



Stanford eCorner

Aspects of Building Trust

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Entrepreneur and author Guy Kawasaki steps through companies that built their success on trust, and offers insights on the role of trust in relationships and individual attitudes. Kawasaki urges individuals to be "bakers," meaning trustworthy individuals seeking to create larger pies to share in the world. He also describes the value in building trust by "defaulting to yes."



Transcript

Trustworthiness occurs when you first of all trust others. This is not a chicken-or-egg problem. The sequence of events is that you trust people and they will trust you. The onus is upon you to trust first. Three great examples. Amazon.com trusts you. You can buy a Kindle book and return it five days later. Most of you could read the book in five days. They're trusting you. Zappos, if Tony Hsieh had told me, "Guy, you know, our business model is we're going to enable women to buy shoes without trying it on online," I would have told him, "He is crazy." But he has pulled it off.

And the reason he has pulled it off is that people, women, trust him. They trust Zappos primarily because they will pay shipping expenses both ways, no questions asked. That's the trustworthy quality of Zappos. And the old school analog brick-and-mortar example of trustworthiness is Nordstrom. All examples where the organization trusted people and then people trusted them. That's the order. The second thing is there are two kinds of people in the world. The world can roughly be divided into two kinds of people. Stanford grads and non-Stanford grads. People who didn't go to SU and people who did.

So, there are bakers and eaters. When an eater sees a pie, an eater is thinking, "Zero-sum game. I need to get as much of the pie as possible. My gain of the pie is your loss of the pie. I need to get as much of the pie as possible." A baker, by contrast, sees the world as an opportunity to make more pies and bigger pies. Trustworthy people are bakers, not eaters. They see the world as a non-zero-sum game. The third quality of trustworthiness is you need to default to yes. Defaulting to yes means that when you meet people, you are always thinking, "How can I help that person?" which is very different than when you meet people, you're always thinking, "How can that person help me?" Default to yes. If you want to be a great networker and a great schmoozer, always be thinking when you're meeting people, "How can I help the person?" Now, you may wonder, "This could get me into a lot of trouble, cause me a lot of aggravation, because if I'm always defaulting to yes, people would be unreasonable." It has been my experience of about 30 years that it very seldom happens.

Most people are completely reasonable about what they ask. And for the rare occurrence where they are not reasonable, that's probably someone you should not bother trying to enchant.