



Individual Progress ► Collective Success

Leadership from a Distance: Driving Effective Virtual Teams



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- ▶ Passionate about people development, self-awareness, and leadership
- ▶ Specializes in learning strategy for people and organizations across many different industries in the U.S. and globally
- ▶ Recruited and led multiple remote and globally-dispersed teams for several organizations within the U.S. and LATAM
- ▶ Over 15 years' experience in roles that include teaching, leading, and consulting
- ▶ Master's degree in *Leadership*, Graduate concentration in *Adult Learning Methods & Instruction*, and currently pursuing Doctorate in *Transformational Leadership & Change*.
- ▶ MBTI®, FIRO-B®, and CPI 260® Certified

Agenda

Topic	Outcome
1- <i>The Changing Space and Place of Work</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore the evolving shape and place of work and trends for virtual teams in organizations
2- <i>The Virtual Leader</i> 3- <i>Five Skills Areas of the Virtual Leader</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examine key virtual leadership strategies to support team development and function
4- <i>Thoughts and Takeaways</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider personal and organizational strategies that can impact and improve the effectiveness of virtual teams



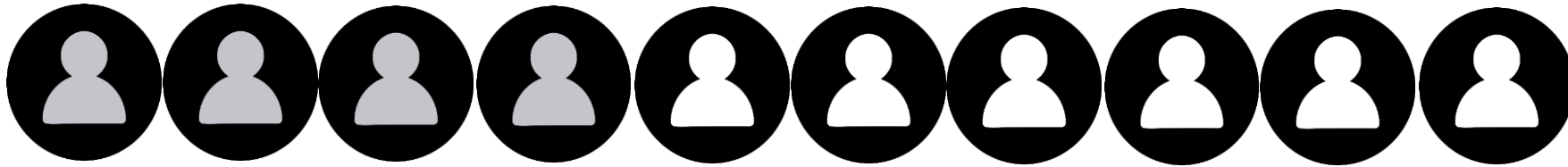
The Changing Space and Place of Work

1

The Changing Space and Place of Work

- ▶ Balanced my checkbook
- ▶ Paid monthly utility bills
- ▶ Sent a B2B domestic wire transfer
- ▶ Bought groceries for the week
- ▶ Purchased a birthday gift for a friend
- ▶ Bought craft supplies for a new project
- ▶ Returned décor that didn't work in my space
- ▶ Reconnected with a friend from long ago
- ▶ Wrote a proposal to help a new leader build cohesion across his management team
- ▶ Collaborated with my work team on a new service for Team Building
- ▶ Participated in a lecture on an interesting topic
- ▶ Delivered and passed by Doctoral degree Proposal Defense (officially on dissertation now!)
- ▶ Reconciled a medical billing error for a doctor visit
- ▶ Binged-watched Season 5 of the series "Vikings" (my new fav)

The Changing Space and Place of Work



4 in 10 American workers spend at least some of their time working remotely

- ▶ Attract better talent
- ▶ Be able to hire the right person for the role
- ▶ Employee/Workforce Demands for flexibility in their work
- ▶ Employee Retention
- ▶ Rapid Business/Personnel Growth
- ▶ Logistics / Physical Space Limitations
- ▶ Geographic dispersion of business

The Changing Space and Place of Work

- ▶ This trend is **on the rise**
- ▶ Employees are spending **more time** working remotely

Employees who work remotely *in some capacity* has risen from **39%** to **43%**.

Employees who work remotely *80-100% of the time* has risen from **24%** to **31%**.

Employees who work remotely *100% of the time* has risen from **15%** to **20%**.

Source: Gallup's State of the American Workplace report, 2016

The Changing Space and Place of Work

- ▶ US-based technology giant launches flexible work timing/work from home program
- ▶ Company has around 80,000 employees globally
- ▶ New flex work option extended to 80% of employees, who are free to work from anywhere.
- ▶ As a result of its workplace transformation since 2012, [Cisco](#) has saved \$196 million in year-on-year real estate costs, while garnering \$294 million through building sales. Total savings of \$490 million.
- ▶ At the same time, employee satisfaction has ***increased dramatically.***



Source: Business Standard report, 2019

The Changing Space and Place of Work

- ▶ Industries where **3+ of 10 employees** are now remote workers:



