

THE IMPACT OF COMPASSION

Who do you trust more, firefighters or mortgage brokers? Librarians or lawyers? Nurses or salespeople? One of the biggest reasons for trust is the perception that someone is concerned beyond themselves for the good of the whole. Firefighters and nurses care for others by nature of their jobs. But we wonder if the salesperson really has our best interest in mind. Don't worry if you are in a less trusted line of work. Resolve to be among the trusted in your field. Show that you think beyond yourself; you will be unique and successful in your industry.

Do not underestimate the bottom-line impact of compassion. The ability to show care, empathy, and compassion is a heavy component of trust. The ability is rooted in two long-standing virtues. The first is being able to "walk in someone else's shoes" and understand things from his or her experience. The second is continually acting out, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." On a basic level, the link between care and trust is fundamental. The aphorism is true; "Nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care."

Though Milton Friedman famously claimed in 1970 that the social responsibility of business is to increase profits, things have changed. Forty years later people want to do business with those who have concern for the whole of humanity. President and CEO of the world's largest independent PR firm and trust researcher, Richard Edelman noted, "We've moved from a shareholder to a stakeholder world in which business must recast its role to act in the public's interest as well as for private gain." (www.edelman.com/trust/2009). Even Adam Smith, the father of modern economics, acknowledged that the ultimate goal of business is not to make a profit. "Profit is the reward one gets for serving the general welfare," according to Author and Professor Walter Wink in his article *Globalization and Empire: We Have Met the Evil Empire and it is US*.

No matter your profession, challenge yourself to start thinking like the customer, patient, client, congregation member, or student. Think of their needs and their challenges. Care about THEM. Give them a great experience. Make them feel valued. Not only is it fun and self-gratifying, but it will also help you gain The Trust Edge.