ilm

The truth about trust: Honesty and integrity at work
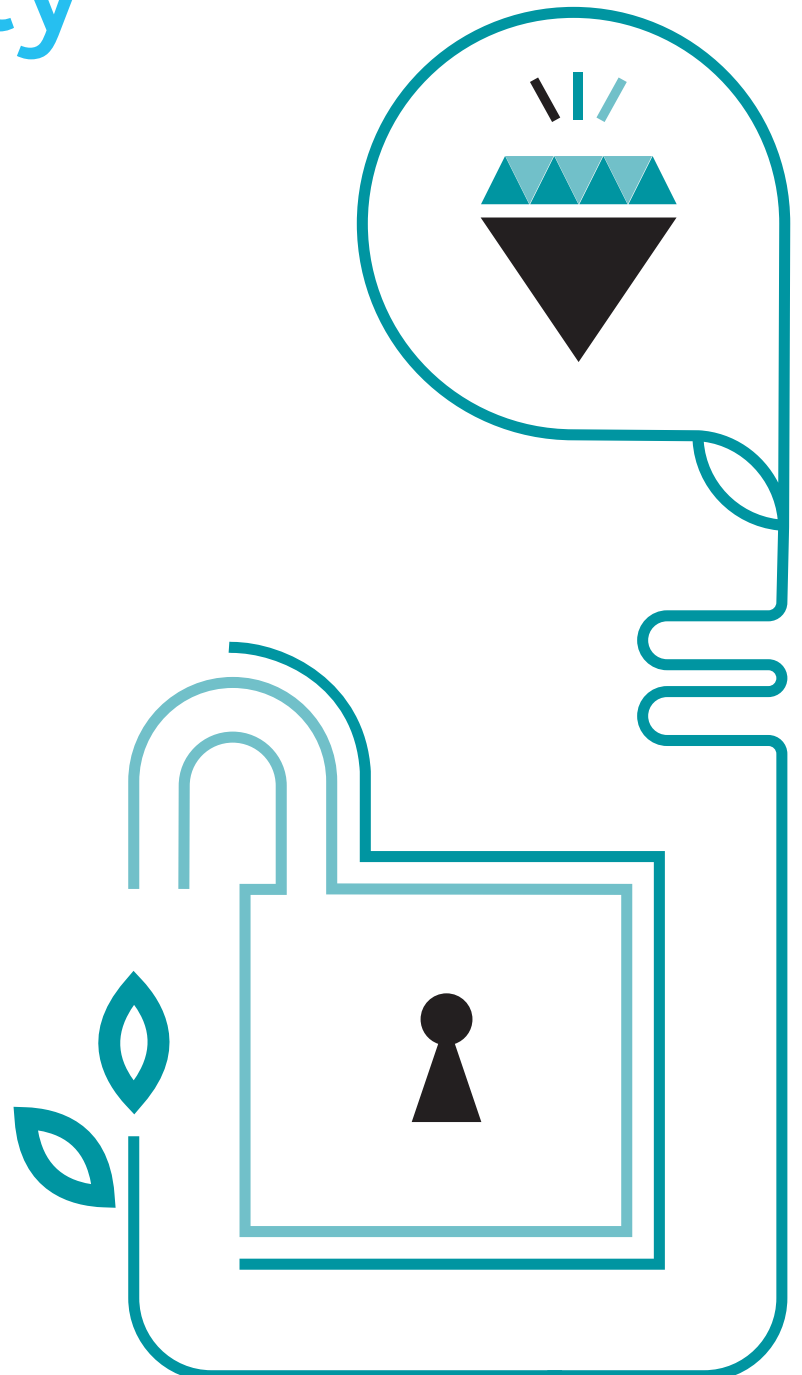
Introduction – Why trust matters

Few leaders would disagree that trust is an essential ingredient for sustainable organisational success. Trust helps organisations to run smoothly, increasing positivity and co-operation, improving processes and driving individual and team performance.

Trust underpins effective working relationships. The more someone trusts a colleague, manager or team member, the greater the likelihood they will co-operate, share information and work effectively together.

By increasing trust levels across their organisations, employers can drive significant improvements in performance by motivating staff to commit additional discretionary effort. It helps businesses to both take and manage risks safely and allows leaders to try new things, essential if an organisation wants to grow and develop. However, trust can be fragile, and it is easily broken.

Ever since ILM's first Index of Leadership Trust report in 2009, we have consistently measured the levels of employee trust in UK organisations and between employees, managers and senior leaders. Over this period we've seen a succession of scandals send consumer trust plummeting in the banking sector, newspaper industry, government departments, and parts of the police service and NHS, leaving leaders across these sectors with the major challenge of rebuilding their reputations.

Against this backdrop, ILM set out to understand how UK organisations can improve the level of trust invested in them by their most important stakeholders – their individual employees. This research explores the current state of trust in business, identifies the most powerful drivers of trust and asks what organisations and individual managers can do to improve this increasingly crucial commodity.

