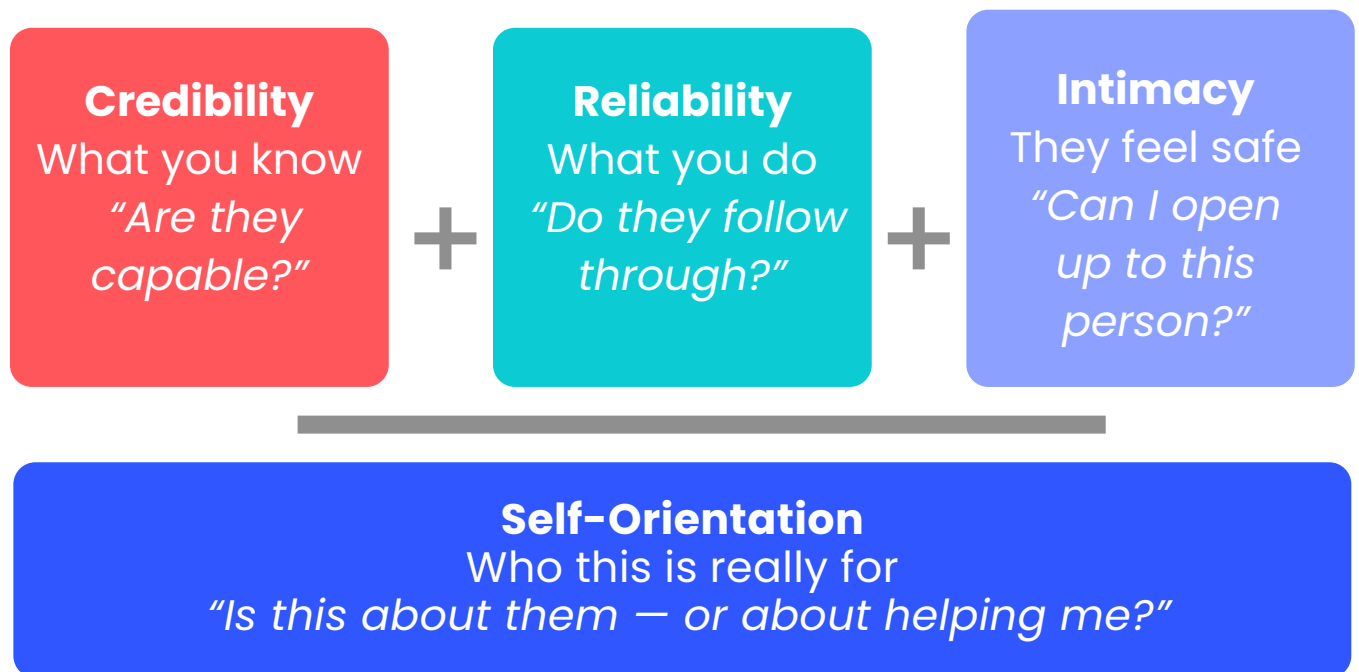


eGuide

# Building Trust

# Trust Equation Explainer

How people decide whether to trust you – and how to strengthen it.



## Increasing Trust

- Be open about what you don't know
- Do what you say, when you say it
- Create emotional safety (be warm, nonjudgmental)
- Focus on them, not yourself

## Self-Check Prompt

On your last client interaction:

- Where was your credibility visible?
- Did you deliver what you promised?
- Did they feel emotionally safe?
- Was your focus on serving or impressing?

# Pull Back Cue Sheet

Create Psychological Safety

Trust is more likely when people feel safe, not sold to.



## Signs They're Pulling Back

- Short, closed responses
- Change in tone or pace
- Vague or guarded answers
- Delay in replying



## When You Sense Resistance

- Check in: "Is this landing okay?"
- Slow down: "We can pause or pick this up later."
- Invite safety: "There's no pressure to make any decision."



## Phrases That Rebuild Trust

"You're the expert on your context — I'm just offering an outside lens."

"We don't need to go further if it's not the right time."

"Would it help if we paused here?"



## Your Pull-Back Commitment

Next time I notice someone withdrawing, I will...

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*(Write your commitment or go-to phrase here)*

# Trusted Behaviours Checklist

## Daily Trust-Building Behaviours

Trust is earned in small moments – here's how to make them count.

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### **Did you take these actions?**

- ☐ I showed up on time and prepared
- ☐ I followed through on something I promised
- ☐ I admitted what I didn't know
- ☐ I asked a question instead of jumping to advice
- ☐ I acknowledged a difficult truth without blame
- ☐ I reflected back what the client said before offering ideas
- ☐ I made others feel heard and understood (not just "dealt with")
- ☐ I paused to make space for their response
- ☐ I invited input or feedback, even if it made me uncomfortable

### **Have you spotted signs of trust in action?**

- ☐ Someone opened up to me unexpectedly this week
- ☐ I was invited into a decision or challenge early (a sign of trust)
- ☐ A colleague or client asked for my perspective, not just my work
- ☐ I noticed reduced resistance or tension in a key relationship

# Rebuilding Trust Prompts

When Trust Has Been Strained...

Even strong relationships hit turbulence. Here's how to repair and rebuild.

