

Trust Economy Outlook 2026



Trust



Leadership



Performance

Building High-Trust Organisations
for a More Competitive Nigeria.

**A Great Place
To Build a
Brighter Nigeria**



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GiftWork® Journey Training is a **Great Place To Work** proprietary program designed to equip leaders and managers with the skills to transform the culture of their organisation one team at a time.

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Our goal is to help you build a great workplace where employees can say 'my work is more than just a job'.

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The Learning Path

Where are we going?
Why do I want to go there?
Who is leading the way?
What Path can I take?
What do I pack for the Journey?
Where am I on the Map?
How do I navigate the Journey?
Am I ready to go?

**5000+
Employees
Coached
Nationwide**

jOURNEY!

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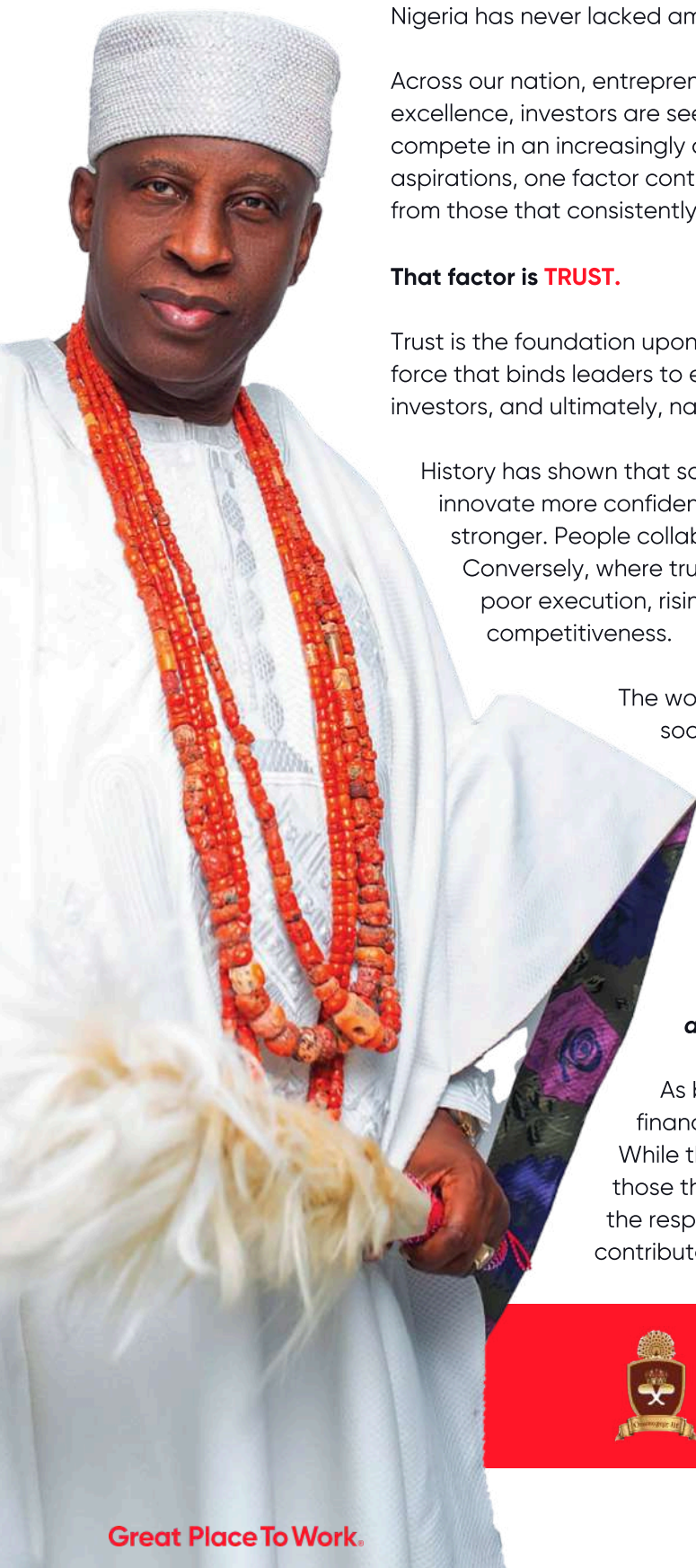
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Building Nigeria's Future on the Foundation of Trust



Nigeria has never lacked ambition.

Across our nation, entrepreneurs are building businesses, professionals are pursuing excellence, investors are seeking opportunities, and organisations are striving to compete in an increasingly complex and interconnected world. Yet, amidst these aspirations, one factor continues to distinguish organisations that merely survive from those that consistently thrive.

That factor is TRUST.

Trust is the foundation upon which enduring institutions are built. It is the invisible force that binds leaders to employees, organisations to customers, businesses to investors, and ultimately, nations to sustainable prosperity.

History has shown that societies flourish when trust is abundant. Businesses innovate more confidently. Investments flow more freely. Governance becomes stronger. People collaborate more effectively. Economic opportunities expand. Conversely, where trust is weak, organisations struggle with disengagement, poor execution, rising costs, declining confidence, and diminished competitiveness.

The workplace is one of the most influential institutions in any society. Every day, millions of Nigerians spend the greater part of their productive lives within organisations.

These workplaces shape attitudes, influence behaviour, develop leaders, inspire entrepreneurs, and mould future generations. They do far more than create products and services; they shape the character and capability of our people.

This is why building great organisations is ultimately an act of nation building.

As business leaders, we often measure success through financial performance, market share, innovation, and growth. While these remain essential, the organisations that endure are those that recognise another equally important responsibility; the responsibility to build cultures where people can flourish, contribute meaningfully, and realise their full potential.



Oba Ghandi Afolabi Oláoyè

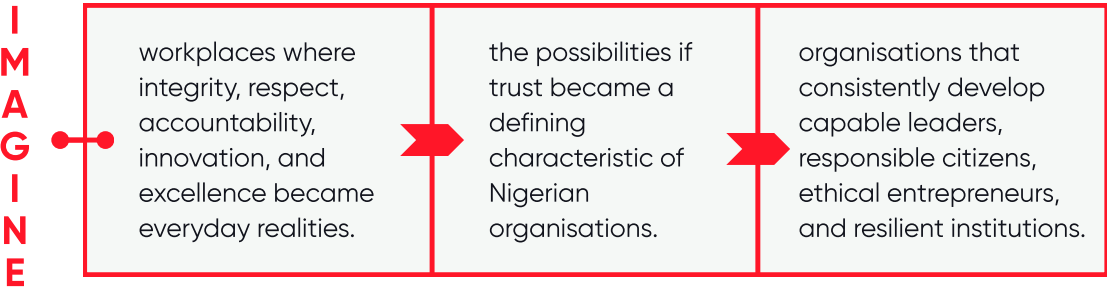
Orumogege III, Soun of Ogbomosho Land

Chairman, Great Place To Work® Nigeria

The emergence of what we now describe as **The Trust Economy** reflects a profound shift in the global business landscape. Increasingly, trust has become one of the most valuable forms of organisational capital. It influences leadership credibility, employee engagement, customer loyalty, corporate governance, innovation, investment confidence, and long-term enterprise value.

"Trust is no longer merely a virtue to be admired; it is a strategic asset to be intentionally cultivated."

This inaugural Nigeria Trust Economy Outlook represents an important contribution to that conversation. It challenges leaders to think beyond short-term financial results and consider the broader legacy their organisations leave through the people they develop, the cultures they create, and the values they uphold.



The cumulative effect would extend well beyond individual businesses. It would strengthen families, inspire communities, improve governance, attract investment, increase productivity, and contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's economic transformation.

As leaders, we have both the privilege and the responsibility to shape this future. It is my hope that the insights contained in this Outlook will encourage thoughtful reflection, meaningful dialogue, and deliberate action among business leaders across every sector of our economy.

The future prosperity of our nation will depend not only on the wealth we create, but also on the trust upon which that wealth is built.

I commend Great Place To Work® Nigeria for leading this important conversation and invite every leader to become an active participant in building a stronger Trust Economy for Nigeria.

Thank You.



Otamere Fredrick Elegon

Country Manager

Great Place To Work® Nigeria

Why Nigeria Needs a **Trust Economy**

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the **Nigeria Trust Economy Outlook**.

For more than three decades, Great Place To Work® has been recognised globally as the authority on workplace culture, employee experience, and high-trust leadership. Across more than 180 countries, our research has consistently demonstrated a simple but powerful truth:

organisations that earn the trust of their people consistently outperform those that do not.

Trust influences how people collaborate, innovate, solve problems, serve customers, and respond to change. It strengthens leadership credibility, improves organisational resilience, accelerates execution, and creates sustainable business value.

In today's rapidly changing business environment, trust has become far more than a cultural aspiration. It has become a competitive advantage.

The decision to publish the **Nigeria Trust Economy Outlook** was inspired by a simple but important question:

What would happen if Nigerian organisations intentionally treated trust as one of their most valuable strategic assets?

