

# LEADER'S GUIDE

NATIONAL BESTSELLER

"Incredibly vital message for today!"—*Zig Ziglar, author | motivational teacher*

# THE TRUST EDGE

How Top Leaders Gain *Faster* Results,  
*Deeper* Relationships, and a  
*Stronger* Bottom Line

DAVID HORSAGER

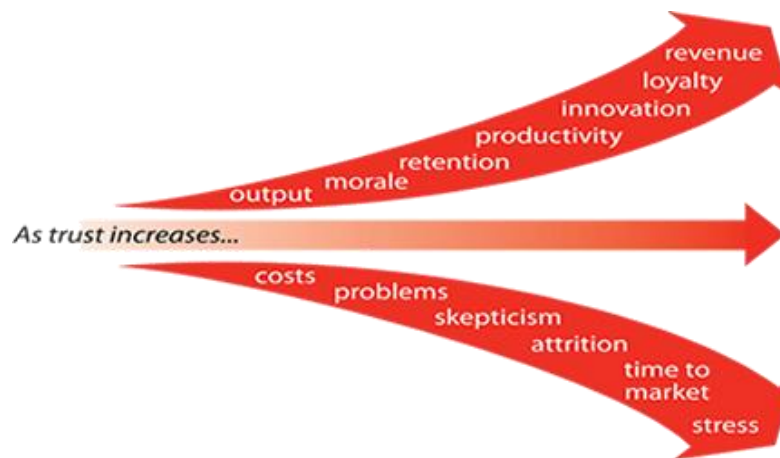
## *The Trust Edge Leader's Guide* is a teaching

instrument that helps leaders and organizations implement the principles of David Horsager's book. Use the highlights and questions to facilitate discussion that leads to change in your organization.

In *The Trust Edge*, trust is revealed to be the single uniqueness of the greatest leaders and organizations of all time. Trust is not a soft skill. It must be intentionally built and it has a bottom-line impact. The trusted leader is followed, the trusted salesperson is bought from and for the trusted brand, people will pay more, come back and tell others.

Every week try to have a bias toward action. Consider "What one specific thing will you do this week to build greater trust?"

This advantage leads to faster results, deeper relationships, more committed teams, and a stronger bottom-line. As leaders and organizations implement ideas from the book club, they gain the greatest advantage of all time, "*The Trust Edge*."



# PART I: The Case for Trust

## CHAPTER 1: The Trust Edge

### *Highlights*

- In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, trust has become the world's most precious resource.
- Costs are high when trust is low.
- Trust is a confident belief in a person product or organization.
- While it may appear to be static, trust is more like a forest—a long time growing, but easily burned down with a touch of carelessness.
- Being talented is valuable, but being trusted is the fundamental key to anyone's genuine success.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. How does trust impact you or your role?

---

---

2. How would you define *The Trust Edge*?

---

---

3. What are the dimensions of trust?

---

---

4. How do the dimensions influence one another?

---

---

5. Whom do you trust? Why?

---

---

# CHAPTER 2: Impact of Trust

## *Highlights*

- Trust, not money, is the currency of business and life.
- For a trusted brand, people will pay more, come back, and tell others.
- A lack of trust is your biggest expense.
- Trust is a necessity for economic activity.
- The biggest deceiver is the one who appears trustworthy when in fact he is not.
- Trust is not a “soft” skill.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. How much does lack of trust cost your organization? Consider relationships, loyalty, retention, and influence.

---

---

2. What are the benefits of high trust?

---

---

3. How does trust affect the economy?

---

---

4. What does it take to build trust?

---

---

5. What are the traits of the most trusted people in your organization? In your personal life?

---

---

6. How can you inspire trust in your organization?

---

---

# CHAPTER 3: Barriers to Overcome

## *Highlights*

- For any great mission it is worth knowing what you are up against.
- In most sectors, trust has decreased significantly in recent years.
- The barriers to overcome include:
  1. Conflicts of interest
  2. Rising litigation
  3. Lower customer loyalty
  4. Media coverage of scandals
  5. Speedy social networks
  6. Technology
  7. Fear
  8. Negative experiences
  9. Individualism
  10. Diverse thinking
  11. Instant gratification
  12. Focus on the negative

