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**Academic Research Papers on Trust  
Neuroscience**

Knowing when to trust others: An ERP study of decision making after receiving information from unknown people

*By Cheryl Boudreau, Mathew D. McCubbins, and Seana Coulson*

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2656882/>

This neuroscience-based research paper explores how much stock people put in information from a third party about an individual's trustworthiness. Results suggest that even when people behave as if they trust third party information, they trust the communication of individuals whose interests they believe are aligned with their own to be slightly more informative than those of individuals who are deemed trustworthy by an institution. In other words, even if our company has clear penalties for untrustworthy behavior we tend to put stronger trust in our colleagues who we believe have our best interests in mind.

When the Trust Hormone is Out of Balance

*By Alix Spiegel*

[https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=126141922&utm\\_source=npr\\_newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=20180321&utm\\_campaign=npr\\_email\\_a\\_friend&utm\\_term=storyshare](https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=126141922&utm_source=npr_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=20180321&utm_campaign=npr_email_a_friend&utm_term=storyshare)

A short podcast on the role oxytocin plays in trusting others, including trust in governments. First aired on NPR's All Things Considered in 2010. Alix Spiegel interviews the mother of a child who has Williams Syndrome, a condition in which the brain produces an excess of oxytocin, and Paul Zak, the Claremont Graduate University professor known for his extensive research on the biology of trust.

The Neuroeconomics of Distrust: Sex Differences in Behavior and Physiology

*By Paul J. Zak, Karla Borja, William T. Matzner, and Robert Kurzban*

[http://www.dklevine.com/archive/jh\\_zak.pdf](http://www.dklevine.com/archive/jh_zak.pdf)

This research paper reports on a study that looked at the prevalence of a biologically active metabolite of testosterone (dihydrotestosterone or DHT) as an indicator of distrust. The authors found that men, but not women, showed elevated levels of DHT when they received signals of distrust. Another study indicates that men but not women tend to respond with

aggression to signals they are distrusted. The authors don't cite the paper by Bos, Terburg and van Honk, also in this collection, but the two taken together are very interesting.

### A Matter of Trust: How the Brain Processes Reputation

*By Matt Wood*

September 5, 2013

<https://sciencelife.uchospitals.edu/2013/09/05/a-matter-of-trust-how-the-brain-processes-reputation/>

We make a lot of decisions that hinge on how much we trust another person. Can you trust your neighbor to bring back the ladder he borrowed, or do you stop by to ask for it? Should you let your son off the hook when he says he "accidentally" stepped on his little sister, or should you send him to his room with no dessert? Trust, in these instances, is built upon past dealings with those people, or their reputation..... MRI images showed that a part of the brain called the caudate signals reputation during trust-based decisions, responding most strongly to partners deemed indifferent or unfair.

### How to Harness the Brain Chemical that Makes You Trust Someone

*By Judah Pollack and Olivia Fox Cabane*

<https://www.fastcompany.com/3060430/how-your-brain-decides-whom-to-trust-and-how-to-tap-into-it>

Next time you're having a fight with your partner try this: Reach out and touch them. Place your hand gently on their knee or their hand. Now, if the fight has escalated to shouting angrily or hurling objects, *don't try this*—otherwise, give it a go. You may find that you'll both come down from your rising anger. The reason is because touch releases the neuropeptide oxytocin, and oxytocin increases our ability to trust. Brain scientists still don't understand why these simple behaviors release trust-inspiring oxytocin. But they know how.

### The Neuroscience of Trust

*By Christopher Bergland*

August 12, 2015

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-athletes-way/201508/the-neuroscience-trust>

Researchers have pinpointed two brain regions associated with trust. Have you ever been betrayed by someone that you trusted completely even though gut instincts gave you early warning signs that he or she might not be trustworthy? Recent neuroscientific research shows that in many ways our brains are hardwired to trust others. This aspect of our human nature is one reason that having your trust betrayed can short-circuit your neurobiology and make it difficult to trust again.

### The Neuroscience in Building High Performance Trust Cultures

*By Kenneth Nowack and Paul J. Zak*

February 9, 2017

<http://www.talenteconomy.io/2017/02/09/neuroscience-building-trust-cultures/>

Trust is a leading currency in today's talent economy. This article provides the science behind how leaders can cultivate it in their organizations. Numerous management books, articles and

conferences have focused on the topic of trust. Trust is claimed to be some near-magical economic elixir explaining everything from productivity gains to enhanced happiness at work. But in reality, trust is complicated and challenging to measure at an individual, team and organizational level. Fortunately, discoveries in neuroscience have provided new, rigorous, peer-reviewed and actionable insights into what trust is, how it can be measured and, most important, how organizations can build and enhance trust to improve their performance.

