Why teachers trust school leaders

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Abstract
Purpose
Trust among teachers in schools is significantly related to student achievement and trust in school leaders is an important influence on such trust. The purpose of this study is to identify leadership practices which teachers interpret as signs of trustworthiness on the part of their principals.

Design/methodology/approach
Evidence for the study was provided by post-observation interviews with 24 randomly selected teachers in three “high trust” and three “low trust” schools selected from a much larger sample of schools included in a national study. Coding of interview data was guided by a framework of trust antecedents identified through a wide-ranging review of empirical research.

Findings
Results demonstrated that teacher trust in principals is most influenced by leadership practices which teachers interpret as indicators of competence, consistency and reliability, openness, respect and integrity.

Originality/value
These results, generally consistent with previous research, specify, in much greater detail than has been reported to date, leadership trust-building practices.

Keywords
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personalities are better suited for distributive leadership, or the sharing of responsibility among a few people such as an assistant principal or outstanding teacher. Leaders who cope vs. leaders who transform. First, the leader must trust their teaching staff. Teachers need to feel like they have room to fail. Principals should serve to help teachers learn from this failure. If a new principal wants to introduce new directives in a school, they must give their staff input on the decisions. Of course, the final call still belongs to the principal. Schools need a leader and a person to make those difficult decisions. But teachers need to feel like they can give input on decisions that affect them and their work. My second takeaway is that it is difficult to have a strong school without a strong leader. The principal sets the tone for a ...