Charles Elvin
CEO, Institute of Leadership & Management

Executive summary

Overall, trust is reasonably high in most UK organisations, with 48% of managers saying they trust everyone or almost everyone in their organisation, while just 8% say they trust very few people or no one at all.

The five fundamentals of trust

The research highlights five fundamental skills and qualities that leaders need in order to be trusted. The single most important driver of trust is openness – 70% of respondents to the survey rank it as one of their top three drivers of trust. This is followed by effective communication (53%), the ability to make decisions (49%), integrity (48%) and competence in their role (42%). Together, these five skills represent the core management characteristics that will increase trust levels and bring associated performance benefits.

The importance of relationships

Managers typically trust their direct reports most highly – those with whom they have a vertical and structured relationship. They trust their colleagues less, and their own manager least for being open and honest and keeping commitments. Trust for managers varies between either very high trust or very low trust, with fewer responses in the neutral middle ground.

We discovered a small minority of employees who distrust their own manager across all measures. This discontented 5% display low levels of trust in their manager's ability to do their job, be open, honest and keep their commitments, suggesting they are not receiving the honest communication and support needed to form a bond of trust with their own manager.

Seniority drives trust

As managers progress through the ranks in their organisations, they typically become both more trusting and more trusted. Senior managers have the highest levels of trust in their organisation (49% net high trust) compared to middle managers (38%), and senior leaders also express higher levels of trust in their own manager, teams and colleagues across a range of factors when compared to middle management colleagues.

At the opposite end of the management journey, first line managers are the least trusting group, with 36% net high trust in their organisation and a worrying one in 10 (9%) saying they trust 'very few' people or 'absolutely no one' in their organisation. Given the importance of this first line management group to organisational performance, their low trust levels should be an area for real concern.

Large organisations suffer most

The research reveals that employees in the largest organisations report the lowest levels of trust, with managers in organisations of over 1,000 staff reporting just 27% net high trust. Those working in the smallest organisations of under 50 employees, where managers and senior staff are more likely to be in direct contact, displayed the highest level of trust across the group – 58% net high trust in their organisation.

Younger managers most positive

The youngest managers, the millennial generation (born in 1981 onwards), are the most likely to say they trust everyone or almost everyone in their organisation (54%), followed by baby boomers (those born between 1946–1964), almost half of whom (45%) say they trust everyone or almost everyone. Generation X, those born between 1965–1980, have the lowest level of respondents saying they trust everyone or almost everyone (44%) they work with.

Millennials generally have the highest levels of trust in their organisation, colleagues, managers and direct reports. Generation X and baby boomers were the most likely to be distrustful of their organisation, with just 36% net high trust, compared to 48% for millennials. Almost one in 10 (9%) Generation X managers say they have very low levels of trust compared to 8% of baby boomers and 6% of millennials, suggesting this middle generation of managers is the least likely to have a positive two-way relationship with their own boss.

70% 9%

of managers rank
openness as a top driver
of trust

of first line managers
trust few people or
absolutely no one at work

Sectors in trouble

The research reveals a pronounced difference in trust levels across different industries and sectors. The public sector is suffering from a trust shortfall, with just 29% net high trust compared to the private (45%) and third (46%) sectors, suggesting that the budget cuts, wage freezes and mass redundancies experienced have had a real impact on trust levels. Over one in 10 (12%) public sector managers say they trust 'absolutely no one' or 'very few' people in their organisation.

We asked managers just how much they trusted their own organisation and analysed the results by industry. The baseline level of net high trust for employees in their organisation is 40% across all industries and sectors, but certain industries stand out as having particularly high or low levels of trust. Most strikingly, central and local government (including the police) suffer from the lowest level of trust from staff at just 10% net high trust, followed by education (32%), and financial services, banking and insurance (34%), which all fall below the average.

We saw that the industries with the lowest levels of internal trust typically scored poorly for external trust, suggesting a link between consumer and employee trust levels. Local government, central government and the police had a consumer net high trust score of –17%, while banking, financial services and insurance were the least trusted by the public, with a net high trust value of –30% – meaning nearly a third more people said they had low trust in these industries than had high trust in them.

Net high trust explained

For the purposes of this report we've analysed responses to develop a consistent measure of trust – net high trust.

This figure adds the positive values, for example 'I trust everyone' and 'I trust almost everyone', and subtracts the negative values, e.g. 'I trust very few people' and 'I trust absolutely no one', eliminating the neutral values. This figure is net high trust.

Recommendations

Organisations wishing to establish or improve trust can do so by focusing on the five fundamentals – openness, communication, decision-making, integrity and competence. Developing these skills in your managers and leaders will drive a more effective and productive organisation.

A focus on these five fundamental skills is particularly important amongst first line managers and the middle managers who manage them. Front-line managers lead the teams that embody the organisation for customers. Improving trust at this level, where it is currently at it's lowest, will have a major bearing on organisational performance.

Targeting time and resources to developing managers through work based learning is a powerful way of helping to build trust, focusing on the core skills identified by this report that drive a more open, communicative and productive workforce.

