

# Building Trust: Creating Jobs People Want to Keep

When you trust your employees and they trust you, your business will thrive. This guide will offer simple ways to build trust with your employees.

Building trust with employees means that through your actions you give them the confidence to rely on you and believe in your intentions and abilities as a business owner. When employees trust you, they feel safe, valued and will work hard to provide customers the best service possible. They will have good attendance, ask questions when they need help and share good ideas to improve the business. This means you can spend more time growing your business.



Here are 7 Ways to Build Trust with your Employees:

## 1. Get to Know Your Employees

Understanding your employees as individuals helps you work better together. Every person has different ways of working and communicating. When you take time to learn about each person, you can create a workplace where everyone can do their best work. Take into consideration past work experiences, potential generational gaps and cultural diversity.

Take time to learn:

- How they like to communicate
- What makes them comfortable or uncomfortable at work
- What they need to do their job well
- How they like to receive feedback
- What makes them feel appreciated

## 2. Ask What They Think

Your employees see things from a different angle than you do. They work directly with customers and use your business systems every day. Their ideas and suggestions can help your business operate better and keep customers happy.

Here are some ways to encourage them to share ideas:

- Letting them know they can talk to you anytime
- Asking what they think during meetings or one-on-one talks
- Having meetings to come up with new ideas
- Using suggestion boxes where they don't have to sign their name
- Having small group discussions

## 3. Listen Carefully

Getting ideas is only helpful if you really hear and understand them. Good listening builds trust because it shows you value what your employees have to say. When employees feel heard, they're more likely to keep sharing ideas that can improve the workplace and your business.

When employees share ideas, it is important that you:

- Give them your full attention
- Make eye contact and/or nod
- Ask questions or repeat what you heard to make sure you understand
- Write down their ideas

## 4. Take Action

Following through on what employees share is crucial for maintaining trust. Even if you can't use every idea, showing that you considered it and explaining your thinking helps employees feel respected and valued.

After employees share ideas:

- Tell them right away what you plan to do
- Explain if you can't use their idea right now
- Thank them for sharing
- Keep them updated on any changes you're making
- Let them know you want them to keep sharing ideas

## 5. Show Your Appreciation

When employees know their work matters and you notice their efforts, they're more motivated to do their best. Regular appreciation, even in small ways, helps create a positive workplace where people want to stay.

You can:

- Provide specific meaningful feedback
- Thank them in front of others
- Get them their favorite drink or snack
- Have a workplace celebration
- Give them a discount on your products
- Give them an extra break or afternoon off

Remember what you learned about each employee to choose the best way to say "thank you." Building trust takes time, but using these tips will help create a workplace where your employees feel safe, valued and where they will want to stay.

## 6. Keep Employees Informed

Employees who know what's happening in the business feel more connected and invested in its success. When you share information regularly, it shows you trust them as partners in the business, not just workers. This helps them make better decisions in their daily work.

Tell them about:

- How sales are going
- What customers are saying
- Your plans for the business
- Why you make certain decisions
- What didn't work out and what you learned

When possible, ask them to help make decisions. The more relevant *business information* you share with them, the more they will trust you.

## 7. Be a Good Example

When you model the behavior you want to see, your employees will notice and feel more confident following your lead. You can build trust over time as you demonstrate what values are important to your business.

You can do things like:

- Following through on the commitments/promises you made
- Creating and respecting boundaries around work hours and time off
- Staying positive when discussing challenges
- Taking responsibility for mistakes
- Working as a team to solve problems
- Asking them what resources you can offer to help them do their job
- Prioritizing your health and well-being by modeling a work-life balance

A foundation of trust shows you care about your workers and not just their outputs, benefitting both employees and your business over the long-term.

