

# HR INSIGHTS

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## Building Trust and Confidence in Senior Leadership

Attracting and retaining top talent continues to be a struggle for many employers. One area that many employers fail to hit the mark on is instilling a sense of trust and confidence in senior leadership amongst its employees.

According to a study from Willis Towers Watson, trust and confidence in senior leadership is one of the top drivers of employee retention. However, only 50 percent of surveyed employees believe the information they receive from senior leadership, and only 44 percent believe senior leadership is sincerely interested in their well-being.

### Why is trust and confidence important?

Instilling a sense of trust and confidence in senior leadership is key to protecting your organization's reputation and bottom line. Employees that do not trust or respect senior leadership are less likely to be engaged in their work and are less productive on the job as a result. Disengaged employees are also more likely to leave your organization for a new job, leading to higher turnover-related costs.

### How to Improve Trust and Confidence

Good leaders know that respect and trust does not come automatically with a new job title. Instead, it is something that needs to be earned over time. Use the following tips to build trust and confidence in senior leadership at your company:

- **Demonstrate competence**—Leaders must be competent at their jobs and have the skills and experience to excel. Nothing builds distrust quicker than if employees believe someone is unqualified for a leadership role.
- **Show passion**—Leaders should be passionate about the work that they do, and that passion needs to be sincere. Your job is not to be a cheerleader or to provide faux compliments or enthusiasm. Instead it is to inspire others by leading.
- **Be a great listener**—Employees want to feel like their voices are being heard, rather than just being talked at. Promote open communication so employees feel comfortable talking to you about whatever issues may arise.

*Only 48 percent of employees say they trust and have confidence in the jobs being completed by senior leadership, according to a recent study from Willis Towers Watson.*

- **Say thank you**—There's nothing worse than a boss who takes credit for others' hard work. Thank your employees for the work that they do each and every day, and make sure your gratitude is genuine.
- **Challenge your employees**—Employees want to continually grow and learn new skills. Make sure employees have room to flourish and encourage them to take on new opportunities within your organization. Employees will appreciate working for someone who cares about their professional growth.
- **Do not micromanage**—Trust is a two-way street. If you believed in your employees enough to hire them, trust them to do their jobs and avoid micromanaging them.
- **Be transparent**—Keep your employees apprised of company goals and performance expectations. Ambiguity builds distrust, so be as transparent and honest as possible.
- **Communicate regularly**—Take the time to connect with your employees. While email can be great a way to communicate, don't overlook the power of face-to-face interactions. Hold town halls, department meetings or one-on-one meetings to encourage open communication.
- **Lead by example**—Model the behavior you wish to see in your employees. If teamwork is highly valued, encourage collaboration across departments and attend any team-building events.
- **Be consistent**—Consistency builds trust. Be true to your word and accountable for your actions. Perform at a consistently high level and uphold all your commitments.

By following the tips above, you can build employee trust and confidence in senior leadership at your organization. For more information about recruitment and retention strategies, contact Touchstone Consulting Group today.