**Trust is a function of two things: Character and competence.**
Character includes your integrity, your motive, and your intent—as seen at the bottom of the model. Competence includes your capabilities, your skills, your results, and your track record—the top of the model. Leaders will discover how to use the 4 Cores of Credibility and the 13 Behaviors® of High Trust to accelerate their team's results.
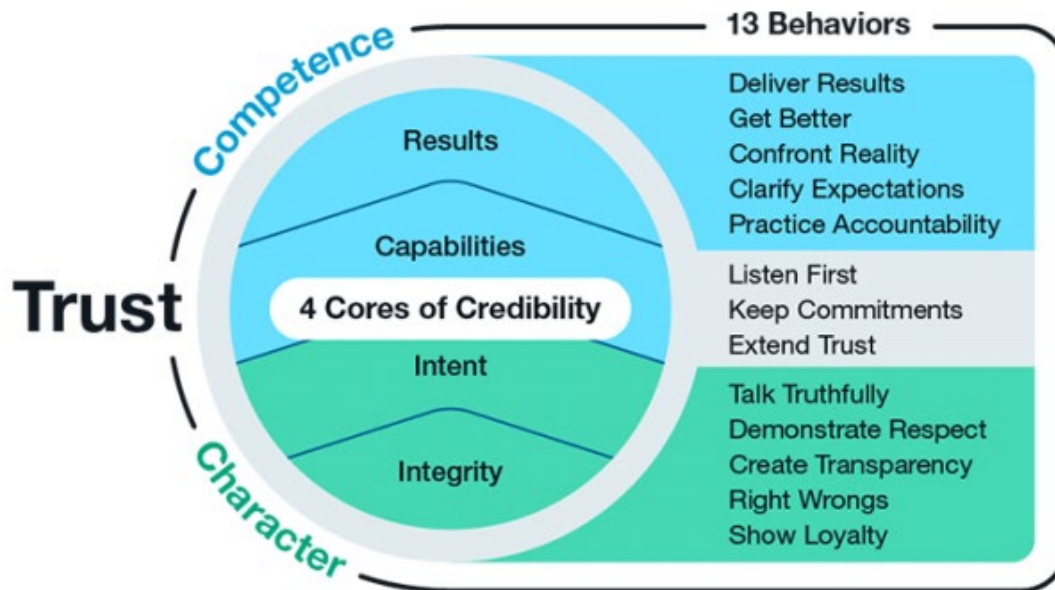
Case Studies of the 13 Principles

1. Talk Straight
- **Positive Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A university dean communicates openly with faculty about impending budget cuts.
  - **Action**: The dean holds a series of transparent meetings, sharing detailed financial reports and explaining the necessity of budget adjustments. They invite questions and provide honest answers, ensuring faculty understand the situation and feel respected.
  - **Outcome**: Faculty appreciate the honesty, leading to collaborative efforts to mitigate the impact of budget cuts.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - **Scenario**: An academic department head withholds information about funding issues.
  - **Action**: The head avoids discussing the financial problems, leading faculty to hear rumors and feel uncertain about their job security.

- **Outcome**: Mistrust grows as faculty suspect the head is hiding information, resulting in decreased morale and engagement.

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2. Demonstrate Respect
- **Positive Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A provost shows respect for diverse academic disciplines within the university.
  - **Action**: They attend various departmental events, acknowledge the unique contributions of each discipline, and ensure equitable resource distribution.
  - **Outcome**: Faculty feel valued and respected, fostering a more inclusive and collaborative academic environment.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A university president consistently prioritizes certain departments over others.
  - **Action**: The president allocates more funding and resources to popular departments while neglecting others, showing favoritism.
  - **Outcome**: Departments that feel undervalued may experience resentment and decreased cooperation, weakening overall institutional trust.

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3. Create Transparency
- **Positive Example**:
  - **Scenario**: An academic leader implements transparent tenure processes.
  - **Action**: They clearly outline the criteria for tenure, provide detailed feedback to candidates, and ensure all evaluations are conducted fairly and openly.
  - **Outcome**: Faculty trust the tenure process, leading to increased confidence in leadership and commitment to the institution.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A department chair makes tenure decisions behind closed doors.
  - **Action**: Tenure evaluations are conducted without clear guidelines or communication, leaving candidates unsure of the criteria and process.
  - **Outcome**: Faculty perceive the tenure process as biased or arbitrary, undermining trust in the department leadership.