Report findings

We know that trust is important for building strong and sustainable organisations. Previous research into the impact trust has on organisations has shown that it helps businesses to run smoothly, increasing positivity and co-operation, improving team processes and driving individual and organisational performance.

Trust underpins effective working relationships, leads directly to increased satisfaction and has also been linked to greater organisational commitment[1].

It also impacts upon perceptions, including the perceived accuracy of information and acceptance of decisions from leadership. Conversely, a lack of trust inhibits cooperation and communication, thereby impeding team and individual performance. The more someone trusts a work partner, the greater the likelihood they will cooperate, share information or take some other form of 'risk' that is known to increase individual and team performance.[1]

The Institute of Business Ethics identifies six areas in which trust impacts positively on employees' attitudes, behaviour and performance (see Figure 2).[2]

Trust is an important hallmark of effective organisations[3,4] and there is accumulating evidence that trust has a number of important benefits for organisations and their members[5].

This research provides us with a clear picture of the characteristics and behaviours that drive trust, and what individuals and organisations can do to increase and develop this crucial organisational commodity.
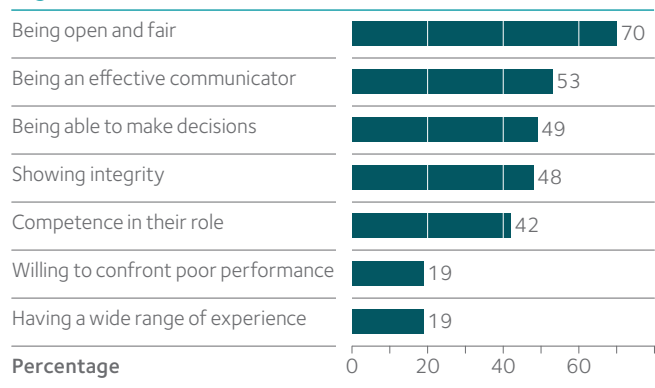
Figure 1: What behaviours and skills drive trust?

Behaviour/skill	Percentage
Being open and fair	70
Being an effective communicator	53
Being able to make decisions	49
Showing integrity	48
Competence in their role	42
Willing to confront poor performance	19
Having a wide range of experience	19

Figure 2: Trust's positive impact on employees' attitudes, behaviours and performance

Trust levels at work

- **Employee engagement** (e.g. extra effort, job satisfaction, commitment
- **Operational efficiencies**
- **Cooperation & problem solving**
- **Information sharing & knowledge exchange**
- **A positive work climate**
- **Individual, group and organisational performance**

1 Mayer, R.C, J.H Davis, F.D Schoorman. 1995. An integrative model of organizational trust. *Academic Management Review.* 20 709-734.
2 Reproduced with kind permission from the Institute of Business Ethics (www.ibe.org.uk). Graham Dietz and Nicole Gillespie, Building and Restoring Organisational Trust (2011)"
3 Argyris, C. 1962. *Interpersonal Competence and Organizational Effectiveness.* Dorsey, Homewood, IL.
4 Likert, R. 1967. *The Human Organization.* McGraw-Hill, New York.
5 Kramer, R. M., A.Isen. 1994. Trust and distrust: Its psychological and social dimensions. *Motivation Emotion* 18 105-107.
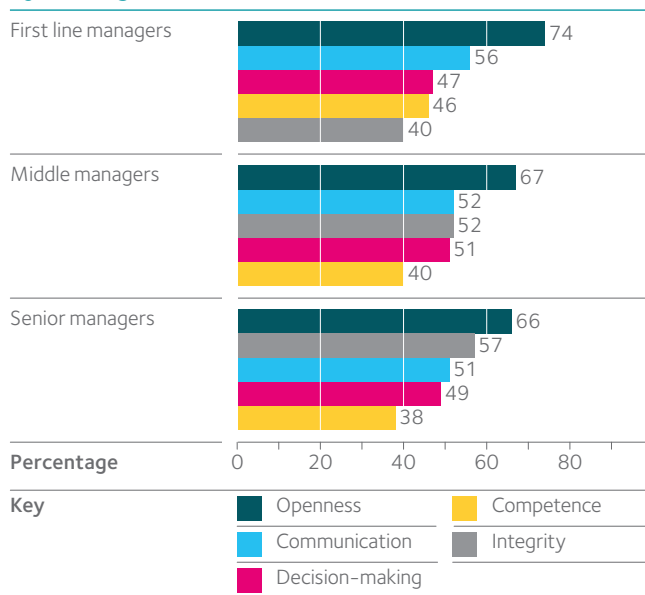
75%

level of net high trust in
direct reports to do their
jobs well

48%

of managers said integrity
was a top driver of trust

Figure 3: Importance of the drivers of trust by management level

First line managers

74	Openness
56	Communication
47	Decision-making
46	Competence
40	Integrity

Middle managers

67	
52	
52	
51	
40	

Senior managers

66	
57	
51	
49	
38	

Percentage   0   20   40   60   80

Key

- Openness
- Communication
- Decision-making
- Competence
- Integrity

Trust 'must haves'