Source: Gallup's State of the American Workplace report, 2016

The Changing Space and Place of Work

► Industries demonstrating % growth in employees who work remote



FINANCE/INSURANCE/REAL ESTATE

TRANSPORTATION

MANUFACTURING OR CONSTRUCTION

HEALTHCARE

COMPUTER/INFORMATION SYSTEMS/MATHEMATICAL

LAW OR PUBLIC POLICY

ARTS/DESIGN/ENTERTAINMENT/SPORTS/MEDIA

COMMUNITY/SOCIAL SERVICES

SCIENCE/ENGINEERING/ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION/TRAINING/LIBRARY

Source: Gallup's State of the American Workplace report, 2016

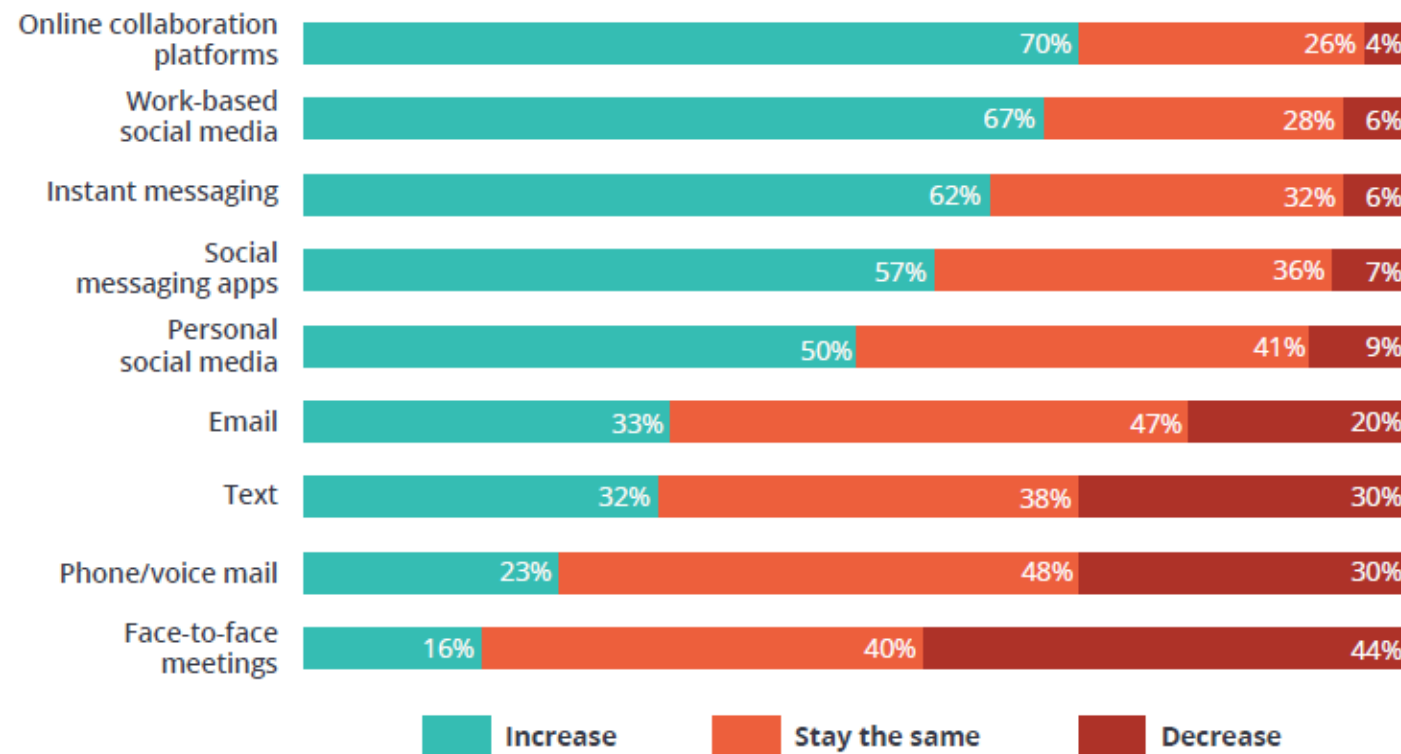
The Changing Space and Place of Work

Global Move Towards Virtuality

PHYSICAL MEETINGS LOSING OUT TO VIRTUAL COLLABORATION

Face-to-face meetings and phone meetings are on the decline, while work collaboration platforms are on the upswing.

Figure 1. Expected use of communications channels in the next three to five years



n = 11,070

Source: Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends survey, 2018.

Deloitte Insights | deloitte.com/insights

The Changing Space and Place of Work

The Result?