This publication represents our first attempt to answer that question.

It brings together insights from Great Place To Work®'s global research, workplace culture data, executive perspectives, and emerging leadership trends to explore how trust is reshaping organisational performance, employee experience, innovation, governance, entrepreneurship, and national competitiveness.

More importantly, it seeks to reposition workplace culture as a business imperative rather than solely a Human Resources initiative.

For too long, conversations about organisational culture have been confined to HR departments. Yet culture influences every strategic priority that concerns boards and chief executives—financial performance, customer experience, innovation, risk management, talent attraction, succession planning, reputation, and long-term enterprise value.

Culture is therefore not merely about employee satisfaction.

Culture is strategy.

Trust is leadership.

Together, they shape organisational performance.

At Great Place To Work® Nigeria, we believe our mission extends beyond recognising outstanding workplaces. We exist to help organisations unlock human potential by building cultures where people trust their leaders, take pride in their work, and enjoy working with one another.

Imagine 50%

Great Place To Work® Nigeria's aspiration: a Nigeria where half of all organisations intentionally commit to becoming great workplaces.

The implications would be transformative.

Millions of employees would experience healthier and more fulfilling working lives. Organisations would become more innovative and productive. Entrepreneurs would emerge from stronger organisational foundations. Corporate governance would improve. Investor confidence would increase. Talent would be more likely to remain and thrive within Nigeria. Ultimately, our economy would become stronger, more competitive, and more inclusive.

This is the vision that underpins the Nigeria Trust Economy Outlook.

Our hope is that this publication becomes more than an annual report. We envision it as a platform for dialogue, learning, and action—a trusted resource that informs boardroom decisions, inspires organisational transformation, and contributes meaningfully to Nigeria's economic development.

Whether you are a Chief Executive Officer, Board Chairman, Entrepreneur, Policymaker, Investor, Human Resources Leader, or Aspiring Business Leader, we invite you to reflect on the ideas presented in these pages and consider the role you can play in building organisations where trust is intentionally cultivated and people are empowered to achieve extraordinary results.

The journey towards a stronger Trust Economy begins with leadership.

It begins with every organisation recognising that its greatest competitive advantage is not merely its technology, capital, or strategy, but the trust it earns from its people.

Together, we can build organisations that shape people, create wealth, and transform our nation.

The global authority on workplace culture

About Great Place To Work, Certification™ and Best Workplaces™ Lists

For over 30 years, Great Place To Work's Certification, Best Workplaces Lists, and global benchmarks have become the industry standard, built on data, updated annually, from more than 20 million employees in over 180 countries around the world.

We are the global authority on workplace culture, providing leaders and organisations with the recognition and tools needed to foster a thriving workforce and robust employee engagement that ultimately leads to a healthier bottom line.

Our employee sentiment data is captured directly and confidentially from employees, empowering employers to use their workplace culture insights to achieve tangible business gains and a clear return on investment through enhancing their employee experience.



Certification is based on the results of our confidential Trust Index™ employee survey. Companies who meet the required Trust Index score are Certified™ 'great' for 12 months.



Best Workplace recognition is awarded to companies, in three size categories ranging from Small to Large. Our national, regional, and global lists are published annually in over 100 countries.

01

Certification & Lists

Our recognition is the most coveted and respected in the world for elevating employer brands to attract and retain the right people.

02

Insightful Data:

We help organisations build strong cultures and retain talent through research, surveys, and employee insights.

03

Bespoke Consulting

We provide culture and change consulting to guide organisations in building exceptional, high-trust workplace cultures.

04

Resources & Community

Our expert consultants, data insights, and For All Community connect bold leaders transforming employee experience and culture.

Scan to learn more



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The Trust Economy Has Arrived

Business is entering a new era.

For decades, organisations competed primarily on the strength of their products, capital, technology, market access, and operational efficiency. While these remain important, they are no longer sufficient to guarantee sustained success, primarily because in this very competitive world where everyone aspires to be No.1, ***your competitors can easily copy your products, policies, processes, strategy; they can poach your people but they can't copy your Organisational culture.***

Today's competitive advantage increasingly lies in this asset:

TRUST

An asset that cannot be found on balance sheet, but influences every measure of organisational performance.

Trust determines whether employees give discretionary effort, whether customers remain loyal, whether investors retain confidence, whether innovation flourishes, and whether organisations successfully navigate periods of disruption and uncertainty.

In an economy increasingly driven by knowledge, innovation, collaboration, and reputation, trust has become one of the most valuable forms of organisational capital.

This is the **Trust Economy**.

The Nigeria Trust Economy Outlook 2026 explores how trust is redefining leadership, transforming workplace culture, strengthening governance, driving organisational performance, and contributing to national competitiveness.



It argues that the organisations best positioned to succeed in the coming decade will not necessarily be those with the greatest financial resources, but those that intentionally build the highest levels of trust.

The following key insights summarise the central findings of this inaugural Outlook and highlight why trust has become the defining competitive advantage of our time.

Key Insights

The insights that follow capture the central findings of this inaugural Outlook. Together they reveal why trust has moved from the margins of organisational life to the very centre of competitive strategy, and why the future of business in Nigeria will belong to those who understand its true power.

01. Trust Has Become a Competitive Advantage

Trust is no longer simply an ethical aspiration or a desirable leadership characteristic.

It has become a strategic business asset.

High-trust organisations consistently demonstrate stronger organisational performance because trust improves the speed and quality of decision-making, strengthens collaboration, reduces internal friction, encourages innovation, and enhances execution.

When employees trust leadership, they contribute more ideas, adapt more quickly to change, solve problems collaboratively, and

remain committed during periods of uncertainty.

Conversely, organisations with low levels of trust often experience disengagement, bureaucracy, internal politics, higher turnover, weaker customer service, and slower organisational performance.

Trust has therefore become a defining characteristic of successful organisations.

“

Increasingly, competitive advantage is determined not only by strategy, but by the quality of relationships within an organisation.

”



02. Employees Are Redefining What Makes a Great Employer

The workforce has fundamentally changed.

Today's employees are no longer evaluating organisations solely on salary, benefits, or job security.

They are increasingly seeking workplaces where they:



While competitive compensation remains important, employees increasingly expect organisations to provide meaningful work experiences that support both professional success and personal wellbeing.

Organisations that fail to meet these expectations risk losing their best talent to employers who intentionally invest in workplace culture and leadership.

The competition for talent has therefore evolved into a competition for trust.

03. Leadership Is the Greatest Driver of Organisational Trust

Trust does not emerge by accident.
It is built, or destroyed, through leadership.

Employees evaluate leaders not simply by what they achieve, but by how they lead.

Leadership credibility is shaped by competence, integrity, transparency, consistency, fairness, empathy, and the ability to inspire confidence.

“Trust is earned through everyday actions rather than occasional statements.”

They communicate honestly.
They listen actively.
They make fair decisions.
They demonstrate accountability.
They create environments where people can perform at their best.

In the Trust Economy, leadership effectiveness will increasingly be measured by the trust leaders create rather than the authority they possess.

04. Culture Is No Longer an HR Responsibility Alone

CULTURE ≠ HR

For many years, organisational culture was treated as a Human Resources initiative, something to be managed through policies, programmes and engagement surveys. That view is rapidly becoming obsolete.

Culture now shapes every strategic priority that concerns executive management and boards: business performance, innovation, customer experience, risk management, talent attraction and retention, governance, reputation, and long-term enterprise value.

It determines how strategy is actually executed, how people respond to change, how teams collaborate or collide, how customers are served, and how decisions are made under pressure.

Boards and CEOs can no longer delegate culture exclusively to HR. In the Trust Economy, culture has become a core executive leadership responsibility.

When culture is owned at the highest levels, it moves from being a set of statements on a wall to a living system that guides daily behaviour and strategic choices.

Organisations that treat culture as an executive priority consistently build stronger alignment between stated values and lived experience.

Ultimately, the organisations that thrive will be those whose leaders recognise that culture is not a soft support function but the operating system of the entire enterprise.

05. High-Trust Organisations Outperform Their Peers

Global research continues to reveal a consistent and powerful relationship between trust and organisational performance.

Organisations characterised by high levels of trust tend to experience higher employee engagement, stronger productivity, greater innovation, lower voluntary turnover, better customer experience, stronger employer brands, greater organisational resilience, and improved financial performance over the long term.

Trust creates the conditions that allow people to perform at their highest potential.

