

Building Trust Needs Stones not People

28th October 2020, 07:06 AM

MICHAEL KAMUNGUNA M.

Independent (Private) Researcher and Self-Publisher
BSc. Electrical and Electronics Engineering, 2005.

Tea@HerMi.KE [Tea.HerMi.KE](mailto:Tea@HerMi.KE) +254 700 00 66 11 MPesa

© Copyrights. You are free to copy, redistribute and forward this article.



SUMMARY: *What does it take to make a group of people trust each other enough to do something?*

Table of Contents

1 Buildings and Relationships	3
2 Competitive Goal and Stable Materials	4
3 Signs of Stability	4
4 Signs of Competitive Value	6
5 Stones for People	9

Table of Contents

1 Buildings and Relationships	3
1.1 Building Materials	3
1.2 Optimal Choice	3
1.3 Build a Competitive Choice	3
2 Competitive Goal and Stable Materials	4
3 Signs of Stability	4
3.1 Predictable Location	4
3.2 Demonstrated Frequency	5
3.3 Re-assertion	6
4 Signs of Competitive Value	6
4.1 Propose High Value to Gain Trust	7
4.2 The Heroic Fool Syndrome	7
4.3 Profess Care	8
4.4 Protect People's Vulnerabilities	8
5 Stones for People	9
5.1 Build structures for people to use	9
5.2 Relationships have to be built	9
5.3 Relationships need to be protected	10

1 Buildings and Relationships

I once saw a *Facebook* post written by a woman who was complaining that her boyfriend was an engineer who could build buildings but could not **build a relationship!** Sounds like me *hahaha!*

As an engineer, there are many ways to respond to this piercing complaint.

1.1 Building Materials

The vengeful response is that the engineer boyfriend was competent at building a relationship but she was not the right **material to be used in building a wife!**

Ouch!

Between the stones and builders, who needs to be right? One or both?

It does not matter how good the engineer is; if the building blocks are made of leaves, the relationships between the walls won't hold. Similarly, a man with the mind of a boy cannot **build himself into a husband** or father.

We choose relationships based on what we want to build from them. Loose friendships and temporary relationships cannot be used to **build permanent families.**

Materials that are in a youthful mood to move around cannot be used to make a building that **remains settled** in one place. Would you be happy to build a house using

grease that is tall today but molten on the floor tomorrow?

1.2 Optimal Choice

Have you ever witnessed how women pick vegetables in the market? A small dent or paleness on the tomato is enough to see it dropped out of the race.

*Everyone wants to feel that they are **picking the best and the safest.***

At the vegetable market, women are so picky that it makes me understand why some ladies won't pick a picky engineer like me as an **ingredient for marriage!**

Many rejections have taught me that –

*People **pick** you because of how much they feel you can take them to the **peak!***

None of us wants to **build a relationship** with *something* that turns out to be toxic or pulls us down. Why spend money on old flabby vegetables when we can get fresh rigid *vegetarians* if we shop a bit more?

It is impossible to build a relationship when there is an obvious competitive feeling that there is still a time and a chance to build a more **productive relationship** elsewhere.

1.3 Build a Competitive Choice

Long ago when I was timing (not dating) a lady who worked at a bakery, she revealed to me that they avoided displaying freshly

baked buns alongside yesterday's remainders.

The strong shiny yellow appearance of today's fresh pastries would make customers frown at yesterday's stock of pale *keki za jana* that were facing the risk of expiry if the morning customers failed to clear them from the shelves.

Competition is real.

There is no need to hide that I was timing her because her looks resembled the smiling scones at her shop! The feminists who complain about my visual biases should take their *equalism* lectures to my female cousin who said she won't vote for Ole Kiyapi because he has a gap between his teeth! Even worse, she voted for a man who has a gap between his minds!

If you cannot compete on attractiveness, then be attractive on competitiveness!

We should stop complaining and start building our groups into a **competitive voice and an attractive choice**. Every group has to invest in attractiveness for it to win an audience and trust.

People are like night-flies; they are more attracted to a hot bulb that burns them than a cool painting that is harmless.

2 Competitive Goal and Stable Materials

Consider the task of **building a sense of purpose** within a new partnership. People come in with little confidence and few expectations from the group. Many only come to see what's cooking rather than to place an experimental order; their intention is to later make the choice of staying or *lefting*.

People choose to remain in a group because of either the **signs of stability** or the **signs of competitiveness**.

3 Signs of Stability

Have you ever tried borrowing money from a friend? Try loaning one miniscule shilling from your friend and then publish a news report about the outcome. *Hahaha!*

Those very friends who cannot trust you with their shilling will confidently deposit their millions in a bank that is run by total strangers whose phone numbers, names and faces they do not know. Why?

A bank is a building that cannot move.

*People bank on you if you appear **stable**.*

3.1 Predictable Location

People fear placing their gold on your three-legged table!

