

the trust model

BUILD A FOUNDATION FOR LASTING BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS.

Have you ever interacted with a salesperson and come away from the experience feeling like you needed to wash your hands? Of course you have. We all have. It is a typical experience that has created a filter for how people – both inside and outside the sales profession – view anyone who says they're in sales. But why?

As a general rule, people don't trust salespeople. And they usually don't even know why they don't trust them. Think of trust as the union of these three qualities: reliability, sincerity and competence. This is called The Trust Model.

Reliability is akin to integrity. It is doing what you say you will do, when you say you will do it. Does the product or deliverable arrive on time and do whatever it is supposed to do?

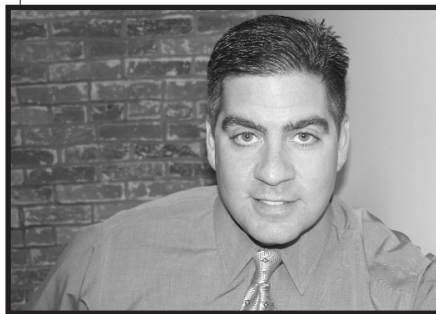
Sincerity is a genuineness that others recognize in an individual. The mark of sincerity is people believing that you have their best interests at heart. Are you really on their side of the table, and truly enrolled in their vision?

Competence is being the right person for the job: being able to deliver the product or service in the desired manner.

The basis of a mutually beneficial, long-term business relationship is mutual trust. Identifying the components of trust can give you the power to understand why, in a given situation, you might not trust the person you are dealing with, and – *Gasp...* *Say it isn't so...* – they might not trust you.

When broken down into its core elements, The Trust Model is a powerful tool for analyzing others – and yourself. As a sales rep leaves your office, and you're standing there feeling greasy, you now have the power to ask why. Did this person not deliver for you in the past?

Do you feel that this person does not have your best interest at heart? Or, did the sales rep simply not convince you that he or she could deliver? And on the flip side of this equation, take a look back at the deals you didn't win and the clients you didn't enroll. Compare your list of sales accomplishments and failures against The Trust Model, and you will find again and again that when trust



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exists, money happens.

It is a fallacy that people do business with only their friends, or that some good ol' boy network has every sector of every market sewn up. People buy from people they trust. More often than not, the person making the purchase is beholden to someone further up the corporate food chain. With that kind of pressure, when deciding to buy from a friend or buy from someone who is reliable, sincere and competent, you don't necessarily trust the one you went to high school with.

Trust breaks down when expectations are not being met. You see, when things are running smoothly, no one questions trust – it is a given. But when things break down, it is usually because someone was either unreliable, insincere or

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incompetent. Knowing *which* is huge, because it presents a great opportunity to get back into integrity with each other and finish the job together – or not. I walked away from my first sales job because I didn't believe in the product. How could I ever be sincere?

By knowing where the breakdowns are, with the other person and within ourselves, we are in a position to make choices. We can choose to make a change in our environment, meaning the people with whom we are doing business, or we can make a change in ourselves. We can choose to be more diligent in the execution of our deliverables, be better with our word, or be more sincerely involved in the outcomes that our clients are trying to achieve.

Trust is the integration of all three of these attributes, but many companies focus only on competence. It has been said that we are living in a time when competence often passes for excellence. In our *quest for yes*, let's commit to being excellent. Let's commit to being reliable and sincere, in addition to being competent, and trust that our clients and prospective clients will recognize the power of this model for living – and will help us make our living through it.

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