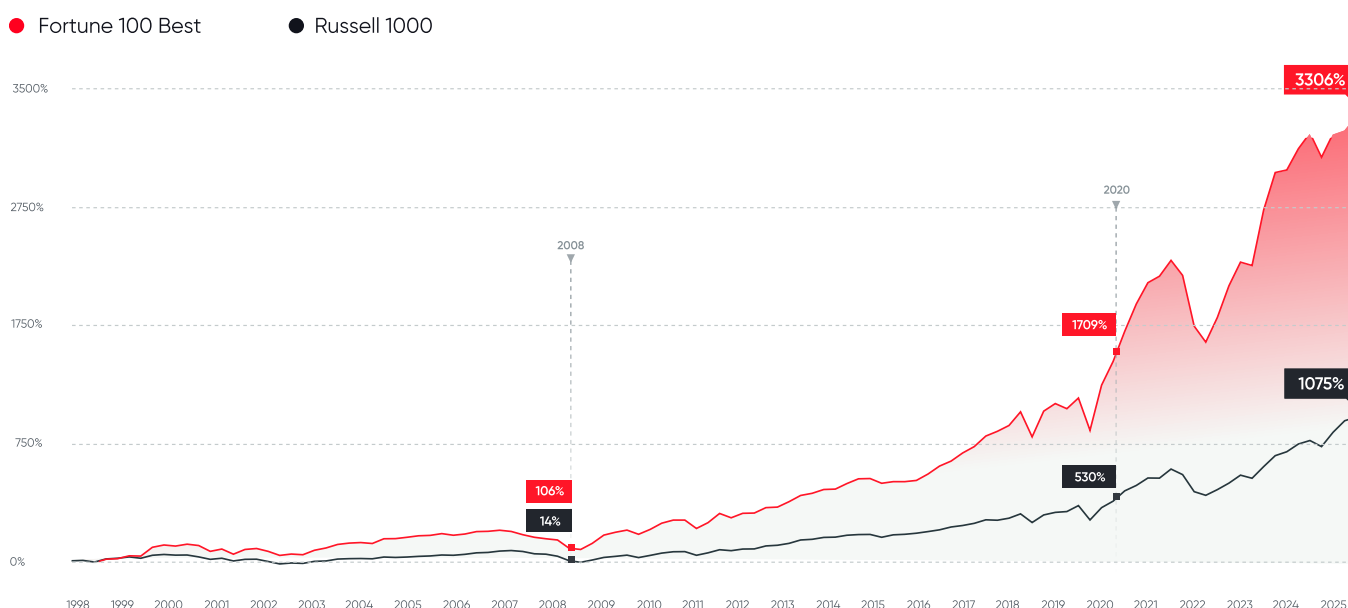
Rather than viewing workplace culture as a cost centre, leading companies increasingly recognise it as a strategic investment that generates measurable business returns.

In high-trust environments, decision-making accelerates because people spend less energy protecting themselves and more energy solving problems. Innovation flourishes when employees feel safe to challenge assumptions and experiment without fear of punishment.

Over time, these advantages compound, creating a widening gap between organisations that deliberately build trust and those that leave it to chance.

3× Stock Market Performance

Fortune 100 (Great Workplaces) Best Companies to Work For compared with the Russell 1000 Index (1998–2025).



06. Trust Strengthens Governance and Reduces Organisational Risk

Many of the challenges confronting organisations today, including unethical behaviour, regulatory failures, reputational crises, and weak execution, are symptoms of declining trust. High-trust cultures foster ethical decision-making, transparency, accountability, responsible leadership, constructive challenge, and better risk management.

Organisations that intentionally cultivate trust are better equipped to anticipate risks, respond to crises with clarity, and maintain the confidence of stakeholders. In this sense, trust is not merely a cultural aspiration; it has become an essential element of effective corporate governance. When people trust their leaders and one another, they are more willing to surface problems early rather than conceal them until they become crises.

Constructive dissent becomes a strength rather than a threat, enabling better decisions and stronger oversight. In an era of heightened regulatory scrutiny and reputational vulnerability, trust functions as both a preventive control and a source of organisational resilience.

07. Great Workplaces Produce Future Entrepreneurs

One of the most overlooked contributions of workplace culture is its impact on entrepreneurship. Many successful founders begin their careers as employees. Within high-trust organisations they absorb leadership, accountability, strategic thinking, customer focus, financial discipline, team leadership, ethical decision-making, and organisational design.

The quality of tomorrow's businesses is therefore shaped, in significant measure, by the quality of today's workplaces. Great workplaces do not only retain talent, they develop the next generation of entrepreneurs and, in doing so, contribute directly to national economic development.

Employees who experience high levels of trust learn how to take ownership, make decisions under uncertainty, and lead others with integrity. These capabilities transfer powerfully when individuals later build their own enterprises. By creating environments where people can grow into capable, principled leaders, organisations quietly strengthen the entrepreneurial pipeline of the entire economy.



08. Nigeria's Competitiveness Depends on Trust

As Nigeria seeks to diversify its economy, attract investment, retain talent, strengthen governance, and improve productivity, organisational trust will become increasingly decisive.

Imagine a Nigeria in which half of all organisations intentionally commit to becoming great workplaces.

The result would be healthier employees, stronger leadership, better corporate governance, higher productivity, increased innovation, reduced talent migration, stronger entrepreneurship, greater investor confidence, more competitive organisations, and ultimately a stronger national economy.

The Trust Economy is therefore not simply about improving workplaces. It is about improving Nigeria.

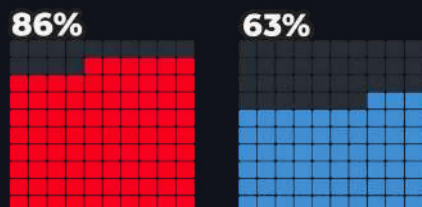
When trust rises inside organisations, the benefits cascade outward into communities, supply chains, and the broader investment climate. Talent is more likely to stay and contribute rather than seek opportunities elsewhere.

In a global economy where reputation and relationships increasingly determine success, Nigeria's ability to build high-trust institutions will shape its long-term competitiveness and prosperity.



Productivity

The strength of an organisation ultimately depends on the performance of its people. Creating an environment where employees can perform at their best is essential to driving productivity and profitability.



Great Place To Work Nigeria Certified companies, demonstrate stronger employee experiences across customer excellence, agility, innovation and discretionary effort, with these four measures averaging 86%, compared with 63% at Non-Certified companies.

Trust inspires more discretionary effort





Leadership Imperative

The findings of this inaugural Nigeria Trust Economy Outlook point to one clear conclusion.

The future belongs to organisations whose leaders understand that trust is not a soft issue. It is a strategic asset.

It belongs to organisations that recognise culture as a driver of performance rather than a programme – a force that shapes how people make decisions, collaborate, innovate, respond to change and ultimately deliver results

It belongs to boards of organisations that measure trust as rigorously as financial performance, recognising that a deficit of trust can create significant organisational friction, while high levels of trust can accelerate execution, engagement and performance.

It belongs to leaders who understand that people are not merely resources to be managed, but the greatest source of sustainable competitive advantage. Technology, capital and infrastructure may enable growth, but it is people who ultimately determine how effectively those resources are deployed.

The implications are particularly significant in an environment of rapid technological change, talent mobility, economic uncertainty and increasing stakeholder expectations. Leaders can no longer assume that trust will exist simply because they occupy positions of authority.

Trust must be

- ✓ **Earned**
- ✓ **Experienced**
- ✓ **Continuously reinforced** through leadership behaviour.

This means creating organisations where people can

Speak Openly

Contribute Ideas

Challenge Assumptions

Collaborate Across Boundaries

Give their Best

Work without Fear

It means ensuring that the values an organisation promotes are reflected in the behaviours it rewards and the standards it upholds.

It also means recognising that the trust employees have in their leaders increasingly influences how they experience the organisation itself.

When Trust Moves, Strategy Moves



Trust influences whether people believe in organisational direction and commit themselves to achieving it.

In the years ahead, the most successful organisations will not simply compete on products, technology, or capital.

They will compete on **TRUST**

- Attract and retain talent
- Build customer relationships
- Collaborate effectively
- Respond quickly to change
- Execute strategy

Technology Advances, Trust Must Advance Faster

As artificial intelligence increasingly transforms how organisations work, the importance of trust will only grow.

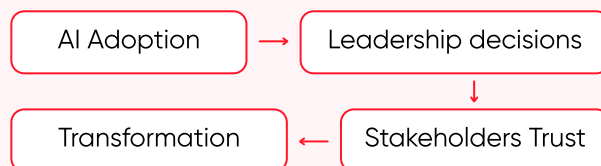
The question will not simply be whether organisations can adopt new technology, but

Will people and stakeholders trust the leaders making decision about how technology is used?



This is why

Trust must move from the periphery of organisational thinking to the centre of leadership and business strategy.



Those that intentionally build trust will shape the future of business, create enduring value, strengthen the institutions they lead, and contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's prosperity.

A more competitive Nigeria will ultimately be built not only through stronger policies and better infrastructure, but through stronger organisations – and stronger organisations are built on trust.

One high-trust organisation at a time.

The Nigeria Trust Economy Outlook 2026

The Nigeria Trust Economy Outlook 2026 is Great Place To Work® Nigeria's **inaugural flagship thought leadership publication**. It marks an important milestone in the organisation's ongoing commitment to advancing high-trust workplace cultures across the country and contributing to broader conversations on organisational excellence and national development.