The word **bank** comes from **bench** or **table**, as in table-banking. Ancient money-

changers, such as those whom Yahoshua whipped out of the Temple in Jerusalem while overturning their tables (John 2:15), identified themselves by displaying money on a **bench**.

The frequent sight of the banker, his table and his money in the same location gives people a sense of **stability** and **predictability**.

*It does not matter what the knight in shining
armour brings to the table;
if he is stable is unstable, she won't be
impressed!*

3.2 Demonstrated Frequency

*We trust the sun because we see it **come
back every day**.*

In *shagz*, a bank-branded *Land Rover* escorted by armed policemen, used to act as the mobile bank, just like a mobile library on a van or donkey cart. As a Child from well-off parents, I used to find mobile libraries and banks fanciful.

On certain days of the week, the bank-van would be parked at the shopping centre for people to withdraw, deposit and check their account balances.

*Repeated positive experiences **build** trust;
Repeated negative experiences break trust.*

People entrust their money to a bank on wheels because they see it **come and go weekly**. We came to accept mobile systems

such as *MPesa* because we saw our money **come and go repeatedly** between our pockets and *MPesa* agents.

*We mistrust politicians because they come
once then disappear forever!*

I once watched a movie of an Arab guy who had travelled north and saw people standing on foggy boats for several hours before disembarking onto the beach.

The explanation was that since the beach dwellers often reported seeing 'ghosts' at sea, the custom in that *land* was to wait on the water for some hours to allow those on land to decide whether the newly arriving boats and sailors were real!

Yahoshua had a similar situation when his disciples saw him walking on water. (Matthew 14:22-33)

*People don't believe when they see you;
they believe when they see you again and
again;*

Hunger, thirst, cold, heat, drunkenness, sleepiness, illness, motion fatigue, fear, rare marine animals, noisy waves, fog, fantasy and attention seeking often conspire to make people see or report seeing ghosts on water. This may be the reason why some coastal tribes have numerous superstitions concerning the sea.

3.3 Re-assertion

People go through life witnessing and experiencing numerous flitting and untrustworthy offers that compete for the very attention you are trying to capture. People need time to decide whether you are real or just another foggy sound they have heard among the misty shapes that form and vanish in the waves of life.

Silence is taken to be a sign of disinterest and absence.

People will not trust you, your ideas or your group if you only post your presence once and then wallow into decades of silence like a comet.

Silence communicates divorce!

Every relationship needs to be **reaffirmed afresh every day**, like the daily raising of the national flag and daily performance of the national anthem.

When the President keeps silent for a week, we rightly suspect that he is either dead or he has resigned.

4 Signs of Competitive Value

Back to bankers on a bench. The sight of money on a table offers a sense of **competitive opportunities** that are similar to those offered by gambling tables. One of my former classmates is a financial expert who literally says that **money is a game**.

Banks are casinos with a banking licence!

It is not a surprise that the cash games played by banks are not very different from those in casinos. In fact, some investment lecturers explain how investment banking works using terminologies that have been borrowed from the gambling sector.

*People play games **together** because of the possibility of **winning gold** trophies.*

People are like **birds on a tree**; we remain in a group because of the **advantages the group offers** them in relation to other activities in their lives.

An alumni group will die if it does not resolve to offer more value than what the members get from their private families, workplaces, customers, media, religions and social circles.

***Competition** is meant to be our propulsion to **completion**.*

Why would I leave my family space to participate in a classmates activity? The alumni association competes with my spouse, job, business, interests, neighbours, friends and needs.

Unless it offers me chances to meet interesting people, listen to and share ideas, seek audience or access professional contacts, I would be better off touring among Maasai livestock herders than donating my time, money and energy to cold or rocky charity.

4.1 Propose High Value to Gain Trust

Remember we are talking about building the competitiveness of your group. When something appears to **offer competitive value**, it creates more trust. People entrust their money to gambling machines because the gambling service offers a highly **competitive value**.

Although high competitiveness is accompanied by high risks, the possibility of hitting a rare but **high-value** jackpot makes people overlook or minimize the risks enough to **give their trust**.

Alternatively, the high value proposed by the group makes the potential participants analyze and **interrogate the risk factors** carefully enough to give a realistic level of trust that is higher than the previous lower level of no trust at all.

4.2 The Heroic Fool Syndrome

If I request you to lend me 100 shillings to buy milk, you will laugh away my request. If, however, I inform you that I am looking for 100,000 shillings to service a **gold-selling mission**, your eyes will dilate with interest despite the known risks in such silly prospects.

Go for gold and people will pay you and pay to watch you!

The perception that I am **chasing high value and high risk** makes you consider to assign a higher level of trust in me. By outrightly admitting that I am pursuing something that is high risk, you get the feeling that I may have considered and made **mitigations against the risks**.

