

Leadership Trust Strategies for Change Management

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Abstract

Although research on leadership trust abounds in management literature, studies on leadership trust in facilitating change management are scarce. This case study on leadership trust strategies in accelerating change management bridged the lacuna in applied management and decision sciences. Trust is a multifaceted social construct crucial for reducing opportunism and fostering more cooperative behavior in leading change. While trust in change leaders is pivotal for workers and businesses to flex, adapt, and thrive in pursuance of the desired change objectives, 79% of employees in the United States do not trust their leadership. The trust deficiency in leadership raises serious concerns regarding the morale in the United States organizational workforce. Change leaders need trust to balance the contingency of new possibilities with confidence in everyday reality. A lack of trust in change leaders generates paralysis by analysis in change management. Grounded in Hiatt's ADKAR, Gibb's trust, Gottfredson and Hirschi's self-control, Kotter's eight-step, and Prabhupada's sonic therapeutic intervention (STI) frameworks, the researcher explored leadership trust strategies for expediting change management. The data collection strategy included 10 semi-structured interviews through purposeful sampling and reviewing pertinent documents. An analysis of interview data transcriptions yielded 15 themes: caring and trusting team members, confidentiality, consistency, competency, cultural inclusivity, demonstrable appreciation, effective communication, team empowerment, integrity, pristine identity enculturation, psychological adjustment, self-restraint, sonic therapeutic intervention, supramundane values, and willpower. Positive social change implications (PSCI) included qualitative performance, high productivity, improved wages, and social responsibility.

Keywords: ADKAR, caring and trusting effective communication, consistency, Kotter's eight-step model, sonic therapeutic intervention.