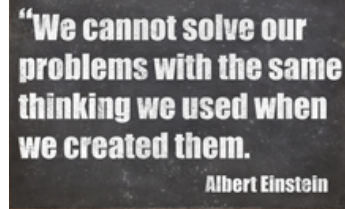


Design Node Document

B02 Building Trust



B02.02 The Elements of Trust

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Today I came across something especially compelling in a very compelling book, Jason Jennings' *The Reinventors: How Extraordinary Companies Pursue Radical Continuous Change*. It was in a chapter on leadership (p 118 if you want to find it).

What Jennings discovered, and discusses, is how recent research has determined that there are four "guiding principles for building the early foundations of trust quickly":

- We trust those who speak our language
- We trust those who ask good questions
- We trust those who share our values
- We trust those who listen

It turns out that attracting both top clients, and top staff to serve those clients, depends almost completely on the level of trust established, with both groups.

One caveat with the above quartet: the "language" in point 1 doesn't mean English as opposed to Swahili or Urdu. It means language in the sense of understanding each other – knowing the idioms and the acronyms; the terminology of the industry.

Read those four dictums again, thinking in terms of how you approach both your clients and your team. **Is it about you, or about them?** If you think it is about them, how do you know?

Let me rephrase the questions:

1. Do you ask more questions than give instructions?
2. Are your questions 100% free of any sense of blame for things that didn't go well?
3. Do you believe that your clients understand your values, business and personal?
4. Do you believe that your staff understand your values, business and personal?
5. Do you listen to your clients more than you talk to them?
6. Do you listen to your staff more than you talk to them?
7. In the above 6 questions, did you answer YES 6/6?
8. If not, why not?

Maybe it goes without saying, but just in case:

- Clients give work to people they trust.
- Staff do amazing work for people they trust.

Read Jennings' book. You won't be able to put it down.