Our research revealed five fundamental skills and qualities that managers need in order to drive trust – openness, communication, the ability to make decisions, integrity and competence.
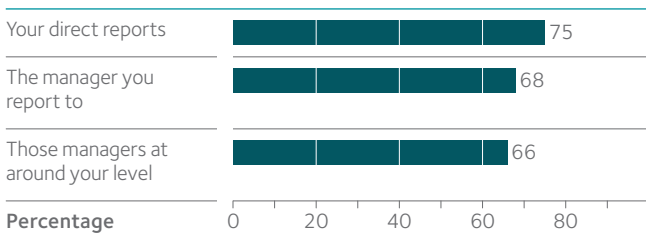
The single most important driver of trust is openness – 70% of respondents to the survey rank it as one of their top three drivers of trust. This is a substantial increase in importance since our last survey in 2011, when it was the 4th most important driver of trust for managers, indicating a growing expectation and desire for an honest relationship with managers and colleagues. Openness is particularly valued in the third/charity sector (77%) compared to the public (69%) and private (68%) sectors.

Effective communication is also essential, with just over half of respondents placing this skill in their top three for inspiring trust (53%) in their managers. This again highlights employees' need for clarity, to know what is expected of them by their managers, with regular feedback on their performance. Communication is particularly valued within the public (58%) and third sectors (57%), and to a lesser extent in the private sector (50%).

Respondents identify the third most important characteristic for driving trust as the ability to make decisions (49%). Managers who can make timely decisions are more highly trusted by their team. We believe this is because their ability to make decisions demonstrates knowledge, confidence and competence in their role, reassuring their direct reports. The link between decisiveness and trust is strongest within the private sector, where 53% of respondents place it in their top three compared to the public (43%) and third (41%) sectors.

Integrity emerges as an increasingly important attribute for modern managers. It is the fourth most effective driver of trust overall (48%) and is shown to increase in importance by age and management level – the older and more senior an employee is, the greater value they place on integrity as a driver of trust. Among senior managers, integrity is viewed as the second most effective driver of trust, with 57% placing it in their top three compared to 52% of middle managers and 40% of first line managers. This suggests that those with the most workplace experience also have the highest needs and expectations of their managers, and that integrity can be seen as a must-have for senior leaders.

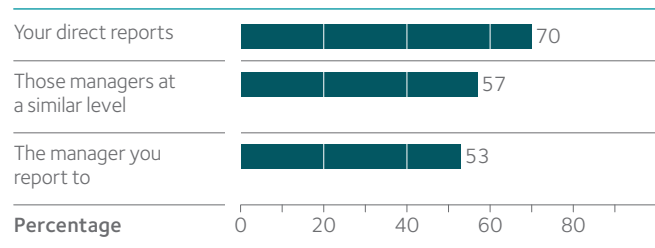## Figure 4: Who do we trust to do their job as well as they are able?

Your direct reports	75
The manager you report to	68
Those managers at around your level	66

Percentage 0 20 40 60 80

Figure 5: Who do we trust to be open and fair in how they deal with other people?

Your direct reports	70
Those managers at a similar level	57
The manager you report to	53

Percentage 0 20 40 60 80

Integrity is valued highest within very large organisations of 1000+ employees, where 50% of respondents rated it in their top three characteristics for trust. Integrity is also viewed as more important within the third sector, where 57% of respondents select it as one of their top three drivers of trust, compared to 48% in the public and private sectors.

In our previous research into trust, between 2009 and 2011, a manager's individual capability was shown to be the most powerful driver of trust. While it no longer ranks as the number one factor in achieving trust, technical ability is still important, particularly to those at the coalface. First line managers place a higher value on competence (46%) than middle (40%) and senior (38%) managers, which is likely to be because competence is generally assumed at more senior levels.

One in five (19%) respondents valued experience in their managers and felt it was important in order to trust them, with willingness to confront poor performance (19%) rated as equally important. While these are relatively minor drivers of trust compared to the five fundamental skills and behaviours, they are still effective tools for any manager to develop in themselves and demonstrate to their teams.
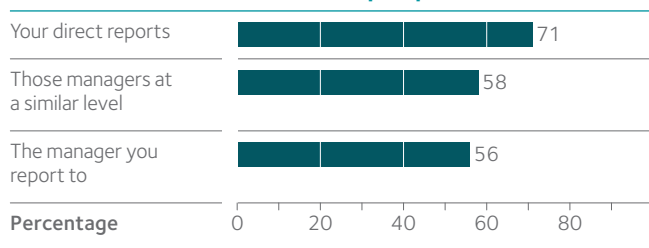
Who do we trust?

We trust people with whom we have a relationship – and the closer they are to us, the more we trust them. Managers typically trust their direct reports more than any other group, with three quarters (75% net high trust) saying that they trust their team to do their jobs well. They are consistently the most trusted across a range of factors including being open and fair (70% net high trust) and being honest and keeping their commitments (71% net high trust).

Managers have a defined relationship with their teams, which typically brings regular one-to-one interactions, shared accountability and a consistent overview of their workload. These frequent and structured interactions lead directly to higher levels of trust.