WHAT IT DRAWS FROM

This Outlook draws on the extensive global research and insights of Great Place To Work®, decades of data gathered through the **Trust Index™** survey, perspectives shared by Nigerian business leaders, emerging workplace culture trends, and practical experience gained from working with organisations across diverse sectors.

It brings these sources together to examine the critical role of trust in shaping organisational performance, leadership effectiveness, employee experience, governance, and national competitiveness.



THE CONTEXT

As Nigeria navigates economic transformation, talent competition, and rising expectations from employees, customers, and investors, the ability to build and sustain trust has become a strategic imperative. This publication explores that reality with clarity and purpose.



PURPOSE

Its aim is to equip:

BOARDS

CEOs

INVESTORS

CFOs

SENIOR EXECUTIVES

POLICY MAKERS

HR PROFESSIONALS

with actionable insights for building high-trust organisations.



THE OUTLOOK AIMS TO



Drive Sustainable
Growth



Strengthen
Institutional Resilience



Unlock Human
Potential



Create Lasting
Positive Impact

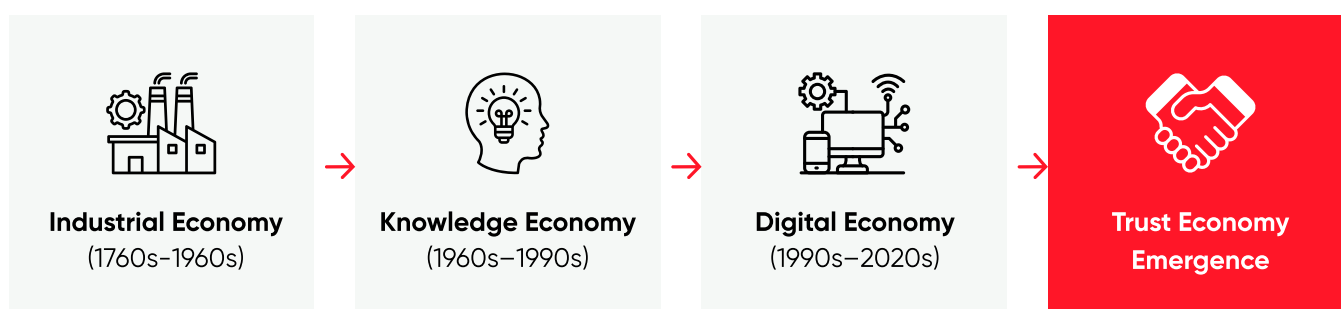
Trust is the New Competitive Advantage

Introduction

From the Industrial Economy to the Trust Economy

Every era of economic development has been defined by a dominant source of competitive advantage – the primary asset or capability that determined which organisations, and which nations, rose to leadership.

In each successive age, the foundations of success shifted as technology, markets, and human expectations evolved. What conferred power in one era often became insufficient in the next, forcing organisations to adapt or risk decline. Understanding these successive sources of advantage reveals not only how business has transformed over time, but why trust has now emerged as the defining competitive resource of our age.



Industrial Economy (c. 1760s–1960s)

During the Industrial Economy, organisations competed primarily through the ownership and control of physical assets. Factories, machinery, natural resources, infrastructure, and production capacity determined market leadership.

Success was driven largely by scale, efficiency, standardisation, and the ability to produce goods at lower cost. Competitive advantage rested on capital intensity, vertical integration, and the capacity to manufacture and distribute products more effectively than rivals.

Labour was largely treated as a cost of production, and organisational structures tended to be hierarchical, command-and-control systems designed to maximise output and minimise variation.

In this era, the organisations that dominated markets were those that could mobilise physical resources at the greatest scale and lowest unit cost.





Knowledge Economy (c. 1960s–1990s)

The emergence of the Knowledge Economy shifted the focus from physical capital to intellectual capital. Information, education, specialised skills, research, expertise, and innovation became increasingly important engines of value creation.

Organisations that could attract talented people, generate ideas, manage knowledge, and continuously innovate gained significant competitive advantage. Professional services, research-intensive industries, and knowledge-based firms rose in prominence. Competitive differentiation increasingly depended on the quality of human capital, the ability to protect and leverage intellectual property, and the capacity to turn specialised expertise into marketable products and services.

While physical assets remained important, the organisations that thrived were those that treated knowledge as a strategic resource and invested deliberately in learning, research, and talent development.

Digital Economy (c. 1990s–2020s)

The Digital Economy accelerated this transformation even further. The rise of the internet, cloud computing, big data, automation, artificial intelligence, digital platforms, and global connectivity fundamentally changed how organisations operate and compete.

Technology enabled businesses to reach customers faster, operate more efficiently, scale rapidly, and create entirely new business models. Data became a critical asset, network effects created powerful competitive moats, and digital platforms reshaped entire industries. Speed, agility, personalisation, and the ability to harness technology at scale became defining sources of advantage. At the same time, the Digital Economy increased complexity, intensified competition, and raised new questions about privacy, ethics, cybersecurity, and the human experience of work.

Yet, despite these profound advances, technology alone has not solved one of the most fundamental challenges facing organisations today.



THE BIG TRANSITION

Technology can automate processes.

It cannot create commitment.

Data can inform decisions.

It cannot inspire confidence.

Artificial Intelligence can analyse information.

It cannot build relationships.

Digital platforms can connect people.

They cannot create Trust.

As organisations become more digital, more distributed, and more interconnected, success increasingly depends on something that cannot be purchased, automated, or downloaded.

It depends on Trust.

As technology becomes increasingly accessible and AI continues to democratise information, automation, and productivity, technology itself is becoming less of a differentiator. The competitive question is shifting again.

The organisations that will increasingly outperform are those capable of creating environments where people trust their leaders, trust one another, trust the organisation, and trust its purpose enough to contribute their best.

The Emergence of the Trust Economy

We are entering a new era, one in which trust has become one of the most valuable forms of organisational capital.

What is The Trust Economy?

The Trust Economy is an economy in which trust increasingly functions as a form of capital, shaping the relationships, behaviours and confidence that enable organisations to attract talent, win customers, mobilise investment, execute strategy and sustain performance.

We are entering a new era, one in which trust has become one of the most valuable forms of organisational capital.

This is **The Trust Economy**.

The Trust Economy recognises that sustainable business success is increasingly determined not only by what organisations produce, but by the confidence they inspire among the people they lead, the customers they serve, the partners they depend on and the stakeholders who invest in their future.

In this economy, **trust is not simply a consequence of good business. It is an enabler of good business.**



In this environment, trust is no longer simply an ethical ideal or a desirable leadership characteristic. It has become a strategic differentiator that influences organisational performance, enterprise value, and long-term competitiveness.

Increasingly, organisations are competing on the quality of their leadership, the strength of their culture, the confidence of their people, and the credibility of their institutions.

In other words, **they are competing on trust.**

Why Trust Has Become the New Competitive Advantage

Historically, organisations sought competitive advantage through cost leadership, product differentiation, operational excellence and technological innovation. These remain fundamental to business success. In an increasingly complex and interconnected economy, however, they are no longer sufficient on their own.

Every strategic initiative ultimately depends on people.

Customer experience depends on people delivering on the organisation's promise.

Strategy depends on people executing consistently.

Innovation depends on people sharing ideas.

Governance depends on people making sound and ethical decisions.

Transformation depends on people embracing change.

The question, therefore, is not simply whether organisations have the right strategy, technology or capital. It is whether they have created conditions in which people can perform at their best.

Increasingly, research points to trust as one of those critical conditions.

When people trust their leaders and their organisation, they are more likely to speak up, collaborate, contribute ideas, embrace change and take ownership. Trust can create the psychological safety required for people to challenge conventional thinking, experiment and innovate.

It can also reduce the organisational friction that occurs when people spend more time protecting themselves, second-guessing decisions or navigating internal politics than delivering results.

THE EVIDENCE

Recent Great Place To Work research provides compelling evidence of this connection and independent research from Gallup and PwC reinforces the broader link between the employee experience and business performance.

27%

Great Place To Work Effect found that high-trust workplaces demonstrate greater agility, while employees in these environments are significantly more likely to experience the empowerment necessary to innovate.

2:1

Ratio of empowered innovators to employees experiencing friction, illustrating the difference trust can make to an organisation's capacity to turn people and ideas into action.

Agility: Trust Fuels Performance



AGILITY:
Empowering people to **move faster**

Employees in Great Place To Work Nigeria certified Organisations report significantly higher scores in GPTW statements (88%) than those in non-certified Organisations (66%), a difference that underscores the value of strong workplace culture practices.

Statements	Non-Certified Companies	Certified Companies
People here quickly adapt to changes needed for our Organisation success	68%	89%
You can count on people to cooperate.	60%	84%
Management has a clear view of where this organisation is going and how to get there.	70%	91%

INNOVATION:
Removing friction to spark ideas

Great Place To Work Nigeria Certified Organisations create better environment for innovation, with employees more likely to have a voice, experiment with new ways of working and access opportunities for professional development than those in Non-Certified Organisations.