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4. Right Wrongs
- **Positive Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A university administrator realizes a mistake in grant allocation.
  - **Action**: They promptly acknowledge the error, apologize to the affected faculty, and take steps to rectify the allocation fairly.
  - **Outcome**: Faculty respect the administrator's honesty and integrity, strengthening trust in leadership.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A dean mishandles a faculty promotion.
  - **Action**: Instead of addressing the mistake, the dean denies any wrongdoing and shifts blame to others.

- **Outcome**: Faculty lose trust in the dean's ability to manage promotions fairly, leading to increased dissatisfaction and disengagement.

5. Show Loyalty
- **Positive Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A department head publicly acknowledges a faculty member's contribution to a successful research project.
  - **Action**: They highlight the faculty member's work in meetings, newsletters, and official communications, giving credit where it's due.
  - **Outcome**: The faculty member feels valued and loyal to the department head, fostering a positive and supportive work environment.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A university leader takes credit for a faculty-led initiative.
  - **Action**: They present the project as their own idea in official forums, ignoring the faculty's contributions.
  - **Outcome**: Faculty feel betrayed and less inclined to support or collaborate with the leader in the future.

6. Deliver Results
- **Positive Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A college dean sets a goal to increase student retention rates.
  - **Action**: They implement targeted support programs, monitor progress, and adjust strategies as needed, ultimately achieving a significant increase in retention.
  - **Outcome**: The dean's ability to deliver on the commitment enhances their credibility and trustworthiness among faculty and students.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - **Scenario**: An academic leader fails to achieve promised improvements in research funding.
  - **Action**: Despite assurances, the leader does not secure additional grants or resources, leaving promises unfulfilled.
  - **Outcome**: Faculty lose confidence in the leader's ability to deliver results, diminishing trust in their leadership.

7. Get Better
- **Positive Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A university administrator pursues advanced training in educational technology.
  - **Action**: They attend workshops, earn certifications, and apply new knowledge to enhance online learning platforms.
  - **Outcome**: The administrator's commitment to improvement is recognized, increasing trust in their capabilities to lead technological initiatives.
- **Opposite Example**:

- o **Scenario**: A department chair refuses to adopt new teaching methods despite evidence of their effectiveness.
- o **Action**: They dismiss innovative approaches, sticking rigidly to outdated practices.
- o **Outcome**: Faculty and students perceive the chair as unwilling to adapt, reducing trust in their leadership and openness to change.

8. Confront Reality
- **Positive Example**:
  - o **Scenario**: Enrollment numbers are declining in a particular program.
  - o **Action**: The program director openly discusses the issue with faculty, analyzes contributing factors, and collaboratively develops strategies to address the decline.
  - o **Outcome**: Facing the reality head-on builds trust as faculty see the director's proactive and honest approach to problem-solving.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - o **Scenario**: A university faces declining student engagement but ignores the signs.
  - o **Action**: The administration avoids discussing the issue, hoping it will resolve on its own.
  - o **Outcome**: Ignoring the problem leads to worsening engagement and faculty frustration, eroding trust in leadership's ability to manage institutional challenges.

9. Clarify Expectations
- **Positive Example**:
  - o **Scenario**: A department chair outlines clear expectations for faculty teaching, research, and service.
  - o **Action**: They provide detailed guidelines, regular feedback, and ensure that all faculty understand their roles and responsibilities.
  - o **Outcome**: Clear expectations reduce misunderstandings and align faculty efforts with departmental goals, fostering trust in leadership's fairness and organization.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - o **Scenario**: A university leader sets vague objectives for a new strategic plan.
  - o **Action**: They provide broad, undefined goals without specific targets or guidance.
  - o **Outcome**: Faculty and staff are unclear about their roles in achieving the plan, leading to confusion, frustration, and decreased trust in leadership's direction.