1. *Increased proliferation of organizations and industries who use and rely on **remote workers** and **virtual teams** to achieve results.*
2. *Increased **personal flexibility** in the job market to work within a desired job or industry, from anywhere.*
3. *Global move towards **virtual work** conditions and virtual collaboration, even in fully co-located and on-site teams.*

***The New
Normal***

Share with a partner

- ▶ How are you experiencing the “new normal” personally?
- ▶ To what degree does your organization:
 - ▶ use remote employees or teams and/or
 - ▶ rely on getting work done through virtual means or virtual collaboration?



The Changing Space and Place of Work

- ▶ The Organization's responsibility in responding to (increasing) virtuality and the use of remote teams:

1

Provide the Tech & Tools Employees will need to be successful

2

Appoint a capable virtual leader

3

Maintain connection to Emotional, Social, and Workplace needs of the employees

?

Consider:

- ***How would you say your organization is doing on these 3 essential responsibilities?***



The Virtual Leader

2

The Virtual Leader

Fred works for *Alliance*, a purveyor of technology to support financial and point of sale transactions with award-winning software. *Alliance* has garnered much success in their local area, with their offices in Fort Lauderdale, Fl. This past month, the Sales team received a referral from a customer and later signed the company's first contract for deployment outside of the local area.

Fred, a proven leader, has just been assigned to lead the team who will be responsible for installing the new credit card system software for a large bank system in the state of Texas. Fred will be relocating to Austin, TX to serve as the point of contact for the duration of the project (estimated at 1 year).



The Virtual Leader

Given the project urgency, the company hired a team of remote programmers and installers who are located around the world. Instead of bringing the new staff together in a conference room to introduce their new manager, the team has been tasked to begin the new project ASAP. Fred was given a list of the new team members and their contact details.

Margaret, Alliance's president, has just visited with Fred to congratulate him on the new project and his upcoming move, and, further, to let him know she is eager to hear his plans for how he will bring the talented new team together to hit the ground running with effective collaboration.



Margaret

The Virtual Leader

Fred is excited about his new role, but wonders:

- *How is leading from a distance different than leading a co-located team?*
- *What are some of the skills needed to be a “capable virtual leader”?*



The Virtual Leader

- ▶ Virtual leadership is **inherently more complex**.

Source: Pauleen, D. J., 2004, Journal of Management Information Systems

- ▶ Today, it is widely recognized that virtual leaders need **relevant skills** to operate in a virtual environment AND that these skills are not expressly the same as those needed to lead traditional or co-located teams.
- ▶ Virtual leaders require different, additional, or enhanced skills to succeed **in a virtual leadership capacity**.

Source: Dulebohn, J. and Hoch, J., 2017, Human Resource Management

"70% of managers have at least 1 remote team member."

Source: SHRM

The Virtual Leader

**Additional
Communication
Skills**

**Depth of
Understanding in
collaborative
technology**

**Ability to Influence
and Build Trust and
Relationships with
dispersed team
members**

Dulebohn, J. and Hoch, J., 2017, Human Resource Management

**New Set of
Coordination and
Control Mechanisms
for work is
processed**

**Ability to read
personal and
contextual nuances
in a world of e-
Communication**

**Distinct attention to
the “flow” of team
processes to head
off snags and
derailing issues**

**Ability and methods
to build
relationships in a
virtual environment**

Pauleen, D. J., 2004, Journal of Management Information Systems

How the virtual team works and interacts = *Cues for building and maintaining Relationships and Trust in and among team members*

★ Leader is the moderator of Team Communication, Relationships, and Trust



5 Skill Areas of the Virtual Leader

3

5 Skill Areas of the Virtual Leader

Capable Virtual Leader Skill Area

What it Looks Like

#1

Leader as Champion of Operational Success

- Demonstrable Results
- Clear Team Goals
- Role Clarity
- Common Purpose
- Management by SMART Goals vs. Proximity/Time Management
- Suitable processes to support virtual work-flow
- Recruitment of team members who can operate effectively in a remote environment
- Supportive Onboarding
- Ongoing Employee Development

Please share with a Partner:

How might accomplishing one of these look different in a virtual environment?

