

# Building Your Credibility

## Objective

To identify ways to increase your credibility with others.

## What to Know

Credibility is a valuable attribute in- and outside the workplace. Credibility helps if you are in sales, when you give presentations, deliver training, and share your ideas. No matter your role or position, credibility is something you must earn, and it takes time, patience, and consistency to build it. Here are some suggestions to establish credibility.

- 1. Build your character.** Identify the core values you will not violate. Reflect on what you care about most, be willing to defend your values, and stand up for what you believe in.
- 2. Strengthen your integrity.** Become known as the person that does the right things for the right reasons. To strengthen and preserve your integrity, consider the choices and promises you make and avoid making promises or commitments you cannot keep. When you make a mistake, take responsibility and do what it takes to correct it.
- 3. Strive to be authentic.** Authenticity means you are true to your personality, values, and spirit—regardless of the pressure you are under. Your values, ideals, and actions align, and you are consistently transparent about your intentions and how they translate into your choices and actions.
- 4. Develop and demonstrate expertise while focusing on competence.** Choose an area, focus your efforts, and avoid overwhelm. Always acknowledge what you do not know, as operating outside of your expertise can damage credibility.
- 5. Be transparent.** When you are open and honest, others do not have to guess your motivations or intentions. You inspire trust when you talk openly about your intentions, values, and goals. It is particularly important to communicate openly when sharing difficult news.
- 6. Communicate clearly.** Listen attentively and make thoughtful, informed comments. Strengthen active listening skills and give others your full attention. Ask questions when you require clarification. Speak clearly and confidently and avoid exaggerating facts or using industry jargon to make yourself sound more knowledgeable. Try to focus on eliminating barriers to communication.
- 7. Be professional.** Professionalism shows others you care about your relationships and your work. To exhibit professionalism:
  - control your emotions at work.
  - avoid lashing out when you are tired, stressed, or frustrated.
  - do not take others' comments or opinions personally.
  - remain objective.
  - come to work well-dressed.

- meet deadlines you set.
- always deliver high-quality work.
- avoid making excuses when you perform poorly.

**8. Prioritize accountability.** You not only hold yourself accountable, but you hold others accountable, too. Notice when others make mistakes, but also notice when they are doing things right. If someone performs in an outstanding way, acknowledge it.

**9. Connect with others.** Treat others the way they want to be treated. So, adapt to the needs of the people around you because being relatable fosters a sense of connection.

**11. Show you care.** Show you are invested by having another’s best interests at heart. Be kind yet firm, and demonstrate you are aligned with others’ needs.

**12. Be open to new ideas.** Question your own assumptions without becoming defensive. Be willing to say, “I may not be right. What’s your point of view?” Remain open to new information and ideas that inform your opinions and beliefs.

Building credibility is an important part of gaining trust, and this worksheet will help you increase your credibility with others.

## What to Do

First, answer the following questions.

Identify the core values you will not violate.

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Do you do what is right, for the right reasons? Think about the choices and promises you make. Do you make promises or commitments you cannot keep? If so, what can you do to change this?

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If you have trouble communicating, what can you do to communicate clearly? Be specific.

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What are some ways you can better connect with others?

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Next, use the following chart to track your “credibility practices” over the next month. Taking ideas from the list above, choose different activities to build your credibility in the workplace. Write down who was involved. Finally, rate your credibility from 1-10 following the activity, where 1 = this activity did not build my credibility at all, to 10 = this activity greatly enhanced my credibility.

Date	Credibility activity	Who was involved?	Credibility rating

Did this exercise help you build credibility? Why or why not?

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### **Reflection on This Exercise**

How helpful was this exercise? \_\_\_\_\_

(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

What did you learn from this exercise?

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