Statements	Non-Certified Companies	Certified Companies
Management involves people in decisions that affect their jobs or work environment.	49%	75%
We celebrate people who try new and better ways of doing things, regardless of the outcome.	49%	79%
I am offered training or development to further myself professionally.	59%	80%

Innovation Capacity: Certified vs. Non-Certified Organisations

Certified Organisations



Nearly 8 out of 10 employees in Great Place To Work Nigeria certified Organisations are far more likely to report more opportunities for innovation compared to 5 out of 10 in Non-certified Organisations.

Non-Certified Organisations



Innovation Velocity Ratio (IVR)

Innovation Velocity Ratio (IVR) measures an organisation's capacity to enable and accelerate innovation. It ranges from friction ratio, where barriers limit innovation, to functional ratio, where employees are supported to innovate, and accelerated ratio, where trust, purpose and empowerment allow ideas to move quickly into action.

Accelerated Ratio of Innovation (11:2)



Functional ratio of Innovation (5:2)



Friction ratio (3:2)



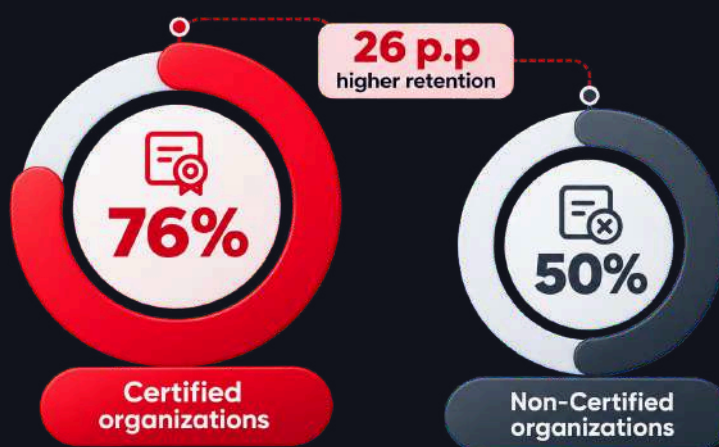
Great Place To Work Nigeria Certified Organisations are more likely to experience **accelerated ratio of innovation** compared to Non-certified Organisations that experiences a **friction ratio**.

89%

Retention is increasingly becoming a strategic concern for organisations competing for scarce and mobile talent. Great Place To Work's 2025 Global Best Workplaces research found that 89% of employees at Best Workplaces wanted to stay with their organisation long term, compared with 64% in typical workplaces. This suggests that the quality of the organisational environment and the level of confidence employees place in their employer, has significant implications for an organisation's ability to retain talent.

Intention to stay: Certified vs. Non-Certified Organisations

Great Place To Work Nigeria Certified organisations have a 26-point advantage in employees' intention to stay, with employees more likely to see themselves staying with their organisation for the long term than those in Non-Certified organisations. The difference highlights the role workplace culture can play in shaping employees' desire to stay.



Gallup's 11th Q12 Meta-Analysis, **covering more than 3.35 million employees across 90 countries, found that organisations with highly engaged workforces significantly outperform those with lower engagement across a range of business outcomes. Top-quartile organisations recorded 23% higher profitability, 18% higher sales productivity and 14% higher production productivity, alongside lower turnover, absenteeism, safety incidents and quality defects.**

While these findings relate to employee engagement rather than trust alone, they are important to the Trust Economy conversation. They demonstrate the broader mechanism through which the organisational environment influences business performance: how people experience the organisation affects how they behave, and how they behave affects results.

The commercial importance of trust is also increasingly recognised at the executive level. PwC's 2024 Trust Survey found that **93% of business executives agreed that building and maintaining trust improves the bottom line.**

This is significant because it moves trust beyond the traditional language of corporate values and employee relations into the language of enterprise value and business performance.

The implications are profound.

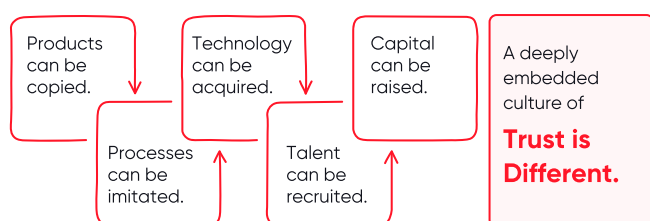
- Trust influences the willingness of people to collaborate.
- It affects whether employees speak up or remain silent.
- It shapes the confidence with which organisations navigate change.
- It influences whether talented people choose to stay.
- It affects how customers experience the organisation.

And, through these and other mechanisms, it can contribute to productivity, innovation, resilience and sustainable performance.

This is why trust is increasingly being viewed not simply as a cultural attribute, but as a strategic capability.

Why Is Trust Difficult to Replicate?

Traditional sources of competitive advantage can increasingly be acquired, copied or matched.



It is accumulated over time through consistent leadership behaviour, credible communication, fairness, accountability, respect, employee experience and shared organisational values. It is reflected in thousands of everyday interactions between leaders, employees, customers and other stakeholders.

A competitor can replicate a product in months. It can acquire similar technology or recruit similar talent, but it cannot simply purchase the institutional

confidence and relationships that another organisation has built over years. This is what makes trust particularly powerful as a source of competitive advantage.

The organisations that understand this will begin to treat trust differently. They will not leave it to chance or regard it simply as a matter of corporate culture. They will measure it, manage it and deliberately build it into the way they lead, execute strategy and create value.

Trust is not the outcome of organisational success. Increasingly, it is one of the conditions that makes sustainable organisational success possible.

And this is at the heart of The Trust Economy: the recognition that in an environment where products, technology, capital and even talent can increasingly be replicated or accessed, the capacity to earn and sustain trust can become one of an organisation's most valuable and enduring strategic assets.

The Trust Imperative

Today's most successful organisations recognise that **every strategic initiative ultimately depends on people.**

Innovation depends on people sharing ideas.

Customer experience depends on people delivering exceptional service.

Transformation depends on people embracing change.

Governance depends on people making ethical decisions.

Strategy depends on people executing consistently.

People, however, perform at their highest potential only when they work in environments characterised by **trust.**

- Trust creates psychological safety.
- Trust encourages collaboration.
- Trust accelerates decision-making.
- Trust reduces organisational friction.
- Trust strengthens accountability.
- Trust enables innovation.
- Trust improves execution.
- Trust builds resilience during periods of uncertainty.

For these reasons, trust has become one of the few competitive advantages that competitors cannot easily replicate.

Products can be copied.

Technology can be acquired.

Capital can be raised.

Processes can be imitated.

However, a deeply embedded culture of trust, built consistently over time through credible leadership and shared values, is exceptionally difficult to duplicate.

This makes trust one of the most enduring sources of competitive advantage available to any organisation.

“

Trust in 2026 is the primary currency of every Organisation.

”

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Building Trust – A Leadership Agenda

In the Trust Economy, leadership effectiveness is increasingly measured by the quality of trust leaders generate rather than the formal authority they hold. The following agenda provides practical guidance for CEOs, senior executives, and boards who wish to move from aspiration to deliberate action.



“

Trust is not created by declarations or values statements. It is created by the daily behaviour of leaders.

A.

The Trust Leadership Checklist

High-trust leadership is visible in consistent patterns of behaviour. Leaders who deliberately build trust tend to practise the following:

- Communicate with honesty and clarity, particularly when circumstances are difficult or uncertain.
- Explain the reasoning behind major decisions rather than simply announcing outcomes.
- Create regular, structured opportunities for employees to speak openly and without fear of negative consequences.
- Listen carefully and respond constructively even when the feedback is uncomfortable.
- Make decisions that are perceived as fair and apply standards consistently across individuals and teams.
- Hold themselves and other senior leaders to the same expectations they set for the rest of the organisation.
- Recognise contributions specifically and publicly, reinforcing the behaviours they want to see repeated.
- Admit mistakes promptly and take personal responsibility rather than deflecting blame.
- Protect psychological safety by ensuring that people who raise concerns or challenge ideas are treated with respect.
- Follow through on commitments, even when external conditions change.
- **Most importantly**, ensure that the organisation's stated values are reflected in its systems of reward, recognition, promotion, and accountability.

These behaviours are not occasional gestures. They form a pattern that employees observe over time. When the pattern is consistent, trust grows. When it is broken, trust erodes quickly.

B.

The Board's Role in Trust

Boards have a fundamental responsibility to treat organisational trust as both a strategic asset and a material risk. Culture and trust influence execution, risk management, talent retention, reputation, and long-term enterprise value. Boards that ignore these dimensions are governing incompletely.

