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Context to the nugget conversation

Stephen speaks about the Trust equation that is often attributed to Charles Green and David Maister. He reconciles his model around Trust with the various variables in the Trust Equation (Credibility, Reliability, Intimacy and Self Orientation). He also goes on to make the distinction between being Trustworthy and Extending Trust in a relationship.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And when I go back to my McKinsey days Stephen, one of the things we were taught was the principles of trust as articulated by David Meister. We were taught to trust equation, trust is directly proportional to credibility, reliability and intimacy and inversely proportional to self-orientation, I am curious given all your work on trust, how do you think about that sort of articulation of trust?

Stephen M. R. Covey (SC): I love the David Maister and Charlie Green model. I think it is beautiful. I have my own one but it would be aligned with theirs I believe and I have spent time with Charlie Green who is the co-author with David Meister on that. And we have done an interview together, we both agree that our models are aligned. They come at it from different angles, use different language but all those components, it is in my core model as well of trust, and so, I like that. And the credibility is absolutely foundational, the reliability, the intimacy but I love the idea of all over against the self-orientation because that is to me is what I call intent and when your intent is one of caring and of mutual benefit versus uncaring and self-serving, you will never build trust in the long run that way if it is self-serving and not seeking the best interest of another as well. Mutual benefit win-win, win-win is the only sustainable approach in an interdependent relationship. Or it will just be command and control using the advantage of hierarchy or who has the power but you would not tap into that, you know, you would not build the trust and you would not build the creativity and the commitment. I love Trusted Advisor thinking and my model is aligned with it. I came at it from a little bit of a different angle focusing on credibility which is part of their model but also behavior, how you behave your way into trust and that includes needing to extend the trust to give it because here is what I find, you could have two trustworthy people working together, both trustworthy and yet, no trust between them. Even though they are both trustworthy, if neither person is willing to extend trust to the other. So if we want to have trust, if the outcome we want is trust, yes, we have to be trustworthy and you might call that credibility and reliability and trustworthy and honorable, where that is part of intimacy and open, trustworthy but we also need to be trusting and you are willing to give that trust in order to have trust. And it is possible that trustworthy people but no trust because neither extends trust to the other, they are not trusting. And I find Deepak, as I have worked with organizations all around the world, especially the better organizations, when the trust is not where they want it to be, the bigger issue is not that they are untrustworthy, the bigger issue is that they are not trusting enough, bigger

gap is they are not trusting enough, extending their trust. There is lots of reasons because we start with a command and control mindset and maybe you do not have a growth mindset but also, maybe we have been burned before in trusting and we are allowing the 5% who we cannot trust into find the 95% who we can and penalizing the many because of the few, that type of thing can easily happen. So I call it smart trust, you tailor it and it is good judgments, it is not one-size-fits-all but I challenge everyone to become more trusting in order to build more trust. Can I give you one quick example on this?

DJ: Please.

SC: Just less than a month ago, I was in Metzingen, Germany with Hugo Boss, a fashion retailer, great organization, great brand and they have real extraordinary ambitions of what they want to be and become, they are already doing phenomenal. I was with Daniel Grieder, their CEO and he came in as the new CEO about almost two years ago and he came in and here is what he said, the first meeting with his senior team. He said, okay team, I am new, I am new to you, you are new to me because he came from the outside. And he came in with a vision and a plan. He said, look, let me give you two choices, we can spend the next year getting to know each other, you deciding whether you can trust me, me deciding whether I can trust you and we will waste a year in doing that. Or I will give you another alternative. We can start right out of the gates by trusting each other and we will move fast on this plan. So let me go first. I want you to know something everyone, I trust you, please trust me back. I think with trust, we can create a whole new culture and I start, I trust you. People there were kind of blown away. I was going to say taken aback but more than that, it was just so refreshing, so bold. And he meant it, he started with trust, he was trusting as well as trustworthy. And people were inspired by it. They responded to it. They reciprocated and returned the trust right back to him. And I was just with them and he says, we are two years ahead of our plan, of our goals and we are achieving these numbers so much faster than we ever thought was possible because we had the speed of trust operating. We started with trust but he was trusting as well as trustworthy. It is very simple, another model of simply bringing about, this is the one I highlight in Trust & Inspire. This is the second stewardship to be trusting. The first stewardship is modeling. And you might say that is modeling the credibility, modeling the character, the competence, modeling the behavior. So you model, you go first as a leader, you model what you would like to see. So you model character, you model competence, you model credibility. modeling goes first, then trusting. So in essence, modeling is trustworthiness, trusting is the extension of trust and then we go to the third stewardship which is inspiring. And we actually have a stewardship of responsibility to inspire those who we lead. That is a paradigm shift for most people, they think you have got to be charismatic to inspire and I am saying no, charisma and inspiration are two different things. Everyone can inspire, it is a learnable skill. I know people who are charismatic but who are not inspiring. I know other people who no one would describe as charismatic but who are extraordinarily inspiring because of who they are and how they lead, how they care, how they connect. So it is different than inspiration. Inspiring others is a learnable skill. Everyone can inspire . It is a stewardship we have as a leader, you model, you trust, you inspire.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I love the distinction Stephen makes between being Trustworthy and Trusting in a relationship. Trustworthiness is often what is an asset that accrues to us based on what we do over a period of time and how we build credibility, reliability and intimacy in relationships. Trusting is a behaviour and a choice in that moment. To Stephen's point, two people could be trust worthy but not extend trust to each other.

Something for us to think about as we engage with the people around us.

End of nugget transcription

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About Deepak Jayaraman

Deepak seeks to unlock the human potential of senior executive's / leadership teams by working with them as an Executive Coach / Sounding Board / Transition Advisor. You can know more about his work [here](#).

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