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**TRUST WORKS!**

“Not only is *Trust Works!* fun to read, but it also provides invaluable tools for building greater trust—or repairing trust that’s been broken. Required reading for individuals and organizations alike.”

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“*Trust Works!* addresses what is often a fuzzy concept—trust—in a clear and logical manner. Timely and engaging, this book is sorely needed.”

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“I enjoyed every thought expressed in *Trust Works!* Ken, Cindy, and Martha have hit a home run in the game of life with this magnificent offering.”

—Colleen Barrett, coauthor of *Lead with LUV* and president emeritus of Southwest Airlines

“Building high-trust relationships is the foundation of effective leadership. With typical Blanchard brilliance, *Trust Works!* demystifies the complex concept of trust and identifies the core behaviors necessary to build and restore it.”

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“Ken and his coauthors lead us on a skillful journey of understanding how, whom, and why we learn to trust. *Trust Works!* is an essential teaching for anyone seeking to deepen their best work in the good soil of sustainable, trustworthy, road-tested wisdom.”

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**Trust Works!**

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# **Trust Works!**

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**Four Keys to Building  
Lasting Relationships**

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**Ken Blanchard  
Cynthia Olmstead  
Martha Lawrence**

*wm*

WILLIAM MORROW

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# *Contents*

Introduction by Cynthia Olmstead	ix
Some Perspective Before You Read This Story by Ken Blanchard	xiii

## *Part I—A Tale of Trust*

Broken Trust	3
A Matter of Perception	8
Ready and Able	13
Believe It or Not	19
The Connection	26
It All Depends	33
A Terrible Blow	39
A Test of Trust	42
Moving On	45
How Trustworthy Do You Think You Are? Scoring Your Self-Assessment	47

## *Part II—Trust-Building Resources: Applying the ABCD Trust Model™ to Real Life*

Trust Busters and Trust Boosters: Understanding How Behaviors Affect Trust	55
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Checking Your Self-Perception:	
Invite Others to Assess You	86
Learning to Diagnose Trust Issues:	
How to Recognize Trust Busters	89
Learning to Have Trust Conversations:	
The Importance of Perception	92
Applying the ABCD Trust Model™ to Your Own life	111
Rebuilding Damaged Trust	113
Building Trust in Organizations:	
A Message for Leaders	119
Appendix: How Trustworthy Do You Think I Am?	127
Acknowledgments	131
About the Authors	133
Services Available	138
Join Us Online	141

# *Introduction*

*by Cynthia Olmstead*

*Creator of TrustWorks!™*

As an organizational change consultant, I help business leaders identify where they are heading, work with them to build a strategic plan, and bring the rest of the organization into alignment so that everyone is pulling together to accomplish shared goals. Some organizations find this an arduous process fraught with setbacks and sometimes even failure. Other organizations are able to implement the changes quickly and move the process along smoothly.

A few years ago I began to wonder: Why were some companies successful in implementing change while others were not? Was it the leadership? If so, what was the key factor that allowed some leaders to get people to work together to bring about the desired changes, while others failed?

Somewhere flying over Kansas on one of my many trips from the West Coast to the East, a lightbulb came on: this key factor was *trust*. But what is trust? How do we describe it? Does trust mean the same thing to you as it does to me? If not, how can we talk about it?

To begin answering those questions, I started asking people in my sessions what symbol they would use to represent trust. People came up with an assortment of answers: a heart, a newborn baby, a handshake, a wedding ring, a cross, the American flag. The reactions to these symbols varied wildly. Some said, “I just went through a divorce, so wedding rings don’t mean trust to me.” Or “The flag isn’t seen as a trust symbol to people in some parts of the world.”

It became evident to me that trust means different things to different people based on their experiences. This begged the question: How could we ever talk about and resolve trust issues if we were seeing them only through our own lenses? Clearly, we needed a common framework, a model that created a mutual language for trust.

I began an intensive search for that, and along the way I found some interesting academic research with sophisticated models. But they were too complicated to use at all levels of an organization, from the C suite to the front line. After six years of research—including market analysis and focus groups with CEOs, managers, and associates—I became convinced that trust was something that grew when certain behaviors were present. But which behaviors?

Working from the premise that trust is based on behaviors, I set up flip charts in my office so that during discussions with clients, colleagues, and friends I could document behaviors they thought would either build or erode trust. As the lists grew long, I realized that the behaviors fell into four main groups: ***Able*** (demonstrate competence), ***Believable*** (act with integrity), ***Connected*** (care about others), and ***Dependable*** (maintain credibility). Thus the ABCD Trust Model™ was born!

Our intention in writing this book is to raise your awareness about the trust issues in your life as well as give you the language and tools to resolve them. Our hope is that you will use what you learn to build productive, joyful relationships—and that you'll share what you learn with others, so they can do the same.