### The Neuroscience of Trust

*By Paul J. Zak*

January-February 2017

Harvard Business Review

<https://hbr.org/2017/01/the-neuroscience-of-trust>

This article cites management behaviors that foster employee engagement. Through his research on the brain chemical oxytocin—shown to facilitate collaboration and teamwork—Zak has developed a framework for creating a culture of trust and building a happier, more loyal, and more productive workforce.

### The neuroscience of leadership (Doctorate)

*By David Rock*

Middlesex University Research Repository, 2010

An open access repository of Middlesex University research

<http://eprints.mdx.ac.uk>

Available from Middlesex University's Research Repository at <http://eprints.mdx.ac.uk/7914/>  
This doctorate summarizes 13 years of thinking, experimentation and research into the issue of improving human performance. Specifically, the issue of how to drive change in human performance, through conversation. This focused on non-clinical populations, and generally with very high functioning people. Dr. Rock's work initially focused on the act of 'coaching'. At its simplest, coaching is the ability of one person to enable another to improve their performance. Through intensive observation, Dr. Rock built a coaching model that enabled a significant improvement in people's ability to facilitate behavior change in others. The model was based on the realization that people needed the 'aha' moment for change to occur.

## **Academic Research Papers on Trust Business**

### Trust Bibliography

*By Robert J. Easton* accessible via Trust Across America/Trust Around the World website

(<http://trustacrossamerica.com/index.shtml>). This bibliography is intended to capture relevant and useful scholarly, trade and practitioner literature on the topic of trust, with a specific focus on the connection between Trust and Well-Being and the concept of Positive or Appreciative Trust. The focus explains why throughout this bibliography you will find citations to relevant literature in the fields of positive psychology, positive organizational scholarship, flourishing, conscious capitalism etc.

Employee trust repair: A systematic review of 20 years of empirical research and future research directions

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S014829632100179X?via%3Dihub>

*By T. Kähkönen, K. Blomquist, N. Gillespie, M. Vanhala*

As the title implies, this paper reviews empirical research on how people repair trust, or not, in organizations. From the abstract: “Employee trust, and increasingly its absence, is a critical topic for researchers and practitioners interested in social relations in the context of work and organizing. Employee trust repair is particularly important in the current disrupted work environment, due to unpredictable changes such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the uncertainty those bring to our lives. In this article, we systematically review and take stock of the research on trust repair conducted in the past two decades to provide comprehensive insights and future research directions for researchers and managers. In our review, we propose that early use of trust repair strategies in response to small violations, prevents these violations escalating into larger violations, and hence, enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of trust repair with employees.

Effects of Cultural Diversity on Trust and its Consequences for Team Processes and Outcomes in Ad Hoc Distributed Teams

*By Anne Lise Bjørnstad, Knut Inge Fostervold and Pål Ulleberg*

<http://sjop.no/index.php/sjop/article/view/277/290>

Research paper that explores trust as a mediator between team cultural diversity and team processes. The researchers explain how cultural diversity may affect team processes and outcomes in distributed ad hoc teams. The results demonstrate significantly lower trust in culturally heterogeneous distributed teams than in homogenous teams. In turn, trust was found to be positively related to team processes (i.e., communication). “...unless trust is established in heterogeneous teams, the potential advantages contained in the collective capacity of the team (e.g., increased knowledge, viewpoints, and creativity) may not be realized.”

Getting to Know You: Reputation and Trust in a Two-Person Economic Exchange

*By Brooks King-Casas, Damon Tomlin, Cedric Anen, Colin F. Camerer, Steven R. Quartz, P. Read Montague*

<http://balleinelab.psych.ucla.edu/pdf/montague3.pdf>

Using a multi-round version of an economic exchange (trust game), the researchers report that reciprocity expressed by one player strongly predicts future trust expressed by their partner—a behavioral finding mirrored by neural responses in the brain’s dorsal striatum as measured by fMRI. Interesting article if you are willing to wade through the academic research jargon.