Effective boards regularly engage management on questions such as:

- Q How do we currently measure the level of trust employees place in leadership and in the organisation?
- Q What is the gap between what senior leaders believe about trust and what employees actually experience?
- Q How does our culture support or undermine the execution of strategy?
- Q Where are the greatest risks to trust within the Organisation; in leadership behaviour, fairness of opportunity, transparency of decision-making, or accountability?
- Q How are culture and trust considered in succession planning and senior appointments?
- Q What early warning indicators would signal that trust is beginning to erode?
- Q How does the board itself model the standards of transparency, accountability, and fairness it expects from management?

Boards that take these questions seriously elevate culture from a peripheral human resources concern to a core element of governance. In doing so, they strengthen the organisation's capacity for sustained performance.

The **Great Place To Work® Trust Index™** provides a rigorous, globally validated method for measuring the quality of the employee experience across credibility, respect, fairness, pride, and camaraderie. Organisations may also use carefully designed pulse surveys, structured listening sessions, and qualitative feedback mechanisms to track trust over time.

Leading indicators of trust typically include employee confidence in senior leadership, perceptions of fairness in decisions and opportunities, psychological safety, willingness to recommend the organisation as a place to work, and belief that leaders act with integrity.

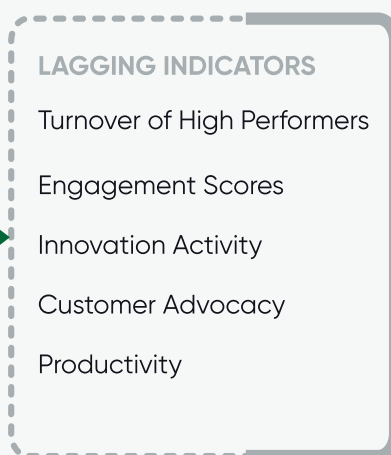
These indicators often move before lagging measures such as voluntary turnover of high performers, engagement scores, innovation activity, customer advocacy, and productivity.

C.

Measuring Trust

Organisations cannot manage what they do not measure. While trust is often described as intangible, it can be assessed with discipline and regularity.

Trust Indicators: Leading vs. Lagging



The most effective organisations link trust metrics to business outcomes. They examine whether declines in trust precede increases in turnover or reductions in discretionary effort. They treat trust data as seriously as financial or operational data and review it at senior leadership and board level.

Measurement alone does not create trust, but without measurement, leaders are left managing by assumption.

D.

Common Pitfalls in the Nigerian Context

Certain leadership behaviours consistently erode trust in Nigerian organisations.

- × The familiar cliché of 'Do what I say, don't do what I do,' where leaders' actions contradict their words.
- × Favouritism and unequal application of rules.
- × Lack of transparency in decisions that shape careers and livelihoods.
- × Delayed or selective accountability, especially at senior levels.
- × Public criticism that humiliates rather than corrects.
- × Over-promising during difficult periods followed by under-delivery.
- × The use of hierarchy to shut down legitimate questions or dissent also erode confidence rapidly.

In environments where power distance is high, these behaviours can become normalised, making them even more destructive because they are rarely challenged.

Leaders who wish to build high-trust cultures must deliberately avoid these patterns.

Trust is rarely destroyed by a single dramatic event. It is more often undermined by repeated small inconsistencies that signal to employees that stated values are negotiable.

Building Trust in a Low-Trust Environment

Building high-trust organisations in Nigeria requires an honest acknowledgement of the wider context in which businesses operate. The challenge is not simply one of leadership skill or organisational design. It is shaped by deeper cultural, economic, and institutional realities that influence how people interpret authority, risk, fairness, and commitment.

High Power Distance and Hierarchical Cultures

Nigerian society is characterised by relatively high power distance. Hierarchical structures are deeply embedded in social, family, and organisational life. Respect for seniority and authority is widely valued, yet this same cultural pattern often discourages open challenge, upward feedback, and the free expression of dissenting views.

Employees may remain silent not because they lack ideas or insight, but because they calculate that speaking up carries personal or professional risk. In such environments, leaders can easily mistake compliance for commitment, and quiet acceptance for genuine alignment.

High-trust cultures do not require the abandonment of hierarchy. They require leaders who use hierarchy responsibly, inviting input, protecting those who raise legitimate concerns, and demonstrating that rank does not place anyone above accountability.

Economic Pressures and Survival Mindsets

Persistent economic pressures further complicate the building of trust. Inflation, currency volatility, job insecurity, and the high cost of living create survival mindsets in which short-term self-protection can appear more rational than long-term organisational loyalty.

When employees are preoccupied with meeting basic needs, appeals to shared purpose or discretionary effort may ring hollow unless leaders also demonstrate genuine care for people's material and psychological wellbeing.

Organisations that ignore these pressures while demanding high engagement often deepen cynicism. Those that acknowledge economic realities, communicate honestly about constraints, and still treat people with fairness and dignity are more likely to earn lasting trust.

Broader Institutional Distrust and Its Spillover

Trust inside organisations does not exist in a vacuum. Broader institutional distrust toward government, public institutions, and sometimes the private sector itself frequently spills into workplaces.

Employees bring with them experiences and assumptions formed outside the organisation. They may interpret leadership communications through a lens of scepticism shaped by wider societal patterns of unfulfilled promises, selective accountability, or perceived unfairness.

This spillover effect means that organisations must work harder to establish credibility. Every inconsistency between words and actions is magnified. Every demonstration of fairness, transparency, and follow-through carries greater weight.

The Challenge of Consistency Amid Volatility

Volatility in the external environment adds another layer of difficulty. Currency fluctuations, policy shifts, inflationary shocks, and security challenges can force leaders to reverse earlier commitments or change course rapidly.

Even when such decisions are necessary and well-intentioned, they can create perceptions of unreliability if communication is poor, delayed, or incomplete.

Consistency is harder to maintain when the ground itself is shifting. Yet it is precisely in these moments that trust is most tested and most valuable.

Leaders who explain the reasons for difficult decisions, involve people where possible, and remain visible and accountable during uncertainty protect the relational capital of the organisation even when circumstances force change.



Creating High-Trust Micro-Climates

Despite these realities, organisations are not powerless. Trust does not require a perfect external environment. It requires leaders who are deliberate, consistent, and fair within the sphere of influence they control. High-trust micro-climates can be created even inside low-trust societies.

Organisations that succeed under these conditions typically make fairness and consistency non-negotiable. They communicate more frequently and more honestly during difficult periods rather than less. They protect psychological safety even while maintaining clear hierarchical structures. They separate personal loyalty from organisational standards and demonstrate that accountability applies at every level, including the most senior. They invest in the day-to-day experience of employees, including; how decisions are explained, how recognition is given, how mistakes are handled, and how people are treated when they raise concerns.

Building trust in a low-trust environment is harder than building it in a high-trust one. It is also more valuable. Organisations that achieve it create a distinctive and durable advantage that competitors find difficult to replicate. In doing so, they not only strengthen their own performance; they contribute to the gradual elevation of institutional standards across the wider economy.

The Nigerian context does not make high-trust cultures impossible. It makes them more necessary – and more powerful when they are achieved.

CASE STUDY



Trust in Practice at ProvidusUnity Bank: Building Trust in a Business Combination

01 The Trust-Related Challenge or Opportunity

The Providus Bank and Unity Bank combination was a defining transformation whose success depended not only on integrating systems, operations and processes, but on earning employees' trust in the vision, leadership and future of the new Organisation. Recognizing concerns about job security, career progression, compensation, culture, belonging and their implications for stability, customer experience and performance. ProvidusUnity Bank made trust a strategic priority throughout the integration.

02 Specific Actions Taken by Leadership

- **Protected employment:** Leadership adopted a people-first approach and retained the entire workforce, signalling that employees were central to the combined Bank's future.
- **Ensured fairness and transparency:** Grades, compensation and benefits were harmonised, supported by timely communication, open forums and clear channels for addressing concerns.
- **Built a shared culture:** The ELITES persona—Excellence, Leadership, Integrity, Tenacity, Teamwork, Entrepreneurial Spirit and Service—created a common behavioural framework.
- **Reinforced trust through action:** Townhall meetings, Knowledge sharing, culture ambassadors, engagement, learning, talent mobility and stronger performance management were backed by visible, consistent senior leadership.

The objective was not merely to manage change, but to create a sense of belonging and shared purpose within a newly combined institution.

03 The Outcomes Achieved

The integration produced strong employee confidence: a Big 4 Change Impact Survey recorded a 95% positive score, while the Great Place To Work® Trust Index Survey conducted less than three months after the merger confirmed broad trust in the combined organisation and its direction:

- 97% agreed that ProvidusUnity Bank is a Great Place To Work.
- 98% expressed pride in telling others they work for the organisation.
- 97% would strongly recommend the organisation to friends and family.
- 97% affirmed that management is competent at running the business.
- 96% agreed that management's actions consistently match its words.
- 96% felt treated as full members of the organisation regardless of position.
- 96% considered the Bank a physically safe place to work.

complex integration process while preserving employee engagement and confidence. These achievements contributed to ProvidusUnity Bank earning its fourth consecutive Great Place To Work® certification and being recognised as the 3rd Best Workplace in Banking 2026.