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## Signs Trust Might Be Wobbly

- Less responsiveness
- Surface-level updates
- Avoiding difficult topics
- Emotional distance or guardedness

## What You Can Say

Try these prompts:

- "I feel like we might've gotten a bit out of sync — can we reset together?"
- "If anything I've done has created uncertainty, I want to understand it."
- "I care about the relationship — not just the work. What do you need more or less of from me right now?"

## Reconnection Actions

Trust rebuilds through behaviour, not just words. Try:

- Acknowledging your part without defensiveness
- Recommitting to clarity and shared goals
- Following up proactively (without waiting for a prompt)

# Progress Cues

## Progress Builds Confidence

When people see forward movement — even small — trust deepens. Use this toolkit to reinforce momentum.

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### Why Progress Cues Matter

Behavioural science shows that even small signs of progress increase motivation, trust, and willingness to engage. These cues reduce ambiguity and reinforce belief that things are on track.

Create visual  
anchors  
(timeline, step  
counters, plan)

Name micro-wins in  
your language ('we  
made a move', 'we  
closed a loop')

Acknowledge  
momentum, not  
perfection

Frame things as  
'next step', not 'final  
plan'

# Progress Cues

Here are some examples of progress cues you can use in every day interactions

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*"Here's what we've already clarified together..."*

*"Since our last session, we've moved these two things forward..."*

*"This step gives us the traction we need for the next one."*

*"Let's mark this moment — this is real progress."*

# Curiosity Question Prompter

Ask Like a Trusted Partner, Not a Pitch  
Curious, open-ended questions build psychological safety and uncover real needs.

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## **When You Want to Understand More Deeply**

- *"What's the conversation behind the conversation right now?"*
- *"Where are you feeling stuck or uncertain?"*
- *"What would you fix tomorrow if you could wave a magic wand?"*

## **When You Sense Something Unsaid**

- *"What aren't we talking about yet that might matter?"*
- *"Are there any risks or tensions we should name?"*
- *"Is anything here feeling misaligned?"*

## **When You Want to Surface Opportunity**

- *"What's working – and what isn't landing?"*
- *"Where are you being pulled between priorities?"*
- *"If you had more capacity right now, what would you invest it in?"*

## **Delivery Tips**

- *Ask with curiosity, not agenda*
- *Pause and hold space – don't rush the silence*
- *Reflect back what you hear before responding*



# Language Decoder Sheet

Use this sheet to decode tension and reframe insight

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## What they say

## What they really mean

*'We're stuck'*

→ Likely a leadership or alignment issue

*'It's political'*

→ Misalignment, unclear ownership

*'We've hired but it's not landing'*

→ Capability or fit mismatch

*'We've been talking for months'*

→ Decision fatigue or inertia

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## How to Respond With Curiosity

- "What's underneath that?"
- "When you say stuck, is that about clarity, capacity — or something else?"
- "What's made progress difficult so far?"

# Trusted Advisor Listening Guide

Listen Like a Trusted Advisor. Move beyond content — listen for challenge, emotion, ownership, and silence.

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## **What Trusted Advisors Listen For**

- Not just what's said — but what's left unsaid
- Shifts in tone, pace, or focus
- Patterns or themes in repeated concerns
- Clues to how decisions are made (not just who makes them)

## **Listening Prompts to Deepen Insight**

Ask yourself during or after a conversation:

- “What matters most to them right now?”
- “Where do they seem most energised or guarded?”
- “What do they keep returning to?”
- “What haven't they named yet that I'm sensing?”

## **Build a Feedback Loop**

Trusted advisors reflect back:

- “I noticed when you talked about delivery, your tone shifted. What's behind that?”
- “It sounds like this has been a recurring frustration. How are you thinking about it now?”

*Use this before and after key meetings to stay grounded in insight, not assumption.*

# Trust Readiness Checklist

It really is this simple! Ask yourself....

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**Do I lead with  
curiosity?**



**Do I follow  
through on  
the little  
things?**



**Do people  
feel safe  
sharing truth  
with me?**



**Do I feel  
proud of how  
I show up?**

# Trust Impact Reflection

Use this weekly to deepen your awareness of where trust shows up in your work — and how to build more of it.

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## **Where has trust made things easier this week?**

- Think of one interaction, project, or decision that flowed smoothly.
  - What role did trust play in that ease?
  - What did you do (or someone else do) that enabled it?
- 

## **When did you feel most trusted?**

- Who trusted you this week? What did they trust you with?
  - How did that trust show up — in words, behaviours, decisions?
- 

## **What eroded trust — and what could you change?**

- Did anything damage trust (even slightly)?
  - How could you repair or respond with greater intention next time?
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## **When did you feel least trusted — or most guarded?**

- Was there a moment you held back, second-guessed, or felt scrutinised?
- What might have caused that? (Tone? Environment? Past experience?)

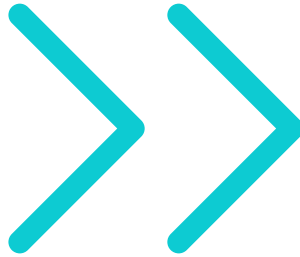
**What helped build trust this week?**

- What behaviour, conversation, or signal helped others open up to you?
  - What did you do differently that earned a deeper connection?
- 

**One action to strengthen trust next week?**

- What's one habit, behaviour, or conversation you'll prioritise?
-

# Let's Talk



If you want to give any feedback or would like any support with building trusted relationships, please get in touch.



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