



The Focused Fire Newsletter - Copyright © Affinity Systems LLC, June, 2014 Issue 12

"You may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all of the people all of the time." Abraham Lincoln



Trust is the glue for civilized interaction and essential for sustaining all relationships, whether personal, business, or political. While an intangible, trust is one of the most powerful words in our vocabulary.

In a society, at work, at home or as part of our religion, there are shared values, including ethics, morals, and implied responsibilities for others. Obviously, religions and populations throughout the world have different value systems. In many cases, although flawed logic, people interpret shared values as being for the greater good, and violation of standards results in distrust and soiled reputations. In some countries, the consequences are extremely severe.

Reputation is one measure of trust. If people are truthful, honest, and fair in their dealing, and have personal integrity, most enjoy favorable reputations even when others disagree with their politics or perspectives. People with good reputations find it easier to get things done and participate in commercial activities. The reason, people trust them to do the job and do it right. Logically, everyone fails at some point, and trust implies accountability and taking responsibility, thereby starting the process of rebuilding trust. Given a lack of contrition for failure in relationships, additional distrust replaces what might otherwise start a healing process.

Following are key elements of trust that intertwine and support each other. These are honesty, quality, and integrity, being there for each other and forgiveness when possible or requested. We are all measured on how well we walk the talk, and keep promises and commitments.

Not telling the truth, either by out-right lying or through deception, has consequences. Friedrich Nietzsche summed it up neatly, "I'm not upset that you lied to me, I'm upset that from now on I can't believe you."

Given that trust is the fabric of our society, how do American institutions measure up?

Financial Institutions

CHICAGO (February 7, 2014) Americans are fed up with the excessive compensation and lack of integrity of top corporate managers, according to the latest data from the Chicago Booth/Kellogg School Financial Trust Index. The overall index's collective measure of trust held steady at 24 percent. **Chase Financial institutions**

Government

Following are the results of the Harvard University's Institute of Politics, trust levels from Millennials.

	2010	2014	Delta	
Federal Gov	29%	20%	<09>	
President	44%	32%	<12>	
Congress	25%	14%	<11>	
Supreme Court	45%	36%	<09>	
<hr/>				
Total	143	102	<41>	
Average	35.75	25.5	<10.5>	<28.7 total>
<hr/>				
US Military	53%	47%	<06>	
United Nations	40%	34%	<06>	
Wall Street	11%	12%	01	
The Media	17%	11%	<06>	
NSA		24%		

This slice of our population represents our future. The numbers among other demographics vary, but these serve our purpose. The confidence, or trust, in our three governmental bodies has dropped by 28.7% in the last four years, trending downwards each year. Business fares no better, with the same approximate percentage approval as overall government. The most distressing number is that Millennials have greater trust in the United Nations than in America.

Given this data, what conclusions are drawn?

It is a given that much of the mistrust is caused by lies that become increasingly obvious to everyone. These include Benghazi, use of the IRS and other governmental agencies for political good, fast and furious, the Veterans Administration, and the list goes on.

There is an obvious truth, that damages done to democracy by this administration will affect Republicans, Democrats, and Independents, alike. In any case, our children and grandchildren will pay the price of lost freedoms and economic opportunity.

What is not so obvious is the deliberate attempt by both parties to split the American people into ever smaller, easier to control fractions. Part of the reason is the loss of common values, and rampant mistrust. Even the media, once regarded as the fourth leg of our government, the protector of freedoms, enjoys only 11% trust among the Millennials, and they are tech savvy. The big question remains. Why do we let the government and press, the least trusted people in the United States, tell us how to think, not only about each other, but to swallow propaganda about what a great job they are doing? They have clearly demonstrated a total lack of managerial skill and refuse to take responsibility for their actions, with either, "I didn't know," "I wasn't responsible," "George did it," or "it has been broken for 50 years, as the Veterans Administration. If they do not know, and are not accountable, why do we, the people that hire them, not throw them out on their well-cushioned butts?

Business has become fair game for not investing stored up capital and creating more jobs. The answer is that everyone hoards or saves when facing uncertainty, in this case caused by unnecessary regulation and distrust. When the government does literally anything without consequence, distrust levels rise accordingly. In our personal lives, faced with uncertainty, we defer large unnecessary expenses as long as possible. That is smart money management. Only the government seems to be immune from spending sprees that jeopardize the economy.

The last and the most obvious observation is the implication that Americans lack a common value system. The United States once valued the rule of law, one that our government appears dedicated to repealing. I submit that this metrics indicates we all suffer the same frustrations and in general share the common values spelled out in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights.

Because some readers may be unfamiliar with, or forgotten the contents, following are the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights.

The Declaration of Independence

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life,

Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, -- That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

The Bill of Rights

(The following is a transcription of the first ten amendments to the Constitution in their original form. These amendments were ratified December 15, 1791, and form what is known as the "Bill of Rights")

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment II

A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and

particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

Amendment VII

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

There are additional amendments, but these form the original core of the Bill of Rights.

Summary

The people determine changes to the values for the country, spelled out in the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights. Although imperfect, these documents form a set of common values, and the debate over the meaning will continue, requiring functional and responsible legislative bodies and courts. Our elected officials are accountable for the enforcement of, and conforming to, the Constitution. The President and every member of Congress and the Senate take an oath promising to uphold the Constitution, and are not above the law. The ultimate betrayal by government is when officials use the mechanisms of law to promote themselves and/or ideals non-conforming to the will of the people.

Ultimately, the voters are responsible for the government, through actions at the ballot box. We vote politicians into office, and when they violate our trust, we must vote them out. While many Americans do not trust the process because it is tainted with big money or political chicanery, voting is one of two actions available. The other is getting involved in the process itself. We have the responsibility of performing due diligence, finding out the facts about the people and policies being voted on. Citizens reap the consequences for abdicating their responsibility to vote.

Our job is to roll up our sleeves, clean-up government, restore trust to our systems, and provide opportunities/freedom to future generations.

Wayne L Staley

Owner/Systems Consultant/Author

Affinity Systems LLC

Rothschild, WI 54474

715-573-8911

wstaley@affinitysystemsllc.com