

6 Characteristics of a High-Trust Culture

[VIDEO TRANSCRIPT – July 11, 2023]

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Nanne Finis: Michael, part of Great Place to Work is really looking at and using a high-trust culture or applying a high-trust culture to organizations, and we see such business success as a result. How would you easily describe this, if you will, and perhaps some of the linkages that you've seen to business outcomes and business success?

Michael Bush: Yeah, to create a high-trust culture, there's really six things that are needed to be true and to be experienced by employees. Number one is that employees want to feel that the person that they work for respects them. And so respect is really determined by how people are talked to, whether or not people are listened to, whether or not people are involved in decisions that that affect their work.

And so for every certainly people leader who's joined us today, you know, be mindful that every interaction that you have or you don't have, there's kind of a meter where the people who work for you are calculating for themselves whether they feel like you respect them or not. And also you can think about these things in terms of being a great teammate, you know, colleague as well.

So respect is number one. And then number two is whether or not people feel like the person that they work for, the people that they work with are transparently honest with them, that they're willing to share information with them based on a question that they might ask about how things are going in the organization. What are we doing to create new talent and hire new talent in the organization?

What are we doing to keep people employed by us that are, you know, at our hospital or institutions? So transparency is really important. Number three is fairness and equity. People can, especially in healthcare, be so committed to their work and so committed to their colleagues that even if they work for a terrible people manager, they'll say it's a great place to work.

That's the odd thing about healthcare. People are so committed to each other and to the patient care that having a wobbly people leader, they'll still say it's a great place to work. Now, that's not what we're recommending as a best practice. We would like the leaders to actually get better. But what people don't like is a leader who is treating some people one way and another group of people a different way.

So that's important. So respect, transparency and fairness, and then people want to enjoy who they work with. So sometimes, you know, you're working and somebody joins the team and you start to interact with them and you wonder, how did this person get hired? And what people leaders don't realize is people don't take that as, you know, an issue with the person who got hired.

They want to know who hired the person. That is reflection and respect and a trust breaker with people leaders who are hiring the wrong people. And but I mean, the wrong people. It's really about skill, sometimes. It is, it's usually about values. You know, how we treat each other, how we treat the patient, how we communicate, whether we're attending work on time.

It's really the values disconnection that if people are thinking, how did Sheri hire this person? You know, that's a trust issue and lowers respect and then people want to be a part of a team. We call it camaraderie, which you find in healthcare, these fierce commitments of people knowing they can't really succeed alone. But they can only succeed their life's purpose based on working with others.

And finally, what we call pride, which is feeling like you are cared for and the people you work with, you care for them as well. So those are the six things that we measure. We ask about ten questions about each of those things because we found how people are experiencing those six things determines the trust level that that person has.

I just defined trust for all of you, that people have with the people that they work with, and most importantly, the person that they work for.

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