## **Discussion Questions**

1. What destroys trust?

---

---

---

2. What barriers do you come up against most often?

---

---

---

3. What barriers are most important for you to overcome?

---

---

---

4. How might you start to overcome these barriers?

---

---

---

# PART II: The Eight Pillars of Trust

## CHAPTER 4: Pillar One | Clarity

### *Highlights*

- Clarity unifies, motivates, increases morale, and inspires trust. Clear communication leads to trusted colleagues and happy employees.
- People trust the clear and distrust the vague.
- Clarity can reduce conflict within your staff and with customers.
- Those who are trusted are candid and are not afraid to tell the truth.
- Leaders need to share the vision at least every thirty days.
- Clarity gives focus on daily tasks.
- Learn to let go.
- Ask managers for input and clear expectations frequently.
- Specificity is a motivator. People can't do a great job if they don't understand expectations. Communication is "shared meaning." The key to conflict is not avoiding it altogether but dealing with it effectively.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Do you know your company's mission or vision? Is there clarity of purpose?

---

2. Do you give clear and specific expectations for projects and deadlines?

---

3. How could you be clearer in your communication with others?

---

4. Do you avoid conflict and confrontation? If so, how do you get issues resolved?

---

5. Are you clear about your own daily tasks?

---

# CHAPTER 5: Pillar Two | Compassion

## *Highlights*

- Caring leads to trust.
- The four LAWS of compassion: listen, appreciate, wake up, serve others.
- Sincerity is the key component of appreciation.
- Consider writing sincere and heartfelt notes of appreciation.
- Everybody needs appreciation and recognition.
- Put people before things to improve relationships.
- Trusted relationships trump clever closing techniques every time.
- Care and compassion have an impact on the bottom line.
- Think beyond yourself.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. What could make you a better listener?

---

2. How could you be more engaged with people in your life?

---

3. If you reap what you sow, what are you sowing?

---

4. What do you do to show appreciation to those who work for or with you?

---

5. Make a list of five people to whom you would like to write a note of appreciation.

---

6. The Saratoga Institute survey found that managers believe 89 percent of employees leave for better pay, but 88 percent say they leave for other reasons. Why do you think most people leave their jobs?

---

7. What kind of sacrifice could you make to show compassion to others?

---

# CHAPTER 6: Pillar Three | Character

## Highlights

- Habits are made by what you do in private.
- Integrity builds trust in you—the first step in trusting anyone.
- Building integrity takes work, but gives the biggest reward.
- Ask yourself: “Is this the right thing?”
- To beat stress, do what needs to be done, when it needs to be done, whether you feel like it or not.
- Demonstrate character through **humility, principles, intention, self-discipline, and accountability.**

## Discussion Questions

1. Who is someone you admire for high character?

---

2. What makes you think of him or her that way?

---

3. *Morality* and *integrity* combine to create character. Why do you think they are both necessary?

---

4. If you are the manager, how do you handle an employee who does not show good character?

---

5. Do you think people in general are more tolerant of low character in certain areas than they used to be? If so, have there been any consequences?

---

6. What does integrity mean to you?

---

7. How do you live it out every day?

---

8. Do you remember your top five personal values?

---



# CHAPTER 7: Pillar Four | Competency

## *Highlights*

- Create a regular plan for staying competent and capable.
- Humility is the first step in learning.
- Stretch your mind with new ideas, fresh thoughts, and different viewpoints.
- Find a circle of professionals with whom you can grow and sharpen one another.
- Accept accountability in your life.
- Find a mentor who is successful or wise in the same way you'd like to be.
- Respect your mentor's time and take his or her insights seriously.
- Be intentional about your downtime. Put a priority on creating time to learn and reflect.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Who would you like to be mentored by?