*Dare to make high-risk proposals;
we trust pilots more than professors!*

This explains why a person who finds it difficult to lend small amounts of money to his **known associates** will easily lose large amounts to strangers who present shaky fraudulent stories that **promise the sky**.

We pay to watch a stuntman put his life at risk on a tight rope. We pay to watch fictitious heroic movies. We pay to read news about politicians who risk their mouths with obscenities.

In two previous workplaces, my fellow employees gained trust in me after they noticed that I have the **courage** to confront the boss on issues. They appointed me to be their salary spokesman! *Hahaha!*

*Fools put their trust in the fool who is puts himself at risk;
to gain the trust of many fools, be that single courageous fool!*

We tend to follow the stories people who are taking high risks. We follow the lives of footballers and musicians; they take the high risk of not seeking a *real* job that is

based on survival needs like everyone else does. We even pay artistes more frequently than surgeons who choose to mitigate their risks.

If he can do it, you can do it.

This is the *heroic-line* some African cultures use to lure boys into painful circumcision rituals! It is often used in advertising as well as calls for both genuine and fraudulent investments.

4.3 Profess Care

Fifteen years ago, my employer hired a team of ladies to conduct a **team building** exercise over the weekend. In one of the exercises, each of us was given a **balloon** and a pin. We were instructed to chase each other and try to burst our co-worker's balloons while **protecting our own balloons!**

Those whose balloons were pierced got angry enough to chase other workers without inhibiting their fear of losing something. Their only balloon was gone!

Introverts like myself chose to hide quietly and pretend that we have no balloon.

*Everyone hides their treasured balloon
inside their anti-pressure cocoon!*

The instructors then gathered us and explained that in life or in the workplace, each of us has something we hold dearly. It could be an idea, recognition, money,

possession, reputation or an investment. It could also be a vulnerability. As we interact with people, we hide our balloon because we fear that someone will burst it with their criticism, rejection, dismissal or even outright sabotage or theft.

That sense of value is our balloon while other people's criticism or negligence is the pins that we fear will pierce our balloons. The fear of been pricked makes us less willing to offer suggestions, report the truth, make a contribution or participate in a team.

4.4 Protect People's Vulnerabilities

The balloon bursting game is an awkward game; everyone runs around hiding their vulnerable balloons. On *Facebook*, I saw a similar game in which the participants had tied the balloons behind their waists! *Yikes!*

People hide to protect their vulnerable balls!

Sexuality is the most personal expression of vulnerability and we do everything we can to hide it, cover it up, deny it and pretend that we don't have it. Sexual vulnerability in the workplace, public spaces, school and even at home is such a big concern that it is counted as a public legal issue.

*If people don't feel safe and private,
they won't come
and they won't open up their ideas!*

Groups have codes of conducts and disciplinary committees to ensure that people do not cross the line into other people's privacy and boundaries.

Build walls and place trespass warnings!

Since there is little we can do to prevent attempted break-ins, the most we can do is to be responsive and anticipating enough to **build walls**, fences, gates, doors, rules and security personnel.

Unfortunately, in every setting, there is that stray *fella* who will solicit for sex, that *shark* who will solicit impossible or irresponsible loans and that *snitch* who turns private talk into *freedoms* of public expression in public.

Relationships and trust exposes us to vulnerabilities. The same way construction projects collapse physically or financially, all relationships face the threat of painful collapse. Some business and family relationships collapse to the point of deceit, theft, violence or murder.

5 Stones for People

5.1 Build structures for people to use

Do you force stones to work for people or force people to work on stones? Building relationships requires items that are very different from the people. No wonder the All-Mighty created everything else before He created people.

*Instead of using people to build a church,
use the church to build people!*

The actions of building should view people as the customers rather than materials. The same applies to building human relationships.

We often build houses made of stone but fail to **build loving relationships** within the families that live in the houses. No wonder people say there is a **difference between a house and a home**.

*Without the use of a lover's story in the
family home,
the house becomes a lavatory of
unfamiliar abuse.*

5.2 Relationships have to be built

Many of us shy from business because we fear facing the task of building relationships between customers, employees, suppliers, partners and even ourselves. The path to building relationships is riddled with awkward moments, rejection, embarrassment, inadequacy, discrimination and losses.

*To build a relationship, you have to painfully
chisel yourself to fit in the **walls and wells**
of other people's lives.*

Just as stones need to be cut and shaped to fit onto each other, building relationships requires us to shape our dress, talk, work, location, time, pace, values and expectations to fit within the needs and services of other

people. We literally have to make space for other people.

5.3 Relationships need to be protected

*Just like houses, relationships
need to be protected
from external threats and
from internal threats.*

There is a reason why states employ armies to protect people and their relationships. Toxic literature, habits and ideologies can readily make a nation collapse.

*The threat of physical invasion from outside
is not often
as great as that of ideological contamination
from inside.*

Build lovingly and enjoy it!