## *Some Perspective Before You Read This Story*

*by Ken Blanchard*

*Coauthor of The One Minute Manager® and  
Leading at a Higher Level*

Trust is a delicate thing. It takes a long time to build, yet you can blow it in a matter of minutes. All it takes is one incident of behaving inconsistently with what someone considers trustworthy behavior for that person to pull away from you.

These days there's a lot of talk about trust and even more talk about the lack of it. But people need to see trust in action more than they need to hear about it. In other words, your walk is more important than your talk. As Cindy pointed out in her introduction, this is where the tricky part comes in, because:

*Trust is in the eye of the beholder.*

What does that mean? It means that you can be completely unaware that your behavior is eroding the trust of those around you. What looks like fine behavior to you could make your friend, spouse, boss, employee, or constituent downright wary.

Because we see trust behaviors through our own filters, we need to have a common language for trust so we can talk together about what it is and what it isn't. We have created the ABCD Trust Model™ to give you a way to begin having conversations about trust, not only in the business arena, but also in your personal life.

Ever since I wrote *The One Minute Manager* with Spencer Johnson and helped him in his writing of *Who Moved My Cheese?*, I have found that writing parables is the best way for me to live one of my missions in life, which is to be “a loving teacher and example of simple truths who helps myself and others to live more effective lives.” That’s why the first part of this book is a parable about how the lack of trust between a cat and a dog threatens the tranquillity of an animal-friendly family.

A story about a cat and a dog—is this meant to be a children’s book? No. While you can share the parable with your kids to start a dialogue about trust, the story is intended for adults. In fact, we hope you’ll see a bit of yourself—and some humans you know—in the story of Woof and Whiskers.

After reading the parable, you’ll be ready to review the trust-building resources in Part II. Here’s where you’ll learn to assess your strengths and weaknesses in the area of trust. You’ll find out about Trust Boosters and Trust Busters. You’ll also see how the ABCD Trust Model™ applies to real-life situations and learn the challenging art of beginning conversations about trust issues. Finally, you’ll discover the steps to rebuilding trust that’s been damaged.

We hope you’ll find the story a fun way to learn about trust. So lighten up, get in touch with your inner child, and enjoy *A Tale of Trust*.

**Trust Works!**



*Part I*

*A Tale of Trust*

## *Broken Trust*

Once upon a time in the country home of Mr. and Mrs. Berryhill, there lived a cat named Whiskers and a dog named Woof. The two did not get along.

They had their reasons.

Woof's goofy personality and sloppy personal hygiene annoyed the cat.

Whiskers's snooty attitude and finicky habits alienated the dog.

Some time ago Woof got so excited he chased Whiskers up a tree. She'd never forgiven him.

A couple of times Whiskers's sharp little claws had come out. Ever since, Woof had avoided her.

Plus, it was common knowledge that cats and dogs did not get along. Both Whiskers and Woof had heard from their mothers and fathers all the horror stories of the generations-old enmity between cats and dogs.

One day Woof made the terrible mistake of accidentally stepping on Whiskers's tail. Whiskers lashed out, swiping the dog across the face. Stinging with pain, Woof snarled and snapped at the cat, who leaped toward the dining room table to escape. She didn't quite make it. Her claws sank into the tablecloth, and as she fell back, she pulled the entire table full of dishes—just set for dinner—onto the floor, where they broke with a loud crash.

That's when Mrs. Berryhill came running into the room, her toddler in her arms.

"Oh, no. What a mess!" she cried.

The toddler, Billy, began to wail—a horrible, earsplitting sound.

Next, seven-year-old Kylie dashed in. "What happened?" she cried.

Finally, Mr. Berryhill burst into the room, his face red with anger.

"That's it!" he yelled as Woof and Whiskers scurried out of the room. "If you two don't learn to get along, I'm going to get rid of you. *All* of you!"

When Mr. Berryhill said “*all* of you” he was referring to the three other animals that lived in the house: a parrot named Presley, a hamster named Harriet, and a goldfish named Wiggles. Mr. Berryhill’s voice boomed, so every animal in the house heard him loud and clear. It was also evident from Mr. Berryhill’s tone that this was no idle threat. He’d been annoyed by the chaos created by Woof and Whiskers for quite some time. Mr. Berryhill seemed to have reached his breaking point.

Kylie’s eyes filled with tears. “No, Daddy! Please don’t get rid of our animals!”

Mr. Berryhill squatted down and looked his little girl in the eye. “I don’t want to get rid of them, honey, but we have to trust these animals to behave if they’re going to live in our house. If they’re going to fight and break our dishes, they’ve got to go.”

“But, Daddy—” Kylie began.

“Daddy’s right,” said Mrs. Berryhill. “If the animals are going to be part of our family, we have to be able to depend on them.”

“If they behave, can we keep them?” Kylie asked tearfully.

“Yes, but only if they stop fighting,” said Mr. Berryhill.

