trustworthy, or place a high value on it, because it is valued in our specific circumstance, organization, or culture. Or we may do the reverse, and see a behavior as untrustworthy or low in value because of our context. Because it can be based on different values, organizational trust has a complex nature. When we look at thoughtful writing and research on organizational trust, we see a diverse set of definitions, meanings, and behaviors ascribed to it.

Definition of Organizational Trust

While there are many definitions for organizational trust, some key words reoccur. Concepts that continually appear in those definitions are *belief*, *willingness*, and *vulnerability*.

Nature of Organizational Trust

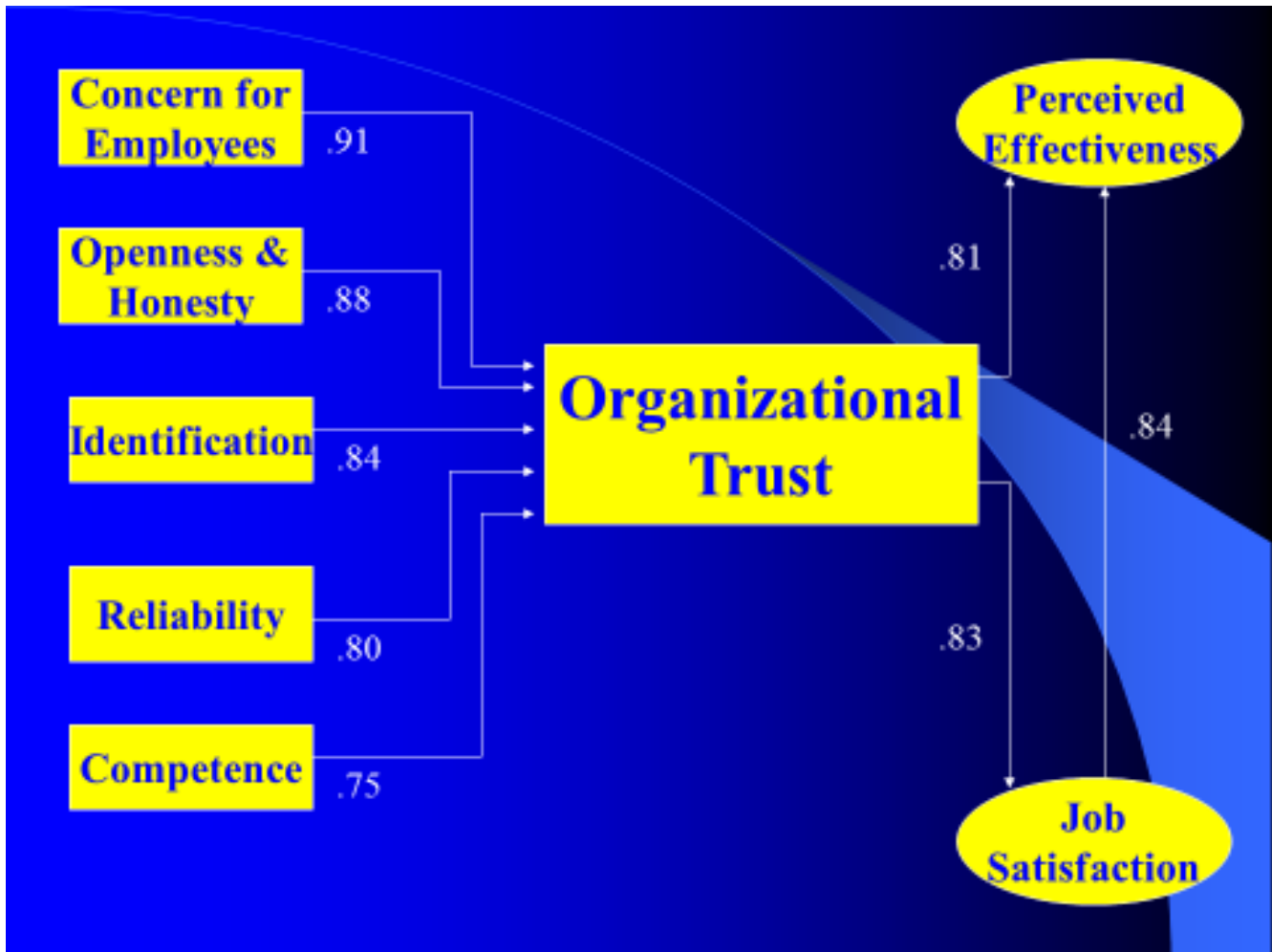
- **Multi-leveled**, meaning that trust results from interactions that span co-worker, team, organizational, and inter-organizational alliances.
- **Culturally-rooted**, meaning trust is closely tied to the norms, values, and beliefs of the organizational culture.
- **Communication-based**, meaning trust is the outcome of communication behaviors, such as providing accurate information, giving explanations for decisions, and demonstrating sincere and appropriate openness.
- **Dynamic**, meaning trust is constantly changing as it cycles through phases of building, stabilizing and dissolving.
- **Multi-dimensional**, meaning trust consists of multiple factors at the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral levels, all of which affect an individual's perceptions of trust.