Both direct line managers and management colleagues have fairly similar levels of trust, although line managers are trusted less to be open and fair (53% net high trust) and to be honest and keep commitments (56%) than colleagues at the same level (57% and 58% respectively). However, we see more extreme responses at the two ends of the trust scale when looking at managers than any other group. Over a third of respondents say they trust their line manager 'very much' to be open and fair (36%) compared to 34% for direct reports and 29% for colleagues, whilst 9% didn't trust them to be open and fair 'at all' compared to just 5% for colleagues and 3% for direct reports.

This suggests that relationships with direct line managers are more likely to be either very positive or very negative. While managers are very trusting of their teams, many need to work harder to persuade their teams to trust them in turn. This can be achieved by focusing on the key drivers of trust in their interactions with team members, being more open, communicating clearly, making and explaining decisions, being ethical and showing competence.

Figure 6: Who do we trust to be honest and keep their commitments to other people?

	Percentage
Your direct reports	71
Those managers at a similar level	58
The manager you report to	56

Figure 7: Trust in organisation by management level

	Percentage
Senior manager	49
Middle manager	38
First line manager	36

We identified a small minority of respondents who distrust their own manager across all measures. This discontented 5% display very low levels of trust in their manager's ability to do their job, be open and fair and be honest and keep their commitments. This small but significant pocket of deep distrust is likely to be causing significant harm to team and organisational performance, representing an opportunity and a challenge for leaders to identify and address.

Seniority increases trust

As managers progress in their organisations, they typically become both more trusting and more trusted. Senior managers have the highest levels of trust in their organisation (49% net high trust) compared to middle managers (38%) and first line managers (36%), and also express higher levels of trust in their own manager, teams and colleagues across a range of factors when compared to less senior colleagues.

For example, 54% of senior managers trust their own manager 'very much' to do their job as well as they are able compared to 43% of middle managers and 43% of first line managers who said the same, a difference of 11 percentage points. Senior managers are more trusting of their colleagues too. For example, 38% trusted them 'very much' to be open and fair compared to 27% of middle managers and 27% of first line managers who felt the same.

These findings suggest that trust and trustworthiness are both important characteristics for managers seeking to progress into senior roles. It also indicates that as they in turn are managed by more experienced and senior managers, they are more likely to experience the five fundamental management behaviours that drive trust.
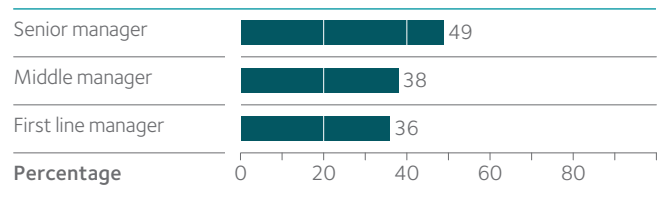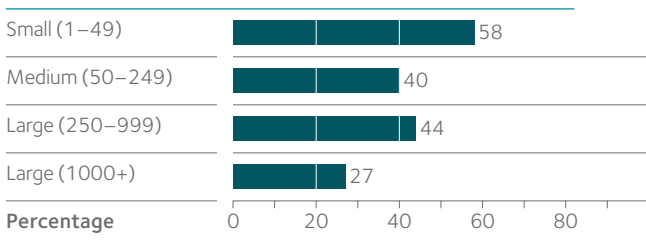
First line managers are the least trusting of all management levels (see Figure 7), with 36% net high trust in their organisation and one in 10 (9%) saying they trust very few or absolutely no people in their organisation. The relatively low levels of trust among first line managers highlights a significant challenge for organisations in engaging with and building solid working relationships with managers at the coalface. It suggests junior managers are less likely than their more senior and experienced colleagues to enjoy the honest two-way relationships they need with their bosses.

First line managers are an incredibly important group of employees for organisations – they lead the teams that interact with customers on a daily basis and manage the majority of employees within organisations. It's concerning that they are the least trusting group and suggests that they feel a lack of trust in their own managers – those at the middle management level.

We know trusting managers are also more trusted themselves, and vice versa. This suggests that junior managers' low trust levels will be impacting on the trust, performance and engagement of their front-line staff. Organisations can address this through targeted support and work based training for first line managers and the middle managers who manage them, to develop the fundamental characteristics of openness, communication, decisiveness, integrity and capability.

Figure 8: Net high trust by organisation size

Small (1–49)		58
Medium (50–249)		40
Large (250–999)		44
Large (1000+)		27
Percentage	0 20 40 60 80	

Figure 9: Net high trust by sector

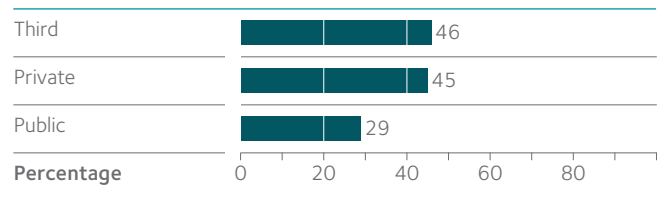|		
Third		46
Private		45
Public		29
Percentage	0 20 40 60 80	

Bigger isn't better

We saw links between company size and trust, with employees in the largest organisations typically reporting lower levels of trust (see Figure 8). Those working in the smallest organisations of under 50 employees, where managers and senior staff are more likely to be in direct contact, displayed the highest level of trust across the group – 58% net high trust in their organisation. This group also displayed the highest levels of trust in their managers and colleagues.

