

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS**Building Influence Through Trust**

I once heard the phrase, “Ability without visibility is a disability.” It’s a phrase that has stayed with me. You can be really good at what you do, but if people don’t know what you’re capable of, you can still get overlooked. So yes, visibility matters.

But visibility can only do so much. People may know who you are and what you’re good at, but that doesn’t necessarily mean they trust you, value your opinion, or feel comfortable being honest with you.

Think about the people who have the most influence on you at work. Are they always the most visible? Probably not. Oftentimes, they’re the people you trust. You know you can speak openly without having to second-guess where they’re coming from. You know they’ll do their best and follow through on what they’ve said. You value what they have to say. And when they need your support, you’re usually happy to step in.

I think that’s what makes some working relationships work so well. There’s less need to prove ourselves or manage how we come across all the time. We know what to expect from each other, and we know we can count on one another.

And from what I’ve seen, that kind of trust is usually built in simple ways.



Take a genuine interest in people



We all have our own priorities and things we're trying to get done. It's easy to go into a conversation thinking about the update we need, the question we want answered, or the task that needs to move forward.

But it makes a difference when we also take an interest in what's happening on the other person's side. What are they trying to achieve? What matters to them? What are they excited about, or struggling with?

It doesn't mean every conversation has to become personal. Sometimes it's simply listening properly, remembering something they told you, or checking in later. People can usually tell when the interest is genuine and when the conversation is only about what we need from them.

Be someone others can count on



I see this in my own team. When I'm away and something comes up, my colleagues will often step in and take care of it rather than leave everything for me to handle when I'm back. And I would do the same for them.

I think that says a lot about trust. Things don't stop just because one person isn't there. There's an unspoken understanding that we'll look out for each other and help where we can.

Being reliable is important to build trust over time. If you say you'll do something, do it. If plans change, let people know. If someone helped, acknowledge them. If you made a mistake, own it. These may seem like small things, but over time, this is how people come to know that they can count on you.





Be someone people can be honest with

Some of the people I trust most at work are also the ones who will tell me when they think differently. And I value that.

When there isn't much trust, we tend to be more careful. We hold back, soften what we really think, or avoid saying something because we're not sure how the other person will take it. It feels different when the trust is there. We can say, "I don't agree," or even "I got this wrong," without worrying that one difficult conversation will affect the whole relationship. It's easy to get along when we agree. But being able to be honest with each other and still work well together afterwards is what makes the relationship stronger.

In the end, visibility still matters. People need to know what you can do. But being seen is only the beginning. It's the trust we build through working together that makes people value our contribution, listen to what we have to say, and want to work with us again. And that carries much further than visibility alone.



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