

Process of building credibility



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Building credibility is defined as a two way process: first, building trust at a personal level (trustworthiness) and second, demonstrating the potential in getting the job complete at the trade level (expertise). High levels of perceived trustworthiness and expertise will bear the high levels of credibility. In the context of communication, credibility is actually the importance or confidence projected by audience to communicator. The notion of media vehicles can clearly explain the credibility connotation. The media channels having high points of credibility receive high business standing and respect.

The reason behind this is the tactics used to earn credibility. To build credibility, following types of credibility should be considered carefully. Following are three types of credibility along with process of earning each of them:

- Initial or Educational Credibility: This type of credibility is not always the same. It is derived from the college, seminars, training sessions the person attended or the books he read in his life. Therefore, this type is based on the initial experience of the person. It usually transmits well wherever the person will go, but this is not always the same.

For instance, one person having poor educational background is likely to receive low points of credibility by the audience. Educational Credibility can be erudite by being good learners. It is often said: “ Leaders are good learners” (Doug Fields). Good learners are always willing to learn and people who believe in learning are always trustworthy and trustworthiness and this leads to credibility.

- **Positional or Derived Credibility:** This is not as great as educational credibility because it could be great for where the person currently is. Therefore, it does not transmit very well.

This type of credibility is required when the person enters into his professional and practical life. For instance, the person being assigned as manager for leading a small team must have the positional credibility so as to influence and convince the team members or the professor must have this credibility so that audience could be persuaded. To learn positional credibility, one should learn certified skills and job related expertise.

- **Experiential or Terminal Credibility:** As the name shows, it is related to person`s past experience and success record. Anyone who has demonstrated his uprightness and expertise over a long period of time is said to have experiential credibility. This transmits very well especially when combined with positional credibility. For instance, a person who has consistently shown a good work throughout his life (personally as well as professionally) plus he has a potential in persuading the audiences, is obviously going to be praised and admired at every place wherever he goes. This could be earned by being consistent, stable and firm throughout the life and by projecting the capacity to achieve every target in professional life.

This type of credibility takes time to build up because it stems from the person`s past experience (Kouzes, & Posner, 2003). Credibility, thus is the most important factor of every leader`s life. It is the ability, capacity to motivate your audience and making them listen to you. For this person must have the convincing power for which he need both, trustworthiness and expertise. The deficiency in any one of these can lead to lack of credibility.

This is why it is often said that credibility is easy to earn but the tragic part is to be able to hold it throughout the life.