Very large organisations have lower levels of trust across the board, and will need to work harder to increase trust between teams and senior leadership. Just over a quarter (27%) of managers working in organisations over 1,000 people say they had net high levels of trust in their organisation. These employees also typically give low scores to their own managers and colleagues across the board for being open and fair, displaying competence in their role, and being honest and keeping their commitments.

Despite having less trust in their managers, colleagues and organisation, these managers still score their direct reports highly for trust, reiterating that it is those with whom we have direct contact that we trust most highly. Large organisations face a very specific challenge in developing and maintaining trust across structural and often geographical divides, large teams and distant senior leadership. Developing a culture of openness and clearly and consistently communicating goals, vision and values are key to keeping a high level of trust alive.
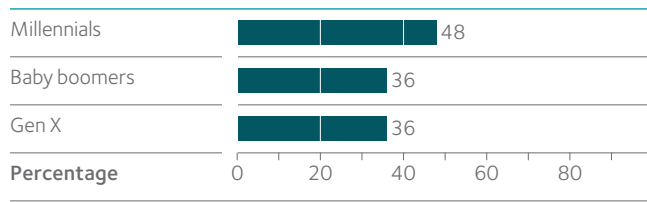
Impact of sector

Managers in the public sector display significantly lower levels of trust compared to their private and third sector counterparts (see Figure 9). Public sector trust in their organisation is much lower (29% net high trust) than that in the private sector (45%) and the charity sector (46%). Public sector managers have similar levels of trust in their direct reports as other sectors, but faith in their own manager is lower than that of their private and third sector colleagues, particularly when it comes to being open and fair (42% net high trust) and being honest and keeping commitments (47%). Faith in their colleagues is also lower, particularly when asked about being honest.

Clearly, public sector organisations face a real challenge in improving levels of trust after budgetary and staffing cuts and wage freezes. Displaying openness, communicating effectively and displaying integrity are fundamental areas for public sector managers to focus on. This is an ongoing theme and reflects the findings from ILM's Index of Leadership Trust 2011 which also showed public sector organisations had the lowest level of trust.

Interestingly, we also found that when an organisation is accountable to shareholders, trust amongst staff is higher. Those working in shareholder organisations trusted their own manager, team and colleagues consistently more than those in non-shareholder organisations. Almost two in five (17%) managers in shareholder organisations said they trusted absolutely everyone they work with compared to 12% in non-shareholder organisations.

Shareholder organisations often have increased visibility of senior leadership and management behaviour. With this visibility comes greater accountability for actions, creating a more open and honest working environment that drives trust.

Figure 10: Net high trust by generation

	Percentage	
Millennials		48
Baby boomers		36
Gen X		36

Percentage: 0   20   40   60   80

29%
level of high net trust in the public sector

48%
level of high net trust amongst Millennials

Impact of generations

The millennial generation (born in 1981 onwards) have the most positive and trusting outlook, expressing the highest levels of trust generally within their organisation as well as in their own managers and their management colleagues. Millennials are the most likely to say they trust everyone or almost everyone in their organisation (54%), followed by baby boomers (born between 1946–1964) at 45% and generation X (born between 1965–1980) at 44%.

Millennials generally have the highest levels of trust across the board in their organisation, colleagues, managers and direct reports. The one exception is in the area of performance, where younger managers are less likely to trust their reports to do a good job (69% net high trust, compared to 75% for baby boomers and 80% for Generation X). This is consistent with the increased likelihood that they are managing less experienced and capable employees.

Generation X and baby boomers are the most likely to be distrustful, with just 36% net high trust in their organisation, compared to 48% of millennials. Almost one in 10 (9%) Generation X managers say they trust no one or almost no one in their organisation compared to 8% of baby boomers and 6% of millennials.

The drivers of trust remain largely similar across all generations, but millennial managers place more importance on experience (28%) than Gen X (15%) or baby boomers (15%). Older workers tend to assume managers will have experience, placing less emphasis on it as a driver of trust than younger staff.

Trust by industry

This research reveals a clear shift in the types of companies which are trusted. While levels of trust have dropped significantly in banks, the press, insurance companies and central government, one in five people (19%) said their trust in the military has risen in the last five years. After a series of very public setbacks (PPI, fraud, phone hacking etc), these are just some of the sectors facing a significant challenge in re-establishing trust with their employees as well as the wider public.

Declining external trust is a widespread organisational issue. Almost a third (31%) of managers said trust in their own organisation had fallen in the last five years, compared to 15% who said it had risen. A drop in trust is an issue for all organisations, and senior leaders need to display the drivers of trust identified in this report to repair the damage – by being open with staff, effectively communicating goals and strategy, and being able to make and explain decisions.