10. Practice Accountability
- **Positive Example**:

- o **Scenario**: A dean holds regular performance reviews and follows up on departmental goals.
- o **Action**: They address underperformance constructively and recognize achievements, ensuring everyone is responsible for their contributions.
- o **Outcome**: Faculty and staff respect the dean's commitment to accountability, reinforcing trust in their leadership.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - o **Scenario**: An academic leader fails to hold themselves accountable for missed deadlines.
  - o **Action**: They do not take responsibility for their own delays and instead blame external factors or other team members.
  - o **Outcome**: This behavior undermines the leader's credibility and trust, as others see a lack of personal accountability.

11. Listen First
- **Positive Example**:
  - o **Scenario**: A university president seeks input from faculty before implementing new policies.
  - o **Action**: They organize forums, listen actively to concerns and suggestions, and incorporate valuable feedback into policy decisions.
  - o **Outcome**: Faculty feel heard and valued, increasing their trust in the president's leadership and decision-making processes.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - o **Scenario**: A department head makes unilateral decisions without consulting faculty.
  - o **Action**: They implement changes to the curriculum without seeking input or addressing faculty concerns.
  - o **Outcome**: Faculty feel ignored and undervalued, leading to decreased trust and potential resistance to the changes.

12. Keep Commitments
- **Positive Example**:
  - o **Scenario**: A program director promises to secure additional funding for research projects.
  - o **Action**: They actively pursue grants, successfully secure funding, and allocate resources as promised.
  - o **Outcome**: Faculty trust the director's reliability and are more willing to support future initiatives.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - o **Scenario**: An academic leader promises to implement a new faculty development program but never follows through.
  - o **Action**: They make commitments without taking the necessary steps to realize them, leaving promises unfulfilled.

- **Outcome**: Faculty become skeptical of the leader's promises, reducing their willingness to engage in future collaborations.

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13. Extend Trust

- **Positive Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A university vice president delegates the responsibility of leading a new interdisciplinary research initiative to a promising faculty member.
  - **Action**: They provide the necessary resources and autonomy, trusting the faculty member to drive the project's success.
  - **Outcome**: The faculty member feels empowered and trusted, leading to successful project outcomes and strengthened mutual trust.
- **Opposite Example**:
  - **Scenario**: A department chair micromanages every aspect of faculty members' research projects.
  - **Action**: They refuse to delegate authority or trust faculty to manage their own projects, constantly overseeing and interfering.
  - **Outcome**: Faculty feel mistrusted and undervalued, leading to decreased motivation and strained relationships with the chair.

Summary

These academic examples illustrate how Covey's *13 Behaviors of High-Trust Leaders* can be effectively applied—or undermined—in higher education settings. By embodying these behaviors, academic leaders can foster a culture of trust, enhance collaboration, and drive institutional success. Conversely, failing to practice these behaviors or engaging in their opposites can lead to diminished trust, reduced morale, and decreased effectiveness within academic institutions.

Implementing the 13 Behaviors in Your Academic Leadership Role

To effectively integrate these behaviors into your leadership practice, consider the following steps:

1. **Self-Assessment**:
   - Reflect on which behaviors you currently excel in and which need improvement.
   - Seek feedback from peers, faculty, and staff to gain a comprehensive understanding of your trust-building practices.
2. **Set Specific Goals**:
   - Identify key behaviors to focus on based on your self-assessment.
   - Develop actionable plans to enhance these behaviors in your daily interactions and decision-making processes.
3. **Model the Behaviors**:
   - Lead by example by consistently demonstrating the desired behaviors.
   - Encourage others in your institution to adopt these behaviors through mentorship and support.
4. **Foster Open Communication**:

- o Create forums for transparent dialogue where faculty, staff, and students can voice their opinions and concerns.
  - o Actively listen and respond thoughtfully to build trust and demonstrate respect.
5. **Celebrate Successes and Address Failures**:
   - o Acknowledge and reward instances where trust-building behaviors lead to positive outcomes.
   - o When mistakes occur, practice "righting wrongs" by addressing them openly and learning from the experience.

By consciously applying these behaviors, academic leaders can cultivate a trustworthy and collaborative environment that benefits the entire educational community.