Workplace Intimacy in Leader–Follower Relationships

*By Ronit Kark*

Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship, Chapter: 32, Publisher: Oxford University Press, Editors: K. Cameron & G. Spreitzer, pp.423-438

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286327750> Workplace Intimacy in Leader-Follower Relationships

In this very interesting paper the author defines the concept of workplace intimacy, present its different components, and examine how it may be enacted in the field of leadership and management. Then she presents the processes of exchange (e.g., communal exchange) and identity shifts (e.g., the relational self-concept) that may underlie the development of workplace intimacy. The author ends by offering an array of outcomes for workplace intimacy that can foster meaningful, pleasurable, and valuable mutual relationships with followers.

2018 Edelman Trust Barometer Executive Summary

<http://www.edelman.com/trust-barometer>

The 2018 Edelman TRUST BAROMETER reveals a world of seemingly stagnant distrust. People's trust in business, government, NGOs and media remained largely unchanged from 2017 — 20 of 28 markets surveyed now lie in distruster territory, up one from last year. Yet dramatic shifts are taking place at the market level and within the institution of media.

Well-being and Trust in the Workplace

By John Helliwell and Haifang Huang, 2011

Journal of Happiness Studies, vol. 12(5), pages 747-767, October

<http://www.nber.org/papers/w14589>

In this paper Helliwell and Huang present findings from their research on the effect workplace trust has on well-being. The research shows that trust in one's manager, coworkers, and top leadership has a strong positive effect on well-being at work. Interestingly, the results also indicate that women derive greater well-being than men from an assessment they can trust their managers and coworkers.

2018 Edelman Trust Barometer Global Report

<https://www.edelman.com/trust-barometer>

Online survey conducted in 28 Countries

18 years of data and 33,000+ respondents total

All fieldwork was conducted between October 28 and November 20, 2017

This report describes how the world is moving apart in trust. No market saw steeper declines than the United States, with a 37-point aggregate drop in trust across all institutions. At the opposite end of the spectrum, China experienced a 27-point gain, more than any other market. The trust decline in the United States is the steepest ever measured and the global trend over the past four years is not positive as the Edelman Global Report characterized 2015 as the year of "Trust is Essential to Innovation," 2016 as the year of "Growing Inequality of Trust," 2017 as the year of "Trust in Crisis, and 2018 as the year of "The Battle for the Truth."

Top Management Team Strategic Capacity: Diversity, Collectivity & Trust

By Paula Jarzabkowski & Rosalind Searle

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.200.3071&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

This academic research paper looks at studies indicating that collective action is difficult to attain from top management teams that are high in diversity and then shows the importance of trust as a vital component of the strategic capacity of such teams. The paper concludes with recommendations for developing and exploiting top management team strategic capacity.

### The impact of apologies and promises on post-violation trust: The mediating role of interactional justice

By Edward C. Tomlinson

<https://doi.org/10.1108/10444061211248930>

This paper looks at the importance of apologizing for a breach or betrayal of trust in restoring trust and cooperation. It references several other research papers that also focus on apology and restoring trust.

## **Trust and Leadership**

### The Decision to Trust

by Robert F. Hurley

<https://hbr.org/2006/09/the-decision-to-trust>

This article presents a model that sheds light on how the decision to trust is made. Building on the social psychologist Morton Deutsch's research on trust, suspicion, and the resolution of conflict, and on his own experience consulting with organizations and executives on trust, Hurley offers a model that can be used to predict whether an individual will choose to trust or distrust another in a given situation.

### Leadership as Trusteeship

by Raj Sisodia

<https://www.managementexchange.com/blog/leadership-trusteeship-0>

Excellent article on how leaders can build a culture of trust in their companies. Sisodia proposes that a culture of trust starts at the top, with what he defines as "conscious leaders". Here is one point from the article: "High trust businesses are built on love and caring, not fear and anxiety."

### Who Do You Trust

By Ty Kiisel in Forbes

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/tykiisel/2012/06/13/who-do-you-trust/#495d525a4789>

A short article in Forbes online that includes a list of actions that leaders can take to help create a culture of trust. Most of these are culled from work by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner.

### Absolute Integrity is the Basis of Heroic Leadership

<https://vdocuments.site/absolute-integrity-is-the-basis-of-heroic-leadership.html>

by William A. Cohen

Executive Forum/Leader to Leader

Article that describes what heroic Leadership entails—leading a group with absolute integrity while raising individual performance to a personal best and building a team spirit of sacrifice for the common good.