Figure 11: Level of net high trust in institutions from those outside of organisations
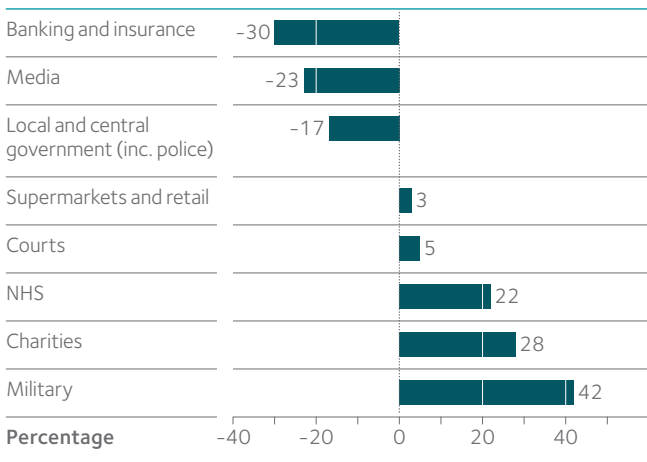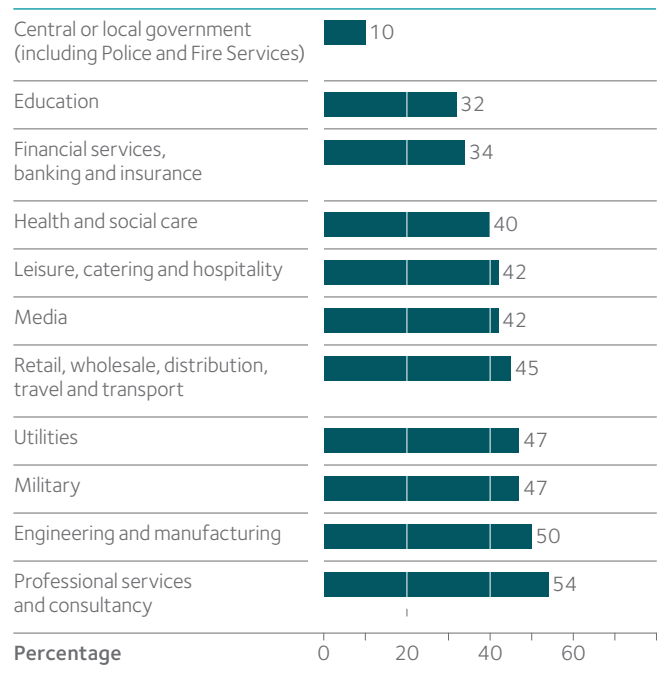
Institution	Percentage
Banking and insurance	–30
Media	–23
Local and central government (inc. police)	–17
Supermarkets and retail	3
Courts	5
NHS	22
Charities	28
Military	42

Percentage: –40, –20, 0, 20, 40

Figure 12: Level of net high trust in institutions from those inside of organisations

Institution	Percentage
Central or local government (including Police and Fire Services)	10
Education	32
Financial services, banking and insurance	34
Health and social care	40
Leisure, catering and hospitality	42
Media	42
Retail, wholesale, distribution, travel and transport	45
Utilities	47
Military	47
Engineering and manufacturing	50
Professional services and consultancy	54

Percentage: 0, 20, 40, 60

Internal and external trust

By analysing the respective levels of internal and external trust in different industries, we were able to identify which industry sectors were the most and least trusted by staff and consumers. While we weren't able to draw a direct comparison across all industries, some clear patterns emerged.

Two of the three least trusted organisations score lowest both for internal and external trust. Local and central government has the lowest level of trust from staff at just 10% net high trust – a shocking figure when compared to the average net high trust level of 40%. Consumers are even less trusting (see figure 11 above), scoring these industries –17% net high trust (against an average net high external trust figure of 3.75%).

Financial services, banking and insurance suffer from below average trust from staff working within those industries (34% net high trust), but an even greater cynicism was felt by consumers on the outside, scoring –30% net high trust, meaning a third more people are distrustful of these industries than have trust in them.

Internal trust is generally higher than external trust across all the industries covered, with employees more trusting of the industry they work in than those outside of that industry. For example, while retail scored 45% net high trust from those working within retail organisations, generally consumers were more pessimistic, scoring it just at 3% net high trust.

The most trusted industries by consumers were the military (42% net high trust), charities (28%) and the NHS (22%). Internally, professional services and consultancy (54% net high trust), engineering (50%) and the military (47%) scored highest.

The link between staff and customer trust levels suggests that leaders seeking to build or rebuild their organisation's reputation would be well advised to begin by measuring and seeking to improve the levels of trust among their own staff.

Conclusions and recommendations

Trust is a powerful indicator of overall organisational health and performance. By measuring, tracking and seeking to increase trust levels, organisations can achieve substantial and sustainable improvements in teamwork, communication, innovation and risk management.

