

## What's Different About Leading Today? Trust.

Before you read another word, take out a piece of paper and write down the names of five people you actually trust. Then read on...

Charles Handy (in *The Hungry Spirit*) believes trust will become one of the most critical issues in the workplace because the "virtual organisations" of today, if they are to achieve any positive results, must be built on trust. But trusting our staff and having our staff trust us has become increasingly difficult.

It's significantly cheaper to trust people than regulate, inspect and control them. In a contact centre, more than any other area in an organisation, the paradigm has too frequently morphed into a culture of distrust through an over emphasis on unrealistic and punitive monitoring, measurement and "movement" (bribing or threatening them to achieve, not true motivation).

The result is staff who don't have the power to achieve and be recognised for their authentic contributions and who sometimes take "silent revenge" on their employers (seen clearly in lack of loyalty, poor attendance and performance behaviors).

The best contact centre I ever worked with hired adults, trained them and allowed them to do their jobs -- as if they were adults. And their un-monitored results (which I was asked to review and report upon) were the best I've ever seen - in over fifty organisations!

This raises one powerful question, the answer to which will shape the successful leaders of tomorrow:

"How can you trust someone you don't know?"

The key? First know yourself and from that understanding, learn new and more effective ways to recruit, select and manage people you can begin to trust (in that trust takes time) and who are committed to the goals and values of your leadership and your organisation.

As leaders wrestle with this question, they are being forced to review their whole approach to human resource issues. People are becoming more focused on their individual rights and litigation to force issues. In an environment of growing distrust (on one or both sides) the chain of development is either broken or strengthened.

How many people can you know well enough to trust them? Answers vary, but probably not more than fifty people in your entire lifetime, although my Dad always said it was more like five! So trust defines the size of a team to be small and stable enough so people CAN get to know one another and create bonds of trust.

Values like TRUST are not simple statements to be laminated onto pocket-sized cards and kept near the heart, they profoundly affect our entire working lives.

Oh, yes, about those five names you have sitting in front of you. Perhaps today is a good day to send each of those people a note to thank them for being a good example of trustworthiness to you.

***Read about the author, Darlene D. Richard, at [www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm](http://www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm)***