

The Trust Factor is Key to High Performing Teams

smallbiztrends.com/2017/07/the-trust-factor-book-review.html

7/29/2017

Do you know what's driving your employees? Most managers don't. With "Trust Factor: The Science of Creating High-Performance Companies" discover the psychology that powers high-performing organizations and leverage that psychology to create high-functioning and productive business that retains good workers, outperforms the rate, and stays ahead of the upcoming talent squeeze.

Leaders, from every time period in history, have tried to figure out how to create the perfect team. In modern times, this quest has led to everything from "scientific management" to Lean Six Sigma and foosball tables at work. **The Trust Factor: The Science of Creating High-Performance Companies** doesn't argue that these things might help a team, but this book's focus is on something deeper. **The Trust Factor** looks at the psychology behind high-performance organizations and helps companies aspiring to be high-performance close the gap using the "trust factor".

What is The Trust Factor About?

Many leaders in trying to avoid this trap of under-performance try a variety of strategies: "Employee of the Month" parking spots, formal awards, stock options, higher pay, promotion, Employee Relations departments, newsletters, and more. These tools have their place, but they are focused on the mistaken assumption that workers are primarily driven to great work by external things (money, status, title, etc.), writes author Paul J. Zak.

The problem with this assumption is that it doesn't work, according to research.

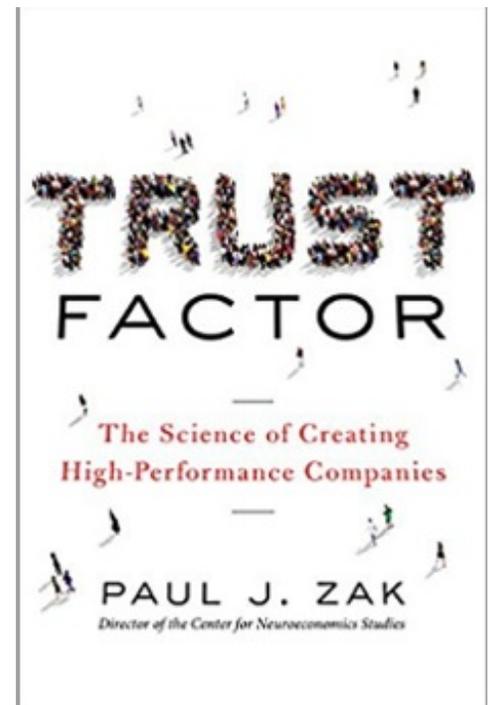
Although workers need money to buy the things they want or need, money is actually a low-level motivator for doing amazing work. That goes for the "Employee of the Day" recognition, the parking spot, the new title and other such incentives too. The warm and fuzzy feeling that happens when workers get these external things doesn't last. Something stronger has to be present in the work culture to create a high-performing team.

What leaders are missing, says Zak, is an internal component more important than external rewards like money and trophies. It's a component needed to transform an "I'm just here to get a paycheck" worker to a worker dedicated to the job. That internal component, according to Zak, is [trust](#).

The Trust Factor doesn't focus on building trust in an abstract way, however. Zak argues that people trust, in part, because of oxytocin. Oxytocin, known as the "trust hormone" or "love hormone", is released in moments of social bonding. Increasing oxytocin raises the sense of trust between two or more people. As expected, high-performing organizations proactively reinforce the flow of oxytocin through their organization's day-to-day activities.

To reach a high-performing level, **The Trust Factor** suggests, average-performing businesses should work to reinforce the moments of social bonding already happening in their team to create higher levels of trust. Businesses lacking real trust within their team or the social bonding creating it, must start at the ground level, one experiment at a time.

[Zak](#), also known as "Dr. Love", is an author, researcher, and professor of economics, psychology and management who holds a doctoral degree in Economics and post-graduate training in neuroscience. Zak is also a founding



director of the Center for Neuroeconomics, the president of ZestX (a neuroscience research company providing insights for consumer-oriented companies) and co-founder of Ofactor (a neuroscience research company that providing insight into management and leadership performance). In fact, Zak is credited with coining the term “neuroeconomics” to describe a discipline combining insights from neuroscience, psychology and economics.

What Was Best About The Trust Factor?

In **The Trust Factor**, Zak asserts “soft skills” can be managed with the precision of a scientist if research is provided in an accessible manner. This reinforces the book’s central principle. Management should involve proactive experiments focused on building trust. The book provides concrete steps leaders can implement within minutes of reading to help reach this goal.

What Could Have Been Done Differently?

The Trust Factor does an excellent job of taking actionable research out of the lab and into the world of work. Though the book could be helped by even further discussion of practical approaches to implementation. The author throws a lot of really helpful ideas at the reader but readers may need help in prioritizing and integrating the book’s ideas into a manageable schedule that busy managers can follow.

Why Read The Trust Factor?

The Trust Factor can serve any kind of leader. For businesses seeking to better perform and who suspect trust is the issue, the book offers specific questions and actionable steps for leaders to begin their investigation. For high-performing businesses, the book provides the same questions and actionable steps. The difference is in the perspective. A high-performing business can use **The Trust Factor** to help refine its trust building even further by reviewing areas the business could improve. This improvement of soft skills is based on the assessments and questions to fuel even more trust experiments.
