BUILDING TRUST

Trust is essential in team productivity, to accomplish meaningful objectives together, and to create a positive sense of purpose and belonging. Below are five action steps we can all take to create an environment where people feel safe with each other, comfortable sharing information/ideas/vulnerabilities, and feel part of a productive team.

1. **LEAD BY EXAMPLE:** Show that YOU trust others by treating others with respect and making every effort to be on time for meetings/events and to follow through with promises/commitments made. Show others what trust looks like.

2. **COMMUNICATE OPENLY:** Promote and practice open communication to get everyone on your team talking with one another in a meaningful and honest way. Remind everyone that other people's approaches and insights can be different but just as valid as their own. Meet regularly to discuss progress and issues so participants get the opportunity to know each other better and to help each other solve problems. "Walk the Talk" – Share relevant information/knowledge and demonstrate that open communication is important to you. Show that you have no hidden agenda to make others feel more comfortable to trust you and each other.

3. **GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER:** Encourage your team to see colleagues as people. Share personal stories and create opportunities to bond. Hold informal group discussions by having lunch together, socializing after work, or hosting an online "talk story" session. Be the first to share your thoughts, hobbies, values and encourage others to share what is important to them.

4. **DON'T PLACE BLAME:** Everyone makes mistakes and disappointments happen as part of life. Take responsibility and admit to your mistakes. Encourage everyone to think about group mistakes in a productive way. Discuss ways to fix what happened, to avoid the mistake from happening again, and ways to move forward together.

5. **BE INCLUSIVE, DISCOURAGE CLIQUES:** Have an open discussion about cliques and their effect on people, how they can make others feel and how they can undermine trust between people. Practice and promote inclusivity by understanding the value in each team member. Help when someone needs assistance. Be there for each other.

Trust is something that is built and does not happen overnight. Be genuine in your actions and intentions and trust will gradually take root and expand.