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Five surprising habits that break trust

New research pinpoints specific trust building (and breaking) behaviors

BURLINGTON, Vermont – High-trust organizations outperformed low-trust organizations in total shareholder return on investment by 286 percent, according to a Towers Watson study. Trust is important for employee engagement, teamwork, managing change, leadership development and corporate culture. But how can companies build trust, or rebuild it after a workplace betrayal?

For nearly 25 years, Dennis Reina, PhD, and Michelle Reina, PhD, of **Reina, A Trust Building® Consultancy** have been the pioneering leaders in measuring, creating, and restoring workplace trust with clients like Walt Disney World, American Express and Harvard University. Through their innovative trust assessments, The Reina Trust Scales, the Reinas provide a clear and immediate picture of trust strengths and vulnerabilities within individual relationships, teams and organizations.

Leveraging data from their assessments and more than two decades of proprietary trust-focused research, the Reinas pinpoint the behaviors people practice that both build trust and break trust. “In our work we’ve found it’s the small, subtle and often unintentional trust breaking behaviors that build up to create a deep negative impact,” says Michelle.

Throughout their research, the Reinas have pinpointed five surprising behaviors that break trust:

1. **Sharing positive news.** When people prematurely share news that isn’t “theirs” to share, they break trust by robbing those tasked with rolling out the information the opportunity to do so thoughtfully.
2. **Saying yes.** Trust is compromised when people fail to deliver because they’ve overcommitted themselves.
3. **Letting sleeping dogs lie.** Sweeping issues under the rug doesn’t make them go away. They’re still there; subtly undermining relationships until a tipping point occurs and trust breaks down.
4. **Viewing mistakes negatively.** When people beat themselves and others up for making mistakes, they not only erode trust, they miss out on the deep learning that can come *out* of those mistakes.
5. **Waiting for “I’m sorry.”** Even if not “at fault” for a breakdown in trust, people bear a responsibility to acknowledge how they contributed to the problem. Restoring trust begins with each one of us.

The Reinas offer a free Trust Quiz to help people discover how their subtle habits impact trust. For more information, please visit www.reinatrustbuilding.com/reina-trust-quiz.

ABOUT REINA, A TRUST BUILDING CONSULTANCY

Reina, A Trust Building® Consultancy works with organizations to leverage trust as a competitive advantage that drives business results. Recognized as international authorities on building workplace trust, founders Michelle Reina, PhD and Dennis Reina, PhD, have collectively devoted nearly 50 years to researching trust, developing rigorous assessments to measure trust, and identifying practical steps to rebuild trust when it’s been compromised. They’ve authored two best-selling books: *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace: Building Effective Relationships in Your Organization, Third edition*, (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2015) and *Rebuilding Trust in the Workplace: Seven Steps to Renew Confidence, Commitment, and Energy* (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2010). They’ve been featured in *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *TIME*, *Forbes*, *Harvard Business Management Update* and *USA Today*.

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