### Building Trust in Business by Trusting

*by Dov Seidman*

Business Week Magazine

September 7, 2009

[www.leadershiptrust.org/building-trust-in-business-by-trusting/](http://www.leadershiptrust.org/building-trust-in-business-by-trusting/)

We all want loyal customers and employees, but are you willing—like Netflix and Radiohead—to meet them halfway? In this article, Seidman speaks of how a doughnut shop owner decided to let his customers make their own change from coins he left on the counter.

### Avoiding Integrity Land Mines

*By Ben W. Heineman, Jr*

<https://hbr.org/2007/04/avoiding-integrity-land-mines>

An inside look at how GE has worked to build a culture that sustains both high performance and high integrity

### Discovering Your Authentic Leadership

*by Bill George, Peter Sims, Andrew N. McLean, and Diana Mayer*

<https://hbr.org/2007/02/discovering-your-authentic-leadership>

We all have the capacity to inspire and empower others. But we must first be willing to devote ourselves to our personal growth and development as leaders.

### The Five Messages Leaders Must Manage

*by John Hamm*

<https://hbr.org/2006/05/the-five-messages-leaders-must-manage>

All too often, leaders fail to explain what they mean when they talk about organizational structure, financial results, their own jobs, time management, and corporate culture. Left unclear, these concepts can throw a firm into turmoil— but when given proper focus, they confer extraordinary leverage.

### Managing Authenticity: The Paradox of Great Leadership

*by Rob Goffee and Gareth Jones*

<https://hbr.org/2005/12/managing-authenticity-the-paradox-of-great-leadership>

Leadership demands the expression of an authentic self. Try to lead like someone else—say, Jack Welch, Richard Branson, or Michael Dell—and you will fail. Employees will not follow a CEO who invests little of himself in his leadership behaviors. People want to be led by someone “real.” To attract followers, a leader has to be many things to many people. The trick is to pull that off while remaining true to yourself.

### Managing for Organizational Integrity

*by Lynn Sharp Paine*

<https://hbr.org/1994/03/managing-for-organizational-integrity>

Ethics is as much an organizational as a personal issue. Managers who fail to provide leadership and institute systems that facilitate ethical conduct share responsibility with those who knowingly benefit from corporate misdeeds. By supporting ethically sound behavior, managers can strengthen the relationships and reputations their companies depend on.

[Moments of Greatness: Entering the Fundamental State of Leadership](#)

by Robert E. Quinn

<https://hbr.org/.../moments-of-greatness-entering-the-fundamental-state-of-leadership>

Leaders are at the top of their game when they act from their deepest values and instincts. Usually they tap into these fundamental qualities during a crisis, but it's possible to do so anytime—in the right frame of mind.

[The Work of Leadership](#)

by Ronald A. Heifetz and Donald L. Laurie

<https://hbr.org/2001/12/the-work-of-leadership>

The authors offer six principles for leading adaptive work and say leaders need to get on the balcony—they should be able to spot operational and strategic patterns from high within the organization, as though on a balcony, and set or create a context for change. Followers want comfort, stability, and solutions from their leaders. But that's babysitting. Real leaders ask hard questions and knock people out of their comfort zones. Then they manage the resulting distress.

## **Trust and Teams**

[Cycle of Commitment: Coordinating Action to Get Results](#)

by Charles Feltman

This “working paper” outlines what has been called the “Cycle of Commitment” or “Cycle of the Promise”. It gives a summary overview of the elements involved in getting solid commitments that lead to desired results, including how to make clear, complete requests for what is needed; useful responses to requests; what to do when a commitment can't be kept; and how to address broken commitments.

[Enemies of Trust](#)

By Charles Feltman

<https://insightcoaching.com/business-development-coaching/>

This paper describes twenty common behaviors that can inadvertently damage trust at work and offers tips on how to avoid them. Behaviors are organized under the four domains of trust defined in *The Thin Book of Trust*.

[Five Reasons Why Trust Matters on Teams](#)

By Dana Brownlee

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/danabrownlee/2019/10/20/5-reasons-why-trust-matters-on-teams/#60f264512d60>

In this short article the author looks at five compelling reasons why trust is such an important a necessary ingredient for broader team success and enhanced business results.

