

Career Watch



Q&A

Dennis and Michelle Reina

The co-authors of **Rebuilding Trust in the Workplace** discuss the effects of the recession on the trust between employers and workers.

How did the recession affect the U.S. workplace? The Great Recession rocked workplaces everywhere, and the very underpinnings of trust were upended.

According to a recent workplace survey by consulting firm Deloitte LLP, one-third of working Americans say they plan to look for a new job when the economy gets better, and, of this group, 48% cite a loss of trust in their employer as the reason. The hidden "aha"? Even now, when many employees are choosing to stay put, they have "quit." In the absence of trust, they have checked out.

Also, major betrayals in the workplace – from companies mismanaging layoffs to CEOs committing crimes – can, and do, make headlines. They are not the only source of trouble, though. Minor betrayals, such as gossiping, finger-pointing or taking credit for others' work, are more pervasive and erode trust over time. The accumulation of little betrayals becomes a big problem. In fact, according to our research, 90% of employees report that they feel the effects of eroded trust daily.

Why should employers be concerned about the level of trust among employees? When trust in a workplace remains broken, no one wins. Not individuals. Not teams. Not organizations. What's more, the consequences come with a high price. On the "hard" side of businesses, we see major hits to productivity, performance and even profits. On the softer side, we see people lose confidence, commitment and energy. They disengage in a variety of ways for a variety of reasons – most often, a certain level of anger or fear. In interviews with individuals and teams, we hear comments like "I'm just going through the motions" or "We've lost all passion and creativity."

Once trust has been breached, how can it be restored? Trust is fragile. In the workplace, as in life, it will be built and it will be broken – a natural part of human interaction. The key, then, to sustaining trust is to know how to rebuild it again and again.

Whether you have been betrayed, have betrayed someone else or have a role, such as manager or team leader, where you want or need to help others, we recommend a seven-step process, drawn from two decades of research, for healing and rebuilding trust. This seven-step process isn't a silver bullet. It does, however, provide a framework for taking concrete, constructive and compassionate action:

- **Observe and acknowledge what happened.** Broken trust is often experienced as a loss – the loss of what was or what could have been. Acknowledge that loss and recognize its impact.
- **Allow feelings to surface.** Give yourself permission to feel your emotions, whatever they may be, and find proper ways to express them.
- **Get and give support.** Ask for help in recognizing where you're stuck and how you can shift from blaming to problem-solving.
- **Reframe the experience.** Put the event into a larger context. Look at the big picture, plus consider the personal choices and opportunities in front of you.
- **Take responsibility.** Own up to what is yours to own, acknowledge the lessons learned, and ask how you can help improve the current situation.
- **Forgive yourself and others.** Forgiving doesn't mean excusing; it means acknowledging how broken trust has affected you, as well as others, and then releasing yourself from energy-depleting emotions.
- **Let go and move on.** There is a difference between remembering and "hanging on." You may not forget a betrayal, but you can make a conscious choice to look forward rather than stay stuck in the past.

– JAMIE ECKLE



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Making Your Résumé Shine

CSO magazine's Joan Goodchild asked a security professional and two security recruiters what security pros should include on their résumés to make them stand out enough to rise to the top of the pile. With just a little tweaking, their advice would seem to be applicable to IT professionals of all stripes.

- 1 Be a business person first, a security pro second.
- 2 Distinguish yourself and your "brand."
- 3 Emphasize accomplishments up high, not education and training.
- 4 Don't embellish.
- 5 Consider getting a mentor.