Implications for Organizational Excellence

Regardless of whether organizations engage in international activities or not, most require enhanced networks of trust. They must have a vertical structure that is flexible and adaptive. Such responsiveness brings improved organizational performance to the daily dramas of business. Research has consistently linked high trust levels with performance. We know that high levels of trust are associated with effective teams and leadership. Likewise, organizations with high trust levels will continually benefit from:

- 1) More adaptive organizational structures
- 2) Strategic alliances
- 3) Responsive virtual teams
- 4) Effective crisis management
- 5) Reduction in litigation costs

*Model of Organizational Trust, Job Satisfaction, and Effectiveness**



* Indicates statistical significance ($p < .01$) in relationship between elements. Standardized path parameters range from 0 to 1.00. The higher the parameter, the stronger the path.

Competence: Competence, as it relates to organizational trust, involves the extent to which we see not only our co-workers and leaders as being effective, but also our organization as a whole. It measures how strongly we believe that our organization will compete and survive in the marketplace.

Openness and Honesty: Openness and honesty are the words used most often when people are asked what contributes to organizational trust. This dimension involves not only the amount and accuracy of information that is shared, but also how sincerely and appropriately is it communicated.

Concern for Employees: Concern for employees includes the feelings of caring, empathy, tolerance, and safety that are exhibited when we are vulnerable in business activities. Sincere efforts to understand feelings contribute to high trust levels in any relationship.

Reliability: Reliability is determined by whether or not a co-worker, team, supplier, or organization acts consistently and dependably. In other words, can you count on them to do what they say?

Identification: Identification measures the extent to which we hold in common goals, norms, values, and beliefs associated with our organization's culture. This dimension indicates how connected we feel to management and to co-workers.

STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING TRUST IN OUR TEAM/DEPARTMENT

ACTION PLAN

<u>What</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>By When</u>	<u>Reinforcement/Follow up</u>
-------------	------------	----------------	--------------------------------

Additional Reading

Korsgaard, M. Audrey., Brodt, Susan E., and Whitener, Ellen M. "Trust in the Face of Conflict: The Role of Managerial Trustworthy Behavior and Organizational Context." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87 (2002): 312-319.

Shockley-Zalabak, Pamela., Morreale, Sherwyn., and Hackman, Michael. *Building the High Trust Organization*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010.

Shockley-Zalabak, Pamela. *Fundamentals of Organizational Communication* (8th ed.) Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2012.

Simons, Tony L., and Peterson, Randall, S. "Task Conflict and Relationship Conflict in Top Management Teams: The Pivotal Role of Intragroup Trust." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85 (2000): 102-111.

Stocker, Kurt P. "A Strategic Approach to Crisis Management." In C.L. Caywood (Ed.), *Handbook of Strategic Public Relations and Integrated Communications* (1997). New York: McGraw Hill.