

## Is your team engaged? The trust factor

Copyright © December 2011, Ian Foster, People Assured  
Contact: [ianfoster@peopleassured.com](mailto:ianfoster@peopleassured.com)

I'd like to discuss what I believe is a key factor in engaging & retaining employees: **trust**.

I'll share a personal story and research to support this:

Early in my career, not long after joining a new firm, the dynamic person who hired me left the organization. It created a void; the remaining managers sought to maintain the status quo and the energy dropped out of the place. I started to question my future.

However, a merger soon followed and we received a new leader who raised the bar. At first, I felt outside of my comfort zone, but my new boss encouraged and supported me in taking risks, and as I delivered I became more confident. My responsibilities were expanded and I ended up representing my department on the divisional board - a role my ex-boss had performed. I recall that not a single team member left the department during a successful 3-year initiative.

My new boss did an exceptional job of *building trust*. How did he do this?

- Being consistent in his behavior
- Creating a challenging yet supportive environment
- Taking our development seriously.

He was up-front about his values and expectations, took the time to get to know us, and provided meaningful opportunities.

This approach and outcome aligns with research by the Great Places to Work Institute that feeds Fortune Magazine's list of the 100 Best Companies To Work For. Employees in these firms "trust the people they work for, and enjoy the people they with" (Levering and Moskowitz, 2011). In addition, these companies consistently outperform major stock indices, such as the S&P 500 and Russell 3000.

In summary, if you want a team that goes the extra mile, shows resilience and loyalty, you need to build trust. In doing so, you will increase performance, build careers and create an enjoyable place to work.

### References

Levering, R. and Moskowitz, M. "Great Places to Work institute. What are the benefits", [www.greatplacetowork.com/our-approach/what-are-the-benefits-great-workplaces](http://www.greatplacetowork.com/our-approach/what-are-the-benefits-great-workplaces), 2011