---

2. Who could you mentor?

---

3. Does a mastermind group have a place in your life? If you started one, who might you ask to be in it?

---

4. Who keeps you accountable?

---

5. How do you keep learning?

---

6. Do you, as a leader, enable learning?

---

7. What can you do to maintain or increase your competency?

---

8. Would it be valuable for your work group to get away for the sake of rejuvenation, freshness, morale, and innovation?

---

# CHAPTER 8: Pillar Five | Commitment

## *Highlights*

- Without commitment from the leader, the players will not win.
- The people who stick with you when things are tough are the ones you can really trust.
- History's leaders who have made the biggest impact were willing to sacrifice for the greater good.
- Passion is the essential ingredient for commitment.
- Those committed to worthy causes will go out of their way to help others and make great sacrifices.
- A committed organization has fans.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. How can managers show both trust and loyalty to younger employees?

---

2. Are you committed to others? Who?

---

3. For whom or what will you sacrifice?

---

4. Who sacrifices in your company?

---

5. Do you have a supervisor who is committed to your success and growth? Are you?

---

6. Does your company have "fans" who rave about it to others? Who are they?

---

7. How can you build your organization's fan base?

---

8. Are you willing to accept full responsibility and spread praise?

---

# CHAPTER 9: Pillar Six | Connection

## *Highlights*

- Trust is all about relationships.
- Engage your staff.
- Ask great questions. Listen.
- Care beyond yourself.
- Collaborate.
- Be genuine.
- Be grateful—gratitude is the common trait of the most magnetic people on earth.
- Avoid complaining; it repels.
- Insincere apologies are trust killers.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. How can you more intentionally connect and collaborate with others?

---

2. If you met prospective clients, what would you ask them first?

---

3. What are three to five things you are happy to have in your life? What are you grateful for?

---

4. What is one magnetic trait that you would like to increase?

---

5. What is one repelling trait would you like to stop?

---

6. Would you consider the challenge to stop complaining for ninety days?

---

7. Do you make insincere apologies?

---

# CHAPTER 10: Pillar Seven | Contribution

## *Highlights*

- You must deliver results to be trusted.
- The more you give, the more you receive.
- Give attention, resources, time, opportunity, and help.
- Reward results.
- Make sure your Difference-Making Actions (DMAs) are focused, clear, quantifiable, realistic, and consistent with your main vision.
- Delayed decision making increases confusion, clutter, and stress.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Do you deliver on promises?

---

---

2. Do you accomplish results without damaging the other pillars of trust, such as compassion?

---

---

3. What is a possible DMA for tomorrow?

---

---

4. When you think of IBM, what image do you have? Why?

---

---

5. How could you be a more significant contributor?

---

---

6. What one idea might you implement from the Daily Contributor Ideas?

---

---

# CHAPTER 11: Pillar Eight | Consistency

## *Highlights*

- Consistency leads to trust.
- Deliver the same thing every time, and you will become trusted.
- The track record of trust is built over time.
- There is no other way to lasting success.
- Don't agree to anything you can't deliver.
- You increase or decrease trust with every interaction.
- Trust is earned by consistent action, not just words.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Are you consistent in words and actions?

---

---

2. How could you be more consistent in your communications?

---

---

3. How could your organization be more consistent?

---

---

4. What one thing, if you did it consistently over the next six months, would change your life?

---

---

5. Can you think of an inconsistent retail experience and how it made you feel? Will you go back to that retail store?

---

---

# PART III: Transforming Trust

## CHAPTER 12: Extending Trust

### *Highlights*

- Believing in people and trusting them will usually bring out their best.
- Trust is a great motivator.
- A culture of trust will improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- Trust inspires more trust.
- Consider the real risk of trusting others. The possible good often outweighs the possible harm in business.
- Be prepared to accept the magnitude of the risk.
- Don't let fear rule your life.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. If you have been the victim of a scam or a dishonest person, how did you learn to trust others again?

---

---

---

2. Can you think of a time when you have been motivated because someone extended trust to you?

---

---

---

3. Have you inspired others by extending trust to them?

---

---

---

4. How can you avoid trusting those not worthy of trust?

---

---

---

# CHAPTER 13: Rebuilding Trust

## *Highlights*

- When we have wronged someone or broken his or her trust, it is our responsibility to make it right.
- Trying to rebuild trust too quickly is likely to make things worse, rather than better.
- The seeds of trust are the small promises you make and keep.
- Stay away from whatever caused you to lose trust initially.
- A step toward forgiveness is learning to let go of your own grudges.
- At some point after an unaccepted apology, you just have to move on.
- When people stop trusting a company, they project that mistrust onto everything associated with it: the product, the people, the services, and more.
- Sometimes mistrust can be handled only by deep change such as changing the name, logo, or leadership.
- Relationship trust is the strongest kind of trust. Brand trust is brittle.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Can you try to rebuild trust by making small promises—and keeping them?