### The Leadership Team: Complementary Strengths or Conflicting Agendas?

*By Stephen A. Miles and Michael D. Watkins*

<https://hbr.org/.../the-leadership-team-complementary-strengths-or-conflicting-agenda>

This article examines senior leadership teams and the benefits (strengths) and risks (conflicts) of complementary style leadership. Even though most complex organizations are run, formally or informally, by teams of two or more, far more attention is paid to CEO performance and succession than to such issues as how complementary teams should be designed and what happens when their membership changes, especially during a succession process. This study supports the case for complementarity: Such teams by their very nature are able to do things that individuals and non-complementary teams can't. At the same time, with the benefits come the risks. Because of different strengths and styles, senior leaders may pursue incompatible ends or employ inconsistent means to achieve their goals which invariably affects trust

### Psychological Safety, Trust, and Learning in Organizations: A Group-level Lens

*By Amy C. Edmondson*

<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Psychological-Safety%2C-Trust%2C-and-Learning-in-A-Lens-Edmondson/398d9ea38973db9afb5c32ae1cf5209d550c8e04>

This research paper contains a good description of the distinction between the concepts of trust and psychological safety. Edmondson proposes a model of antecedents and consequences of psychological safety in work teams and emphasizes the centrality of psychological safety for learning behavior. She also describes different approaches to studying and measuring psychological safety in teams.

### What Psychological Safety Actually Means for Teams

*By Shane Snow*

<https://www.shanesnow.com/teamwork/psychological-safety>

Good overview of psychological safety for teams, what it means and what it doesn't mean. Contains a useful distinction between "safety" and "comfort", including the danger inherent in focusing on the latter.

### Trust and Well-Being

*By John Helliwell and Shun Wang*

<http://www.nber.org/papers/w14589>

In this paper the researchers focus specifically at the link between trust and well-being. Their work looks at both interpersonal and social trust in this context. They conclude that people who feel themselves to be living in a trustworthy environment have much higher levels of subjective well-being.

### How to Build Trust in a Virtual Workplace

*By Keith Ferrazzi*

<https://hbr.org/2012/10/how-to-build-trust-in-virtual>

This article from Harvard Business Review discusses the role “swift trust” may play in helping geographically dispersed virtual teams function when there is little opportunity to build trust through many interactions over time.

#### Building Trust in Diverse Teams (a concise facilitation handbook)

<https://www.alnap.org/.../Building-Trust-in-Diverse-Teams-concise-manual-english-FINAL.PDF>

This Toolkit is a collection of exercises that could be used to develop trust in a team and/or increase its levels. It contains an explanation of the values, behaviors and characteristics that will help managers and team members recognize trust in action and the development of trust between team members; an explanation of why trust matters in teamwork; and a set of tools to help team managers and team members to build and measure trust in a team; and a set of tools to help team managers and team members to build and measure trust in a team.

#### Build Trust with Operating Principles

*By Kathleen A. Paris, Ph.D.*

<https://www.leadstrat.com/articles/build-trust-with-operating-principles/>

In this article, Kathleen Paris discusses how trust is an essential ingredient for a successful workplace. People do their best work when they feel they can trust their bosses and those around them. Conversely, without that bond of trust, employees will not extend themselves beyond the minimum required to do their jobs. That makes sense, but how is trust built in the workplace? The article discusses many of the ingredients that go into building trust, including honesty, consistency, respectful communication, predictability, and dependable actions over time. Creating operating principles together is a tangible activity that can help a work group establish and develop a climate of trust.

#### Trust: does it impact team performance... or not?

By Wendy Hirsh

<https://scienceforwork.com/blog/trust-impact-team-performance/>

This is a clear, easy to read synopsis of the academic research paper cited below.

#### Trust and Team Performance: A Meta-Analysis of Main Effects, Moderators and Covariates

*By Bart de Jong, Kurt Dirks, and Nichole Gillespie* in Journal of Applied Psychology, April 2016.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/297733590\\_Trust\\_and\\_Team\\_Performance\\_A\\_Meta-Analysis\\_of\\_Main\\_Effects\\_Moderators\\_and\\_Covariates](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/297733590_Trust_and_Team_Performance_A_Meta-Analysis_of_Main_Effects_Moderators_and_Covariates)

The researchers did a meta-analysis of 112 studies to examine the fundamental questions of whether intrateam trust is positively related to team performance, and the conditions under which it is particularly important.

#### Understanding Competence at Work

*By Jörgen Sandberg*

<https://hbr.org/2001/03/understanding-competence-at-work>

Being good at your job means having the right understanding of your job.