The parrot, who was old and wise, gravely shook his head. To human ears, Presley merely began squawking. But to every animal in the house, his announcement was clear:

“All animals, meet in the living room tonight at the stroke of midnight. Your presence is mandatory. This is an emergency!”

• • •

That night as they were getting ready for bed, Mrs. Berryhill had a heart-to-heart with her husband.

“Honey, the dog and cat did make an unfortunate mess tonight. But your reaction seemed a little over the top. Is there something going on that I should know about?”

Mr. Berryhill sat down with a sigh. “Things aren’t going as well at work as I had hoped. I had a meeting with my boss today and he said he wasn’t sure if I was in the right position.”

“What did he mean by that?”

“He said he was disappointed that I didn’t seem to have the skills to get things done on my own. Said he didn’t have time to do his job and mine.”

“That must have really bothered you,” Mrs. Berryhill said.

“No kidding,” he replied. “My position has a lot of new responsibilities, and I’ve been working my tail off. It annoys me that he expects me to be up to speed overnight. I wish he’d spend a little time helping me identify people who can coach me if he doesn’t have the time.”

“Can you talk to him about that?” asked Mrs. Berryhill.

Mr. Berryhill shook his head. “It won’t be easy. He says his door is always open, but to get a meeting with him is a major project in itself.”

“Sounds like you and your boss have trust issues. Just like we have with our cat and dog,” she added with a smile.

“Yeah, stress at work, chaos at home. I’m between a rock and a hard place!” he said with a laugh. “Thanks for listening, honey. I certainly need this weekend to decompress.”

## *A Matter of Perception*

That night the animals gathered at midnight as planned. Sitting high on his perch, Presley began the proceedings.

“The status quo cannot continue,” the parrot said. “There must be peace and harmony among all of us, or there will be great sorrow for each of us.”

The animals were silent. They knew that Presley spoke the truth.

“First,” said the parrot, “the two of you”—here he looked at the dog and cat—“must learn to get along.”

“Impossible,” said Whiskers, licking her paws. “Woof simply cannot be trusted. He nearly bit my head off today!”

“You nearly clawed my eyes out today!” Woof protested.

“After you crushed my tail!” Whiskers yowled.

“I didn’t mean to!” Woof cried, jumping to his feet.

Whiskers arched her back and hissed loudly.

“STOP!” squawked the parrot. “Keep it down, or we’ll all be thrown out!”

“You see?” said Whiskers. “Dogs cannot be trusted. Everyone knows that. There’s no point in further discussion.” With that she turned and left the room.

Woof sank onto the carpet and put his head on his paws.

“I didn’t mean to upset Whiskers,” the dog said. “I never do. It’s all a misunderstanding, I swear.”

Harriet the hamster, who had been silently running on her wheel, spoke up.

“Misunderstanding or not, we’re all going to get kicked out of here if you two can’t get along.”

Woof looked to the parrot. “How can I get along with Whiskers when she won’t even try to trust me?” he implored.

The parrot closed his eyes, going deep within for the answer. When at last he opened his eyes again, he said:

*“Trust is a matter of perception.”*

“What do you mean?” asked Woof.

“I mean that what looks like perfectly acceptable behavior to you makes Whiskers wary—and vice versa. For example, Woof, when you think about the word *trust*, who or what comes to mind?”



The dog thought for a moment.

“I think about Kylie, because she puts food in my bowl every evening.”

The parrot turned to the hamster. “Do you associate Kylie with trustworthiness?” he asked.

“Heavens, no!” said Harriet. “The last time Kylie played with me she tried to put me in doll’s clothing! I associate trust with Mrs. Berryhill, who fills my water and cleans my cage when Kylie forgets to.”

“So you see,” said the parrot to the dog, “trust means different things to different people. If you and Whiskers are going to get along, you’re going to have to find out how to earn each other’s trust.”

“What do you think I can say to earn Whiskers’s trust?” Woof asked.

The parrot pondered the dog’s question for a moment.

“Once you’ve lost someone’s trust, it takes time to earn it back,” said the parrot. “You must demonstrate you are trustworthy not only through your words but also through your actions.”

“What kind of actions?” asked the dog.

“Actions that show you’ve mastered the ABCDs of trust,” said the parrot.

“ABCDs?” said Wiggles, who until now had been swimming silently in his bowl. “That’s certainly a mouthful.”

“It is,” said the parrot. “But trust can’t be defined easily with a simple phrase. And it isn’t something you can earn overnight. You’ll have to begin at the beginning and go from there.”

“Okay,” said the dog, “where do I begin?”

“First, you must show Whiskers that you are *Able*,” the parrot replied.

“What do you mean by *Able*?” asked the dog.

“That means showing Whiskers you have the know-how to help her,” said the parrot. “If she has a problem, help her solve it! If she wants results, deliver them. If you are *Able*, step up and contribute. Show her you’re worthy!”