04 Key Lessons for Other Leaders

The central lesson is that trust must be deliberately embedded in leadership decisions, policies, systems and behaviours—not communicated in words alone. When employees feel valued and see leaders' actions match their commitments, they become stronger advocates who support customer experience, productivity, collaboration, reputation and sustainable performance through change.

When Intelligence Becomes Artificial, Trust Becomes Human

Artificial intelligence is changing the way organisations work

It is influencing how decisions are made, how customers are served, how employees perform their jobs, how products are developed and how organisations compete. Generative AI and increasingly autonomous AI agents are moving beyond experimentation and into everyday business processes.

As organisations accelerate their adoption of AI, they face a challenge that technology alone cannot solve:

TRUST

The central question of the AI era is not simply whether organisations can use artificial intelligence.

It is whether **employees, customers, investors and other stakeholders trust organisations to use it responsibly.**

This makes AI one of the most important new dimensions of the Trust Economy.

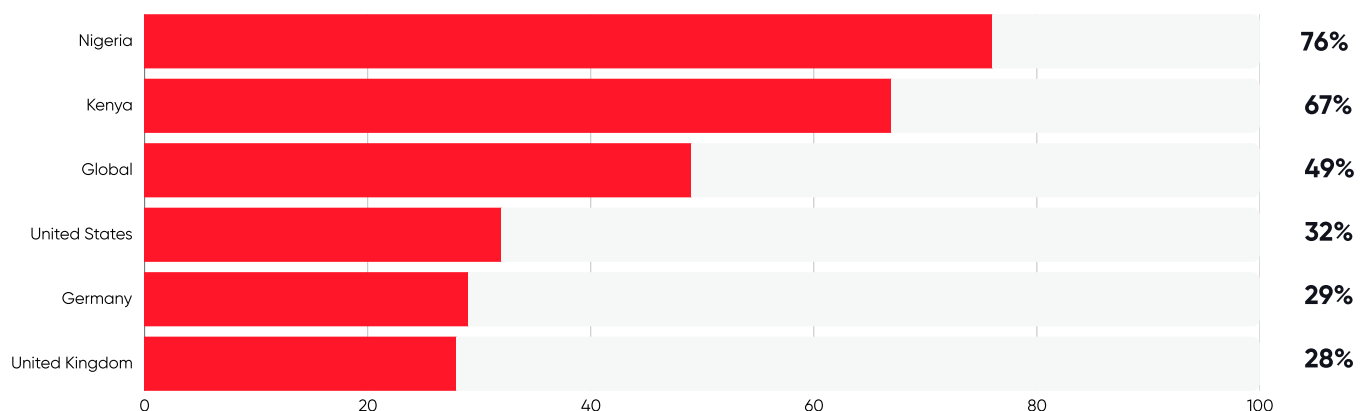
The AI Trust Paradox

AI presents organisations with an unusual paradox. The technology promises greater productivity, faster decision-making, innovation and new forms of human capability. Yet the same technology raises concerns about job displacement, surveillance, bias, misinformation, privacy, accountability and the loss of human judgement.

Consequently, the more powerful AI becomes, the more important trust becomes.

The 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report on Technology found that global trust in AI stood at 49%, but the figure varied dramatically across countries. In Nigeria, 76% of respondents said they trusted artificial intelligence, placing Nigeria among the countries with the highest levels of AI trust globally. Kenya recorded 67%, while the United States recorded 32%, Germany 29% and the United Kingdom 28%.

TRUST IN AI - % of RESPONDENTS (EDELMAN, 2025)



Nigeria's relatively high level of trust in AI is significant.

It suggests that Nigerian organisations may have an opportunity to adopt AI rapidly. High initial trust should however not be confused with unconditional trust.

Trust can accelerate adoption, but it can also disappear quickly when people experience harm, deception, unfairness or a disconnect between what organisations promise and what AI actually does.

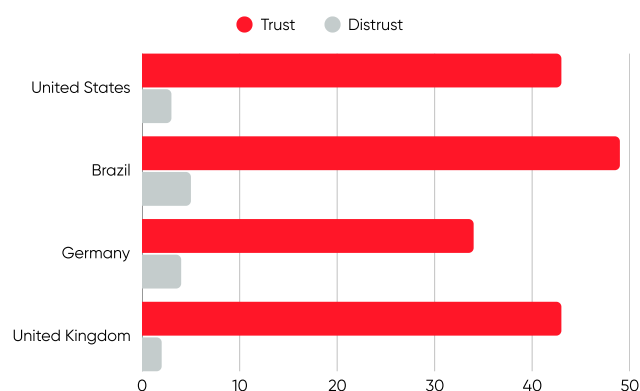
Trust Is Becoming the Gateway to AI Adoption

The relationship between trust and AI adoption is already measurable.

Edelman's 2025 Trust and Artificial Intelligence at a Crossroads study surveyed 5,000 people across five countries and found a strong relationship between trust and willingness to embrace increased AI use.

For example, in the United States, 43% of people who trusted AI embraced its growing use compared with only 3% among those who distrusted it.

Similar gaps existed in Brazil (49% vs 5%), Germany (34% vs 4%), United Kingdom (43% vs 2%)



EMBRACE GROWING USE OF AI – % OF THOSE WHO TRUST VS DISTRUST IT

The implication is straightforward:
Trust is not merely an attitude toward AI.
It is an adoption mechanism.

Where people trust AI, they are considerably more willing to use it. Where they distrust it, adoption becomes slower and resistance increases.

For organisations investing heavily in AI, this matters enormously.

An organisation can purchase the technology. It can license the platform. It can hire AI specialists. It cannot, however, purchase employee trust.

The Workplace Will Be the Great Test of AI Trust

The workplace may become the most important arena in which AI trust is established or lost.

Employees want to know:

- Q Will AI augment my work or replace me?
- Q Will decisions affecting my career be made by algorithms?
- Q How is my personal data being used?
- Q Can I challenge an AI-assisted decision?
- Q Who is accountable when AI gets something wrong?
- Q Will everyone receive the training necessary to work effectively with AI?
- Q Will the benefits of AI be shared with employees or accrue only to shareholders and senior executives?

Edelman's research provides an important insight here.

Across the five markets in its 2025 AI study

53%–76%

Employees said they would be more enthusiastic about generative AI if they believed their employer was using it to enhance productivity rather than cut jobs.

The same research found that high-quality employer training also increases enthusiasm for AI.

This reveals an important principle for the Trust Economy:

People are more likely to trust AI when they believe it is being used for their benefit, not simply for organisational efficiency at their expense.

Experience Builds AI Trust

Trust in AI is also not created primarily through corporate announcements.

It is created through experience.

Edelman's research found that when employees actually experienced generative AI helping them find solutions at work, trust increased dramatically. For example, trust rose from:

Brazil	63%	→	89%
Germany	41%	→	73%
United Kingdom	28%	→	74%
United States	33%	→	68%

when respondents moved from saying AI had not helped them find solutions at work to saying that it had helped them.

This has an important implication for leaders:

Do not ask employees simply to trust AI. Give them opportunities to experience its value.

Training, experimentation, responsible pilots and peer learning may therefore be more powerful than top-down declarations about the benefits of AI.

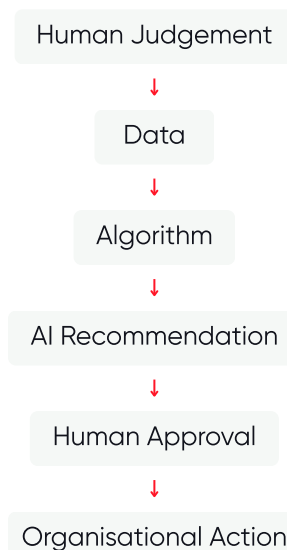
The Leadership Trust Challenge

AI also creates a new leadership responsibility.

Historically, employees could reasonably expect that a human leader ultimately understood and owned most significant organisational decisions.

AI complicates this.

A decision may now involve:



Who is accountable?

The answer cannot be:

"The algorithm decided"

Trust requires accountability to remain human.

Leaders must therefore establish clear principles around:

Transparency

People should understand when AI is being used and, where material, how it influences decisions.

Accountability

There must always be identifiable human responsibility for consequential decisions.

Fairness

AI systems should be monitored for discriminatory or unfair outcomes.

Privacy

Employees and customers need confidence that their data is being responsibly handled.

Human Oversight

AI should support human judgement rather than create an accountability vacuum.

Capability

Employees must receive the training necessary to use AI responsibly and effectively.

Voice

Employees should have opportunities to raise concerns, challenge AI-assisted decisions and contribute to how AI is introduced.

These are not simply technology governance issues.

They are trust issues.

The New Psychological Contract

AI may fundamentally change the psychological contract between organisations and employees.

