

## Building an Atmosphere of Trust

The church is a community of mutual love and unity. Without mutual trust, there can be no true friendship, let alone love and unity. The Bible teaches us to strive to preserve the unity of the Holy Spirit, so church leaders must be careful to create an atmosphere of trust in the community. As leaders, our mindset and demeanor are building the atmosphere of the group. But are we building trust or distrust? The two lists below, while inspiring team-building wisdom from the business world, can also help us examine ourselves.

### A. Undermining the atmosphere of trust

1. Regard feelings and doubts as signs of weakness.
2. Deliver smart sarcasms.
3. Do not tell anyone the reason behind your requests or instructions. (There's no reason at all; you are dead if you do not do it).
4. When something goes wrong, lose your temper and find the culprit.
5. Let others dare not come to you for help, and remind them to be "spontaneous" and "self-reliant".
6. Never let people know what you're thinking, so they can be kept on toes.
7. Gossip about people behind their backs.
8. Over-react to casual comments from members.
9. Let them know that it is okay to "exaggerate" if it makes their church look better.
10. Design hatred or other tactics to make other churches look bad .

### B. Building an atmosphere of trust

Effective leaders have the following conducts:

1. Open yourself up first.
2. Encourage members to express feelings, confusions, and concerns. Include members' concerns in the agenda of discussion. Support and protect other people's feelings.
3. Be as open as possible for members to understand the rationale behind the directive.
4. If something goes wrong, find out "what happened?" rather than "who did it?" Get involved enough to get the right assessment from the members involved.
5. Encourage others to see you as a resource to help get the job done, but at the same time encourage them to be independent and not overly dependent on your leadership.
6. Naturally express your own doubts, concerns, and feelings.
7. Talk candidly about yourself, not about others, knowing that what you say can always be made "public".
8. Bear most of the criticisms of the organization from others.
9. Honesty is the uncompromising standard.
10. When other people ask for your opinions, let people know exactly what you want.