

# THE ABCD TRUST MODEL™

## Management Models

### >> INTRODUCTION

The **ABCD Trust Model™** created by Ken Blanchard is a leadership model which places an emphasis on leading with trust. High levels of trust allow creativity, productivity, efficiency, and innovation to flourish whilst a lack of trust creates cynicism, doubt, and anxiety. Trust is a key factor in how people work together and build effective relationships, yet many people are unaware of the actions that influence trust.

### >> HOW CAN THIS HELP ME?

The ability to build trust is an essential skill for leaders. It is worthwhile for leaders to assess themselves against all of the four elements to discover if they might be contributing to low-trust relationships through behaviours that are seen as less than Able, Believable, Connected, and Dependable.

By using the ABCD Trust Model™, leaders can focus on the behaviours that build trust, and by sharing this model with those they lead, create a common framework and language for discussing issues of trust in the workplace. Individuals can create action plans to increase the level of trust in relationships or repair damaged relationships where trust has been broken.

### >> ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

#### **Trust works: four keys to building lasting relationships**

Ken Blanchard, Cynthia Olmstead and Martha Lawrence  
London: HarperCollins, 2013

#### **Building trust**, white paper, 2010

Available from: [www.kenblanchard.com/Leading-Research/Research/Building-Trust](http://www.kenblanchard.com/Leading-Research/Research/Building-Trust)

#### **Developing trust** (CMI management checklist 243)

### >> THE MODEL

The ABCD Trust Model™ sets out the four elements of trust that are critical to creating and sustaining trustful relationships: ABCD - Able, Believable, Connected, and Dependable.

**Able** - Demonstrate competence. Leaders who are able earn trust by solving problems, getting results, and using their skills to help others achieve established goals.

**Believable** - Act with integrity. Leaders who are believable earn trust by being honest and sincere, showing respect for others, keeping confidences, not talking behind people's backs, and admitting their own mistakes.

**Connected** - Care about others. Leaders who are connected earn trust by showing interest in others, asking for input, listening, showing empathy, praising others' efforts, and sharing about themselves.

**Dependable** - Maintain reliability. Leaders who are dependable are organized, timely, accountable, and responsive to requests; they do what they say they'll do and consistently follow up.

**A** **ABLE**  
Demonstrate  
competence

Get quality results. Resolve problems. Develop skills  
Use skills to assist others.

**B** **BELIEVABLE**  
Act with  
integrity

Keep confidences. Admit when you are wrong. Be honest  
and sincere. Be non-judgemental. Show respect.

**C** **CONNECTED**  
Care about  
others

Listen well. Praise others. Work well with others. Show  
empathy with others.

**D** **DEPENDABLE**  
Maintain  
reliability

Do what you say you'll do. Be responsive. Be organised.  
Be consistent.