

Building Trust:

5 Core Elements for School Leaders

Trust is the foundation and the key resource that enables school leaders to build and steward healthy learning communities, and to lead transformational change efforts in those communities.



Clarity: Roles, responsibilities, values, and goals are crystalized throughout the school.



Connection: Positive emotions are cultivated, rituals are centered on the human experience, and gratitude is a default setting amongst adults.



Communication: The means by which we speak to and with each other are in service of building strong ties of trust and professional support.



Consistency: Rules, boundaries, and norms of behavior are accepted and adhered to across time, space, and people.



Caring: Empathy, perspective taking, and the wellbeing of others are elements of each systemic and personal intersection within the school.

Practices that Build or Erode Trust

Builds Trust

Erodes Trust

Presents problems to be solved collaboratively.	Skews towards presenting solutions made in isolation.
Garners support and ideation prior to decisions being made.	Skews towards “buy-in”: decisions need to be “sold” to educators.
Quick to modify and adjust according to changing conditions.	Prone to charging forth on set plan without fluid alterations.
Ample use of “I don’t know. What do you think?”	Preponderance of “Wait here and I’ll tell you what’s up later.”
Consistent tracking and following through	Missed work or poorly articulated follow-through.
Comfort with apologizing.	Recalcitrance to admit mistakes.
Personal capacity to make hard decisions and explain them clearly.	Avoidance of “executive duties” to avoid necessary tension.

Using **myFolio** in Service of Trust

A tool must be used thoughtfully and well in order to build trust. Here are some trust-building ideas to consider in the ways you use the myFolio platform.



Goals

- Empower faculty and staff members to make good decisions about the growth goals that are right for them
- Encourage faculty/staff to adjust their goals based on evolving circumstances
- Emphasize growth and improvement over evaluation and perfection



Conversations and Relationships

- Share concerns, questions, and feedback related to faculty performance candidly and transparently as they emerge, engaging with curiosity rather than reprimand
- Encourage leaders to model vulnerability by sharing their own growth goals with faculty and staff
- Ground growth conversations in listening and inquiry, with the faculty/staff member's needs at the center



Structures

- Explore myFolio implementations that move away from traditional hierarchical supervision towards growth partners, PLC's, and peer coaches
- Ensure that leadership holds itself and faculty and staff accountable for meeting milestone deadlines for growth conversations and other supports
- Work towards expectations for performance and effective teaching that are codified and shared transparently