



Building Trust In The Workplace

A Guide for Internal Communication Professionals

Why Trust Matters

Trust is the foundation of a healthy workplace. It enables collaboration, psychological safety, innovation, and engagement. Internal communication teams are uniquely positioned to build and reinforce trust through what and how they communicate.

Key Strategies to Build Trust

1 Communicate with Radical Transparency

- Always share the *why* behind decisions, not just the outcomes
- Acknowledge uncertainty and change with honesty
- Share successes and failures without spin

2 Humanize Leadership

- Show leaders as real people with stories, values, and vulnerabilities
- Use “Ask Me Anything” platforms, video messages, or informal Q&As
- Let leaders respond to employee feedback directly

3 Close the Loop on Feedback

- Actively seek input, then visibly act on it
- Use “You said / We heard / We did”
- When action isn’t possible, explain why

4 Be Consistent and Credible

- Align words with actions; follow through is everything
- Ensure leadership behavior reflects company values
- Avoid performative comms; trust is earned, not posted

5 Foster Two-Way Communication

- Move beyond broadcast and create dialogue
- Use platforms for open feedback and conversation
- Train and empower people managers as trusted messengers

6 Embed Trust into Culture

- Make trust-building part of your onboarding, values, and rituals
- Reinforce psychological safety: encourage safe dissent and failure
- Recognize and reward integrity, transparency, and courage

Actions IC Teams Can Take Now

- ✓ Audit your comms channels – are they transparent, two-way, and inclusive?
- ✓ Use plain language – ditch jargon, talk like a human.
- ✓ Map trust moments – identify where trust is gained or lost and improve them.
- ✓ Train managers – build confidence in clear, empathetic communication.
- ✓ Tell trust stories – showcase moments where honesty or courage made an impact.

Pro Tip

Employees don't expect perfection. They expect honesty, clarity, and consistency.