---

2. Do you agree that relationship trust is the strongest form of trust?

---

3. Have you ever made an apology that was not accepted? Was your apology sincere?

---

4. Do you find it difficult to forgive people and move on?

---

5. Does your company need to do some big things to restore trust? If so, what?

---

6. Why do some companies bounce back quickly when negative publicity strikes, while others don't?

---

7. What steps would you take to institute lasting positive change?

---

# PART IV: Deep Trust in a Flat World

## CHAPTER 14: Globalization and Trust

### *Highlights*

- Get to know people individually rather than stereotyping them.
- When there are cultural differences, be transparent. Let people get to know the real you.
- People are more likely to trust others who are like them, and less likely to trust those who are different. Do the extra work to increase trust with those who are different from you.
- As a team leader, find common ground.
- Ignoring another culture's feelings or customs leads to skepticism, not trust.
- Show people they can trust you, and most often they will.
- Making products overseas can be good business, but not if it costs you your reputation at home.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Are you open to learning the customs of your vendor or customer overseas?

---

---

2. If you had to travel overseas to a client or vendor, what kinds of things would you do or learn about in preparation for the trip?

---

---

3. What does it look like to be humble across cultures?

---

---

4. What are the benefits and challenges of globalization?

---

---

5. How can your organization do more to earn trust internationally?

---

---



# CHAPTER 15: Trust in the Online Age

## *Highlights*

- The public's trust can change quickly.
- Customers trust one another more than they trust propaganda.
- In an online age, reputation moves at the speed of light.
- Be smart with your email use.
- Create and implement strategies for a trusted online presence.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Why does doing business online require more trust?

---

---

---

2. What precautions should you take in giving out information?

---

---

---

3. How have eBay, Elance, and Amazon kept such a strong reputation for confidentiality and responsible handling of both customers and providers?

---

---

---

4. What could your organization do to be more trusted online?

---

---

---

# PART V: Courageous Trust

## CHAPTER 16: A Sharp and Lasting Edge

### *Highlights*

- Trust is always a risk. Risk can be scary. Risk takes courage. It might seem like a halt in progress to stop and make a genuine connection. It takes discipline to continually build competency.
- You might get hurt when you give compassion to an unresponsive coworker. It takes guts to risk your job or a relationship by standing up for what you think is right. Lay the groundwork of trust and enable yourself to take risks.
- Not every risk is going to mean a gold rush. But focus your attention on the pillars of trust and put yourself in the market for a positive return on your risk.
- Individuals are the conduit for trust. It's not up to your organization or the responsibility of anyone else. Your courage to take action and become trustworthy will be the invitation for others to follow.
- Keep working to build the pillars of trust. Start by laying the first brick. Persevere through the barriers. Be a clear, compassionate, high-character, competent, committed, connecting, contributing, and consistent leader. When you are, you will enjoy the foundation of all genuine and lasting success, the trust edge.

## 5 Ways to Sharpen Your Trust Edge

1. **Book Dave** to energize and inspire your group. See him speak live at [www.DaveHorsager.com](http://www.DaveHorsager.com) or [www.TheTrustEdge.com](http://www.TheTrustEdge.com).
2. **Get a baseline on your trust** with our *Trust Temp 360° Assessment*, as well as a practical process to increase it.
3. **Utilize our Trust Edge Coaching Program** to help your leaders build the Eight pillars of trust and increase morale, retention, innovation, and results.
4. **Build a culture of trust** through *The Trust Edge Training* and our *Trusted Action Wheel* process that will help you find and solve the *real* problems affecting your organization.
5. **Read the book in a management group** or book club using the chapter questions and highlights to apply the principles of *The Trust Edge*. For questions about any of these strategies or investments:

**Contact Us:** 651-340-6555 | [INFO@DAVIDHORSAGER.COM](mailto:INFO@DAVIDHORSAGER.COM)