Focus on the five fundamentals
The research highlights five fundamental skills and qualities that leaders need in order to be trusted by their staff. The single most important driver of trust is openness – which 70% of employees ranked as one of their top three drivers. This is followed by effective communication (53%), the ability to make decisions (49%), integrity (48%) and competence in their role (42%).

Together, these five drivers represent a core skills and behaviour set that leadership and organisations should focus on developing in order to increase trust levels and deliver the associated performance benefits.

Engage with your first line managers
Low levels of trust among first line managers should be a cause for major concern. This group of managers are crucial to organisational performance and reputation, yet have the lowest level of trust in their organisations.

In response, organisations can provide targeted support and development for both first line managers and middle managers around the five fundamental areas of openness, communication, decision making, integrity and role competence.

Develop management skills and relationships
We found lower levels of net high trust in direct line managers for openness, fairness, honesty and keeping commitments than for colleagues and team members, with a high number of responses spread between complete trust and no trust at all. A high proportion of employees are experiencing either a very positive or very negative relationship with their manager.

Managers can increase their impact and team performance by improving the five fundamental skills and qualities outlined here through a continuous process of development, and by taking advantage of learning opportunities wherever they arise. Training

and qualifications offer one clear route to enhanced skills and awareness, particularly those which incorporate a large component of work based learning.

Targeting time and resources to the development of direct reports through work based learning is an effective way of helping to build trust. Managers are powerful role models, so by engaging in their own development activities they highlight its value to their teams. At the same time, managers will be developing their own competence – which others see as an important driver of trust.

In addition, the workplace provides many informal learning opportunities. Simply asking for feedback from direct reports and colleagues not only enhances a manager's self-awareness but can quickly build essential communication skills. Being open about how decisions are made, honest about the extent of consultation that informs those decisions, and communicating those decisions in a clear and timely way, all help to raise trust in the decision making process and buy in to those decisions.

Internal and external trust are linked
We've seen a strong link between how trusted organisations are by consumers and the level of internal trust from staff. Where trust has been damaged externally, levels are also likely to be low internally – leading to inefficient organisations.

Where employers are seeking to rebuild damaged reputations with consumers, they should first rebuild internal trust. This can be achieved through a focus on the five fundamentals of trust outlined above, developing these skills and qualities from senior leadership right down to first line managers.

Methodology

The aim of this project was to gauge the levels of trust that managers and leaders have and to see how this has changed since ILM last ran its Index of Leadership Trust in 2011. In aiming to gauge the levels of trust the specific research questions were:

▸ What do leaders and managers identify as the drivers of trust and which do they recognise as the most important?

▸ How do levels of trust vary by sex, generation, seniority, sector and industry?

▸ What are the levels of trust in high profile institutions and have they increased or decreased?

This project does not use the full version of ILM's Index of Leadership Trust and so although some comparisons can be made it is not possible to make full and direct comparisons on every measure. However, it is still based on the six dimensions of trust which provide the conceptual framework to the Index. These dimensions have been identified from the academic literature and are:

▸ Ability – the leader's ability to do their job

▸ Understanding – displaying knowledge and understanding of their employee's or reports' roles and responsibilities

▸ Fairness – behaving fairly and showing concern for the welfare of their employees or reports

▸ Openness – being accessible and receptive to ideas and opinions

▸ Integrity – striving to be honest and fair in decision making

▸ Consistency – behaving in a reliable and predictable manner

These six dimensions can broadly be summarised as Competence (Ability and Understanding), Benevolence (Openness and Fairness) and Integrity (Integrity and Consistency). For the purpose of this research the dimensions can be seen as the drivers of trust, where each is a necessary, though not sufficient condition.

Primary data was collected via an online survey and includes the responses from 1,647 people. They are a mixture of ILM members and non-members (managers, provided by a market research agency panel). The questionnaire used for the survey was developed from that used for the Index of Leadership Trust. It consists of mainly closed response multiple choice questions with opportunities to write comments. The data was cleaned to remove incomplete responses (from ILM Members who had dropped out before completing the survey). The cleaned dataset was then analysed using data software SPSS. The majority of the variables are categorical or ordinal, where there appear to be significant differences in the responses between different groups (for example by generation, seniority or sector) this has been tested using Chi Square and the strength of association indicated by using Cramer's V or Phi.

About ILM

The Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) is the UK's largest management development organisation. We are passionate about great leadership and management, and its power to drive organisational performance and wider economic prosperity.

We are committed to raising awareness and understanding of good leadership and management practice through an intensive programme of independent research. This helps us to maintain a clear picture of what great leadership and management looks like, and how best to achieve it.

We offer a broad range of industry-leading qualifications, training and member services to develop and support leaders at all levels, from first line managers to CEOs. Last year, our network of over 2,500 expert learning providers helped more than 90,000 people to enhance their leadership and management capability with an ILM qualification. Currently, over 35,000 managers enjoy increased professional recognition and support through ILM membership.

As part of the City & Guilds group, we operate internationally, improving leadership and management capability and performance across all sectors.

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