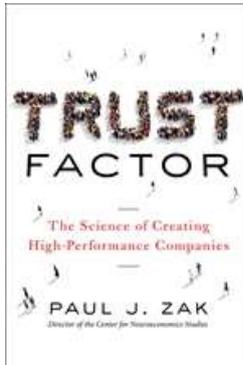


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***The Trust Factor: The Science of Creating High-Performance Companies***

Author: **Paul J. Zak**

Publisher: AMACON

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Reviewer: **Art Pratt, PMP**

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Introduction

Trust Factor. The Science of Creating High-Performance Companies is focused on cultural soft skills at the organization level. The book summarizes multiple years of scientific research into empathy using the release of Oxytocin as the indicator. The Author, Paul Zak, uses his research into empathy to identify key factors that develop employee trust which leads to better organizational performance.

Overview of Book's Structure

Paul Zak uses the letters of his “trust molecule”, O-X-Y-T-O-C-I-N, to describe eight factors that build trust: **O**vation: recognizing colleagues and celebrating success; **eX**pectation: defining goals and challenging teams; **Y**ield: yielding project control to the team; **T**ransfer: self-direction and leadership; **O**penness: transparency; **C**aring: care and support of colleagues; **I**nvest: career investment; **N**atural: honesty and vulnerability with. Each factor is a separate chapter in the book.

He completes the book by adding two chapters on purpose and performance. When trust is combined with purpose, joy in the workplace is created. In the final chapter, a survey method to assess trust against the eight factors, Ofactor Survey, is presented with a case study. Each chapter includes supporting anecdotes and examples from recognized companies ending with a to-do list to implement each policy intervention.

Highlights

By building on years of scientific research in brain chemistry the author has identified the positive and negative organizational factors for the hormone oxytocin. Organizing these factors and comparing them with high-performing corporate cultures the author chronicles implementation of each factor and its impact on an organization. Each of the O-X-Y-T-O-C-I-N factors, are presented in what is likely a priority order for many organizations and while these factors can stand alone, subsequent factors build upon and interact with previous factors.

In a trusting culture adding in purpose can lead to joy in the workplace and a high-performance culture. Developing a purpose narrative was shown to be a unifying element in advancing company culture and performance. In the final chapter, a survey method to assess trust against the eight factors, Ofactor Survey, is presented with a case study. With the anecdotal evidence presented throughout the book along with lists at the end of each chapter, actionable ideas are plentiful.

Highlights: What I liked!

The author describes the book as taking an engineering approach to getting the soft skills right. I found the data-driven, evidence-based approach to soft skills helpful. Many books focusing on soft skills do not provide the evidence to support the findings. In this book, direct evidence is presented to support the value of the factor and its ability to change the culture in an organization.

Another one of the key points in the book in applying the trust factors presented is the use of business experiments to test changes in actual use. By defining experiments and expected endpoints, the outcomes can be evaluated and corrections can be made. Demonstration of the value of the change through business experiments is key to organizational acceptance and adoption.

Who might benefit from the Book?

This book is valuable to anyone who wants to improve organizational culture and team performance. Although the book is targeting corporate culture in organizations, anyone leading a group of people, especially those without direct supervision, will find this helpful in team building, trust and performance.

Conclusion

This is an important book for those looking to change the culture and performance of their organizations and teams. For additional insight into this topic, review Google Project Aristotle and the OFactor website.

For more about this book, go to: <http://www.amacombooks.org/book.cfm?isbn=9780814437667>

Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Dallas Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Dallas Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published. Chapter members are generally mid-career professionals, the audience for most project management books. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact editor@peworldjournal.net.

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Art Pratt has worked as a project manager since 2000. He graduated with a Master's Degree in Engineering from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He holds a Project Management Professional Certification working in development programs in the Medical Device/Pharmaceutical industry. Art is a member of the Madison, WI PMI Chapter.

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