Building trust in higher education leadership requires intentional actions, consistency, and emotional intelligence. Here are **12 practical tips for building trust** within academic settings:

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1. Foster Open Communication
- **What to Do**: Create regular opportunities for dialogue with faculty, staff, and students. Encourage open forums, Q&A sessions, and faculty meetings where everyone's voice is heard.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: When people feel their concerns are listened to and addressed, they are more likely to trust leadership and feel valued.

2. Be Consistent and Reliable
- **What to Do**: Follow through on your promises and be consistent in your actions. Set realistic expectations and deliver on your commitments.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: Consistency shows that you are dependable and that people can count on you to do what you say.

3. Acknowledge and Right Wrongs
- **What to Do**: When mistakes happen, admit them quickly and take steps to correct them. Apologize when necessary and offer solutions rather than excuses.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: Transparency in owning mistakes fosters credibility and shows integrity, which enhances trust in leadership.

4. Empower Faculty and Staff
- **What to Do**: Delegate responsibilities and give faculty members the autonomy to manage projects, research, and initiatives. Show trust in their abilities by stepping back from micromanaging.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: When you extend trust to others, they feel empowered and valued, leading to reciprocal trust.

5. Lead by Example
- **What to Do**: Model the behaviors you want to see in others. Demonstrate transparency, accountability, respect, and ethical behavior in your leadership role.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: Faculty, staff, and students are more likely to follow a leader who exemplifies high standards of conduct.

6. Show Genuine Interest in Others

- **What to Do**: Take time to engage with faculty and staff on a personal level. Ask about their challenges, successes, and professional goals, and show interest in their well-being.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: When people feel that their leaders care about them as individuals, it deepens relational trust and fosters loyalty.

7. Clarify Expectations
- **What to Do**: Be clear and transparent about roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations. Ensure faculty and staff understand how their work aligns with departmental and institutional goals.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: Clear communication reduces misunderstandings and helps everyone feel secure in their roles, reinforcing trust in leadership.

8. Be Accessible and Approachable
- **What to Do**: Make yourself available to faculty, staff, and students. Keep your office door open, attend informal gatherings, and invite candid conversations.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: Leaders who are approachable foster an environment where people feel safe to share their thoughts and concerns, building stronger relationships.

9. Support Professional Growth
- **What to Do**: Encourage continuous development by providing opportunities for professional learning, training, and mentorship. Help faculty and staff enhance their skills and advance their careers.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: When leadership invests in people's growth and success, they build loyalty and trust by showing they value the long-term potential of individuals.

10. Celebrate Achievements
- **What to Do**: Recognize and celebrate the achievements of faculty, staff, and students. Publicly acknowledge their contributions to the institution, whether it's in research, teaching, or service.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: Acknowledgment of others' efforts shows that leadership is aware and appreciative of their work, which fosters goodwill and mutual respect.

11. Encourage Collaboration and Teamwork
- **What to Do**: Promote an inclusive, collaborative environment where departments, faculty members, and staff work together toward shared goals. Facilitate interdepartmental projects and interdisciplinary research.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: Collaboration builds trust by creating a sense of shared responsibility and mutual respect, reducing silos within academic institutions.

12. Be Transparent About Decision-Making
- **What to Do**: Clearly explain the rationale behind institutional decisions, especially those involving budget, resource allocation, policy changes, or strategic plans. Share data, reasoning, and outcomes openly.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: Transparency in decision-making prevents rumors and suspicion, creating a culture of openness and fairness.

Bonus Tip: Practice Active Listening

- **What to Do**: Listen carefully and attentively during meetings and conversations. Reflect back what you've heard to ensure understanding, and avoid interrupting. Respond thoughtfully and take action based on input received.
- **Why It Builds Trust**: Active listening signals that you respect others' opinions and are genuinely interested in their contributions, strengthening personal connections and trust.

Tailoring These Tips to Academic Leadership

In academic leadership, trust-building is particularly important because leadership decisions directly impact faculty development, research opportunities, and student success. By adopting a trust-centered leadership approach, you not only build stronger relationships but also create a more productive, innovative, and cohesive academic environment.