All That Matters - Core Values - Honesty and Transperency

Trust is one of the most important aspects of workplace relationships. Your relationships with Conrad Labs, your peers and your client teams all require mutual trust. And the key ingredients for building this trust are Honesty and Transparency. Embodying these two basic principles makes it extremely easy to win the trust of the folks around us.

I know these already, you say!
Well, no doubt you do, but still, please bear with me.

>*Honesty is being truthful. We tell others the truth and nothing but.*

>*Transparency is like a window. We give others the ability to look in, a little more, on the truth we speak.*

To explain this a little more. Here's a situation we've all been in.

>*Team time starts at 10 AM.*
>*Omer @ 9 AM: Hey all, running late to work today.*
>This is good. Omer's telling his team well in time that he'll be late, so don't wait for me for the daily standup.

>*But let's rewind and play this a little differently.*
>*Omer @ 9 AM: Hey all, running late to work today. ETA 12 PM. I have PTMs to attend at the kids' school.*
>Notice, how the little extra details give us better insight into what Omer is really dealing with.

>More often than not, these trivial details are all that is needed in our communication as these become the window.

Remember, the window is important. We want people to know that they can trust us.

Here's another example we can all relate to.

>Salman's sitting at work, heads down, working on the feature he is supposed to develop and complete (a true statement), but he's making sure that he tilts his screen in a way that others can't see it (closed window). Even though he's working and will most likely complete his work in time, it is still hard for others to know.

>Now during the day, Salman spends time reading the news, watching videos, catching up with friends, etc. The "closed window" makes his "unsaid statement" about working on feature dev, making the statement untruthful because of all the other activities.
>If he keeps the window open and when someone finds him switching to another tab, he isn't hiding what he is doing.

This is all good and makes perfect sense, you think!
Are there any examples of how the company practices this, you ask?

Ah yes, there are!

The company, Conrad Labs, is made up of individuals. But since you're asking about our practice at the company level. Well, we start with never making promises we can't keep with our colleagues and with our clients.

When a new work prospect comes our way, we are brutally honest with them about our capabilities. It is easy to define the boundaries of "what we can do and what we can't" on the onset.

Take the example of POOLogics. We'd known the founders (Nate and Chris) since our first-ever startup project, conformity (aka IronStratus). They reached out in July 2019 to engage us in their mobile app development. But they also wanted us to take ownership of the platform later, down the line. We had never done any project in Microsoft technologies before, so that is exactly what we told them. And they still stuck around because they knew that CL is in the business of taking ownership and delivering the goods. But being honest upfront helped because when we finally took charge of the backend, the expectation of the dev team needing time to ramp up had already been set.

From our end, we took up the challenge because we knew of the founders' capabilities, the product had promise, and because there was significant equity (2%) on the table for our efforts. All of us have phantom ownership in that startup, so succeeding was the only option, and we all made a push for it.

Let's segway into another example of how we practice this in the teams we build for our clients and partners who are sitting thousands of miles away …

… trusting us with their work, their businesses, their livelihoods. One of the practices at CL to stay true to the H&T principles is that we give our clients exactly what they sign up for. We've talked about the skills and capabilities. We also make sure that we engage the exact team size that we have committed to. For example, putting 5 people on the team means that we put exactly 5 people on that team. No less than that. And because this is a matter of building relationships that will last a lifetime, the clients know exactly who is working on their team and have direct access to them should they need any help.

This aspect of transparency is further strengthened by daily stand-ups and frequent demos. These are the open windows that help our clients and partners look in and provide timely feedback.

The relationships with remote teams cannot be built and maintained without trust. There have been books upon books written on the topic, and owing to time, it is difficult to quote lots of examples and bore you with them. Just know that you are one of us now, and we expect nothing but brutal honesty and complete transparency from you.

These are all good, but what if the team and the client already trust me, and I make a mistake, you ask?
Hmmm, that's a great question, and thank you for asking! There are two basic scenarios, one in which someone else finds out and the other in which we fix things before someone else finds out. Should we behave differently in the two

situations? No! We own up in both cases and tell everyone else how and what happened. Trust me; this will win you more trust 100% of the time.

Just like that, telling others that you don't know the answer to a question is okay too. Even in critical meetings. Be honest. Ask for some time to research or ask your peers for the right answer and then follow up. This too will make you a more trusted professional.

Conrad Labs is based on an honor system. There are no strictly enforced rules or constant policing to keep everyone in line. We do something, and we tell. It is that simple. And now that you're here, It is upon you to contribute to it and to make our culture stronger or not pay attention to it at all.