5 Skill Areas of the Virtual Leader

Capable Virtual Leader Skill Area

What it Looks Like

#2

Leader as Creator of Communication Norms and Predictability

- Consistent communication (team meetings, project coordination, etc)
- Clear, high quality communication peer-to-peer, peer-to-client, peer-to-manager.
- Cascading Communication
- Expectations and norms around how and when to reach out + how and when to respond
- Team members know what dependability and consistency is expected of each other
- Tools for virtual collaboration that reduces “distance” – web cams, voice, interactivity
- Respect for team members (time zones, working hours, client responses)
- Employee development to be effective communicators in a virtual environment
- Appreciation of personal communication styles and flexing to needs of others

5 Skill Areas of the Virtual Leader

Capable Virtual Leader Skill Area

What it Looks Like

#3

Leader as Mediator of Distance

- Transparency and awareness of team members, one to each other, and to operations, forming “shared context”.
- Inclusion (vs Isolation) of individuals
- Increased social connections
- Regular showcasing of team member contributions
- Teamwork and sense of community
- Humanizing the team members

3 Dimensions of “Distance”: *Physical, Operational, and Affinity Distance*

Affinity Distance leads to: Trust decline by 80%, Cooperative behaviors decline by 80%, Org. commitment and satisfaction decline by 50%, Innovation declines by 90%.

“When leaders learn to lift the veil of virtual distance, people are able to see in others what matters most- what inspires them to act on behalf of others- their mutually shared humanity.”

Source: Karen Sobel-Lojeski, Harvard Business Review, 2015

5 Skill Areas of the Virtual Leader

Capable Virtual Leader Skill Area

What it Looks Like

#4

Leader as Nexus for Building Strong Workplace Relationships

- Recognition of Diversity among team members
 - Surface Diversity
 - Personality Diversity
- Appreciation of differences
 - Understanding of each other
 - Tools to flex to each other's needs for communication, interaction, decision-making, and approach to work
- Team awareness of individual roles and contributions to build dependability among team members
 - Role clarity
 - Confidence peer-to-peer, peer-to-manager
- Individual voices are heard
- Differences are recognized (vs misunderstood)

