



Alex Brogan ✓

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Building trust quickly is a
superpower.

Here's how—from an FBI Behavior
Expert:

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Robin Dreeke is a retired FBI Special Agent where he was Chief of the Counterintelligence Behavioral Analysis Program.

He's worked with hundreds of organizations, entrepreneurs, and government entities teaching the art of trust.

Here are his top tips to do it quickly:



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1. Slow speech

In some situations, quick speech is a sign of credibility or intelligence.

Not when establishing trust.

Trust demands understanding and slower speech is key to understanding.

Example:

Speak slower than normal with more pauses to let people digest your words.



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2. Nonverbals

To build trust, you need to use non-threatening non-verbal communication.

It may be intimidating if your chest is high and your chin is up.

Instead, use innocuous nonverbals.

Example:

Smile.

Drop your chin.

Stand at an angle.

Tilt your head to the side.



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3. Set Time Constraints

It can be awkward when someone starts talking to you, and you're not sure when it'll end.

To avoid this, set artificial time limits—they'll know you respect their time.

Example:

"I have to leave soon, but do you have time for a quick question?"



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4. Ask for help

"As humans, we are conditioned to comply with asks for help." - Dreeke

Whenever you do something for someone—or vice versa—trust is built in that relationship.

The key is to make the ask tiny and fast.

Example:

Ask for help thinking about a problem you have.



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5. Ego is the Enemy

Remove ego by discussing their wants, needs, and desires.

People care more about themselves than they do about you, so talking about them matters more and builds trust quickly.

Example:

Ask what someone likes or thinks without injecting your thoughts.



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6. Validation

Humans have a deep longing to be validated.

That means you establish trust with someone whenever you validate their thoughts, feelings, or actions.

Example:

Listen to what they say without judgment, and don't immediately disagree with anything they say.



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7. Ask open-ended questions

Don't ask any ol' open-ended questions.

Ask questions about the content they brought up.

Repeat their words and thoughts back to them.

Example:

If they say, my mom is in the hospital.

Ask, how did your mom end up in the hospital?



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8. Quid pro quo

Aka: give a little to get a little.

Dreeke recommends only using this if other techniques aren't working.

To employ this, you give some information to help them open up.

Example:

Share your thoughts and experiences to help them feel comfortable—be vulnerable.



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9. Gift-giving

This is a cornerstone of building trust quickly.

It's not only physical gifts; it's kind words, sincere compliments, and timely follow-ups.

Example:

After a conversation, text the person and thank them for being open and kind with your thoughts and feelings.



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10. Manage expectations

Nothing destroys trust like unmet expectations.

To prevent this, put your agenda aside and make it about them.

Instead, seek to understand them, not push your talking points.

Example:

Don't interrupt.

Hold your tongue.

Listen as they talk.