5 Skill Areas of the Virtual Leader

Capable Virtual Leader Skill Area

What it Looks Like

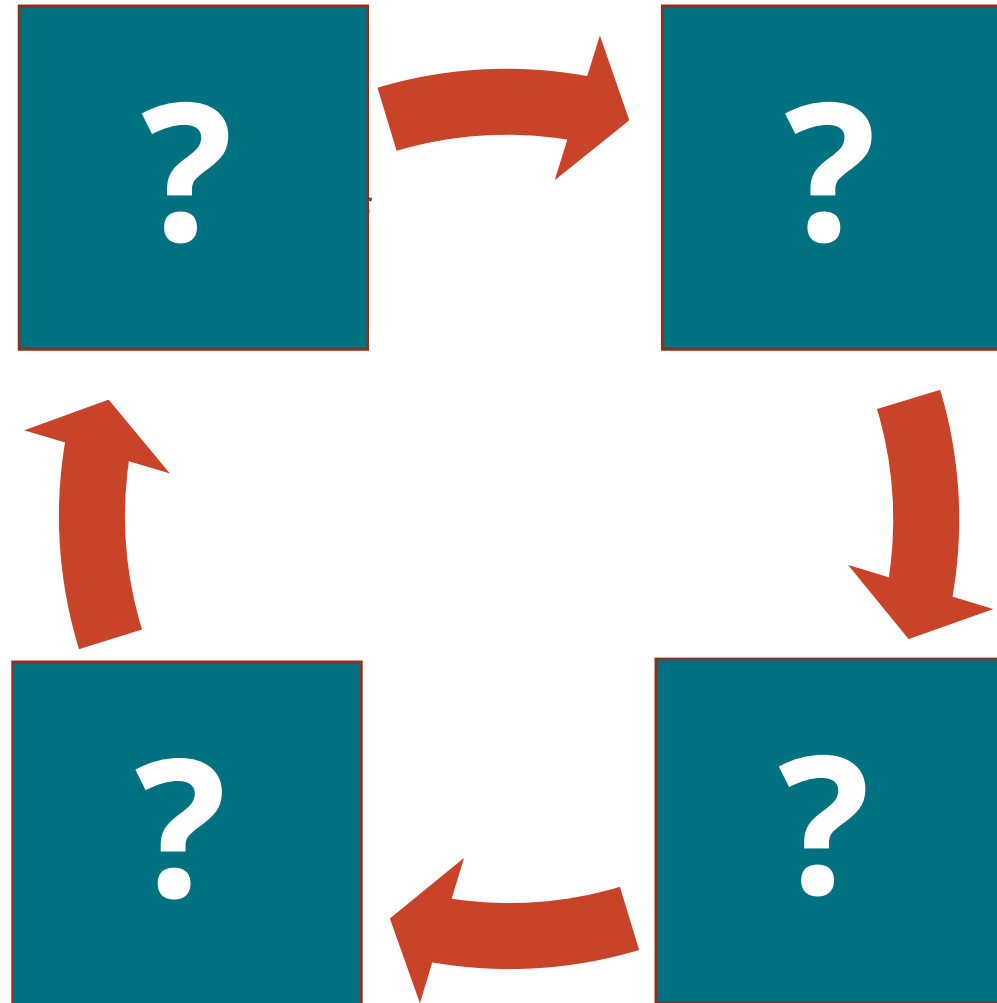
#5

Leader as Central to Building Trust

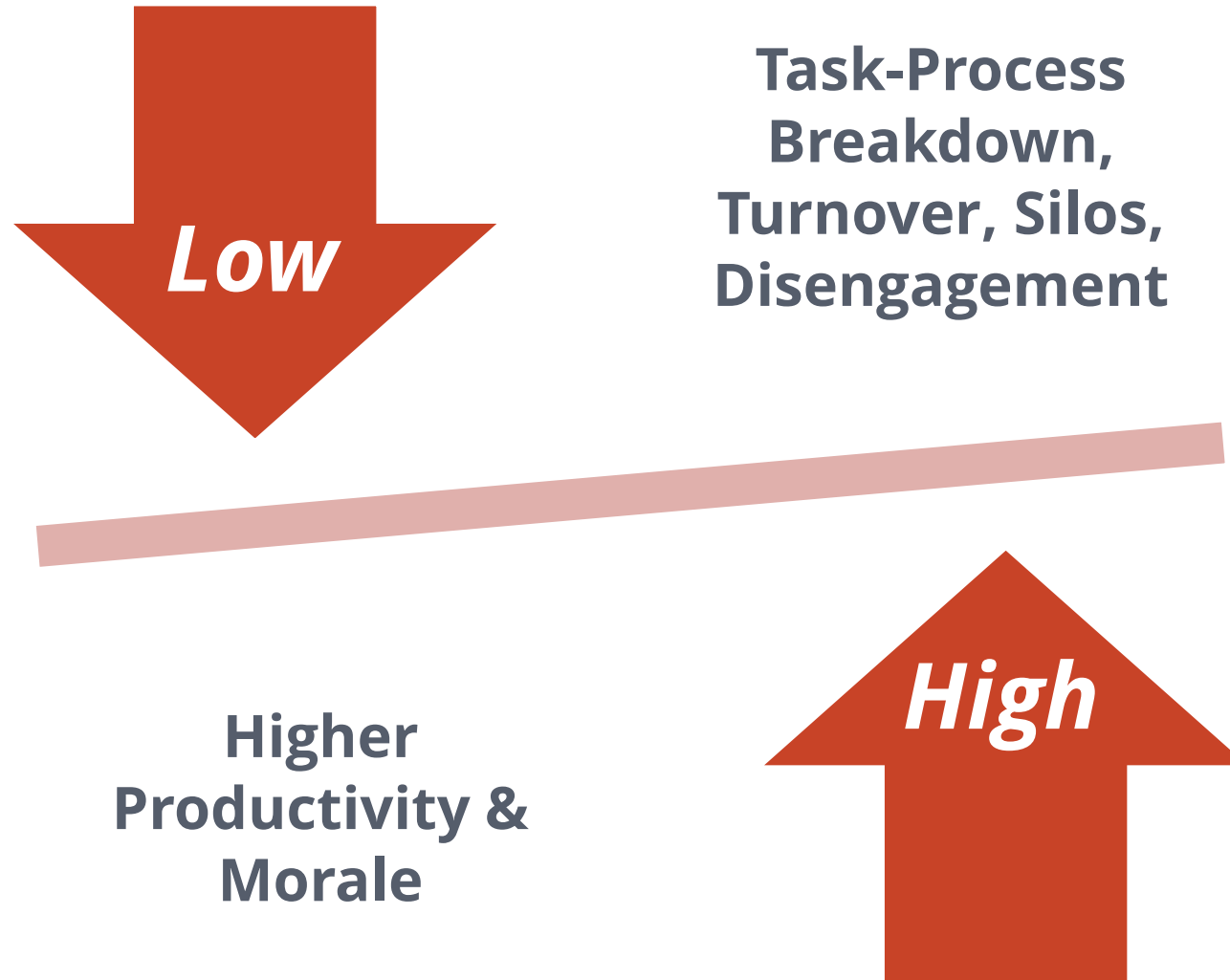
- Employee-to-Org trust that there is reasonable employee support
- Peer-to-Peer trust to depend on each other and to collaborate (vs. Silos)
- Employee-to-Manager trust is built and maintained through ongoing support
- Individual appreciation and shared context are high, creating a space for individual contribution and risk taking to share perspective and disagreements.
- Employees have the tools to address conflict, differences in ideas, and to do so aligned to agreed-upon norms for working together.

Avoiding the Trust Trap

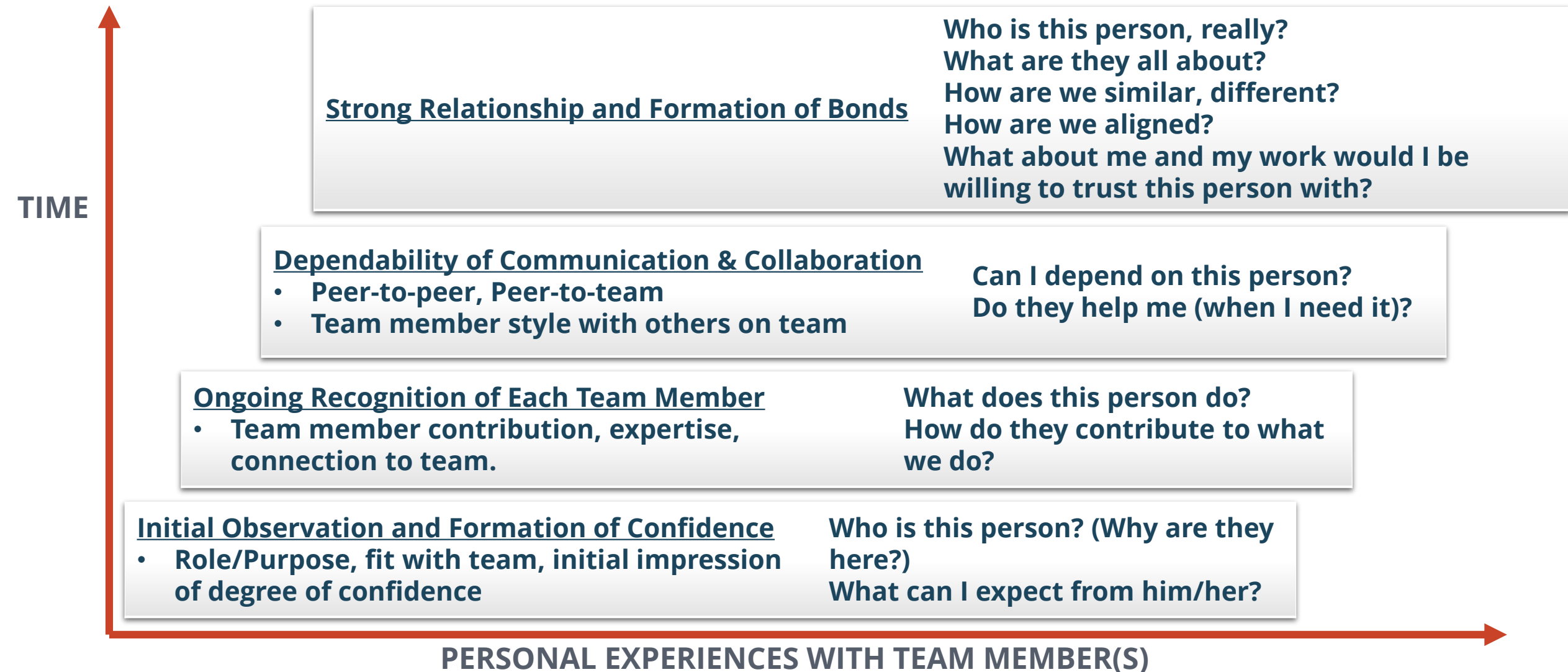
The Trust Trap



The Trust Trap



Building Trust





Thoughts and Takeaways

4

Thoughts and Takeaways

Capable Virtual Leader Skill Area	Rank order of personal strength
1- <i>Leader as Champion of Operational Success</i>	
2- <i>Leader as Creator of Communication Norms and Predictability</i>	
3- <i>Leader as Mediator of Virtual Distance</i>	
4- <i>Leader as Nexus for Building Strong Workplace Relationships</i>	
5- <i>Leader as Central to Building Trust</i>	

Thoughts and Takeaways

***Please write your
response to 2 prompts:***

**1 “Working Well”
Strategy that
helps me in
driving effective
virtual teams**

**1 “New” Strategy
I will implement
to help me in
driving effective
virtual teams**

Thank you!