The traditional expectation was broadly:

"You give us your time, skills and commitment; we provide employment, compensation, development and opportunity"

The AI era introduces a new question:

"As technology changes the nature of your work, what responsibility does the organisation have to prepare you for what comes next?"

This is where leadership will matter enormously. Organisations that introduce AI primarily as a cost-reduction programme may generate fear and resistance.

Organisations that introduce AI as a means of augmenting human capability, improving productivity and creating new opportunities, while investing in people, are more likely to build confidence.

The distinction is not technological.
It is relational.

AI Trust and the Nigerian Opportunity

For Nigeria, this issue is particularly important.

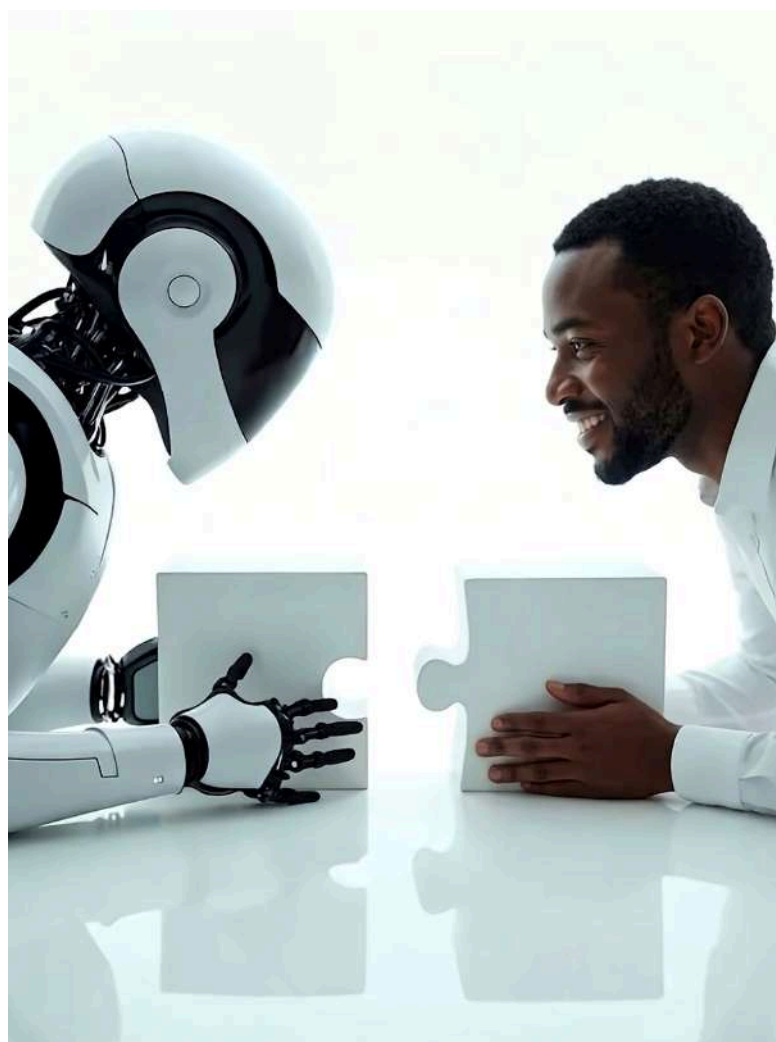
Nigeria enters the AI era with significant opportunities to use technology to overcome traditional constraints in productivity, service delivery, financial inclusion, healthcare, education and business development.

The country's relatively high level of reported trust in AI; **76% in the 2025 Edelman global technology data provides a potentially favourable foundation for adoption.**

However, Nigeria must not interpret enthusiasm as permission to adopt AI without safeguards. The country's Trust Economy will increasingly depend on whether organisations can demonstrate that AI is being used to:

- » Improve productivity
- » Create better customer experiences
- » Expand opportunity
- » Develop people
- » Support better decision-making
- » Reduce inefficiency
- » Strengthen rather than undermine accountability
- » Create new forms of value

The opportunity is to make AI human-centred rather than simply technology-centred.



From Artificial Intelligence to Augmented Intelligence

The most trusted organisations of the AI era may not be those that use the most AI. They may be those that use AI most responsibly and most effectively to augment human capability.

This requires a shift in mindset:

TRADITIONAL AI CONVERSATION

How much can we automate?
How many jobs can AI replace?
How much efficiency can we gain?
Can AI make the decision?
How quickly can we deploy?
How do we control AI?
How do we convince employees?

TRUST ECONOMY CONVERSATION

What should we automate?
How can AI make people more capable?
How do we create sustainable productivity?
Where should human judgement remain?
How do we build confidence while deploying?
How do we govern AI responsibly?
How do we involve employees?

This is ultimately the human dimension of the AI revolution.

The Trust Equation for AI

The Trust Economy suggests a simple principle:

- AI capability creates potential.
- AI governance creates confidence.
- Human experience creates trust.
- Trust creates adoption.
- Adoption creates value.

The organisations that understand this will treat AI trust as a strategic capability rather than a communications exercise.

- They will explain how AI is being used.
- They will train their people.
- They will involve employees in the transition.
- They will protect data.
- They will maintain human accountability.

And they will measure not only whether AI is producing efficiency, but whether people trust the way it is being used.

AI Leadership in an Age of Trust

The question facing leaders is therefore not:

"Should we trust AI?"

Nor is it:

"Can AI be trusted?"

The more important leadership question is:

"What must we do to make the use of AI worthy of trust?"

That is the question that will define responsible leadership in the Trust Economy because the organisations that win the AI race may not ultimately be those with the most sophisticated technology.

They will be the organisations that successfully combine artificial intelligence with human trust.

“

In the Age of AI, trust becomes the human advantage.

”

CASE STUDY



Round Table Sessions ("Family Meetings")

As Legend Hotel Lagos Airport, Curio Collection by Hilton continued to grow, leaders recognized the need to maintain a stronger personal connection with Team Members beyond traditional communication channels. While formal structures exist, they did not always capture the concerns, ideas, and experiences of team members.

To address this, the hotel **introduced Round Table Sessions (RTS)**, known internally as "Family Meetings," creating a safe and open platform where Team Members could engage directly with leaders, share feedback, ask questions, raise concerns, and suggest improvements.

The sessions were intentionally designed as **informal, two-way conversations** rather than presentations. Led by the General Manager and Human Resources Manager, each session provided dedicated time for honest discussions about experiences at work, general welfare, recognition, communication, development, and the whole work environment. Leaders actively listened, sought to understand issues from the Team Members' perspective, and ensured appropriate follow-up actions or clarifications where necessary.

To maintain accountability, the Human Resources (HR) team **documented all feedback, reviewed recurring themes, and used the insights gathered to drive people-focused initiatives and leadership decisions**. This process reinforced confidence in the system by demonstrating that team member voices were not only heard but also considered and acted upon.

The impact of the RTS has been significant. The sessions have strengthened trust between Team Members and leaders, improved transparency, and created a more open culture where team members feel valued and comfortable speaking up. Leaders have gained deeper insight into team member experiences, helping them identify and address issues that might otherwise have gone unnoticed.

To further reinforce trust, the HR team established a visible feedback communication system in all Team Member areas, including digital displays showcasing

"You Said" – what team members told us through feedback.

"We Did" – actions implemented in response to feedback.

"The Impact" – the difference these actions have made."

This approach closes the feedback loop by clearly demonstrating how team members input translates into actions and positive outcomes.

THE KEY LESSON

Trust is built through consistent leadership behaviour. Creating opportunities for open dialogue, listening without defensiveness, following through on commitments, and providing transparent feedback all contribute to a workplace culture where team members feel respected, heard, and empowered.

Ultimately, the RTS have proven that when people see their voices making a difference, trust and engagement grow stronger across the Organisation.

Building Organisations That Earn Confidence and Outlast Individuals

Trust is not created by leadership alone. For trust to endure, it must become embedded in the institution.

An organisation may have an exceptional leader, a strong strategy and talented people, but if its systems, governance structures and decision-making processes are inconsistent or perceived as unfair, trust can quickly become dependent on individuals rather than anchored in the institution.

This is where **institutional trust** becomes critical.



Institutional trust is the confidence that people place in an organisation because they believe that its principles, systems, leadership practices and governance mechanisms will consistently support responsible and fair outcomes.

It is the confidence that decisions will not depend solely on who is in the room. That rules will be applied consistently. That accountability will extend to senior leaders. That resources will be responsibly managed. That commitments will be honoured, and that the organisation will continue to behave with integrity even when circumstances become difficult.

Good governance is therefore not simply about compliance. It is about creating confidence in how an organisation operates.

In the Trust Economy, this confidence becomes increasingly valuable.

From Individual Leadership to Institutional Trust

One of the greatest tests of an organisation is what happens when its leaders change.

If trust disappears when a CEO leaves, the organisation may have built loyalty to an individual rather than confidence in an institution.

Strong institutions are different. They establish principles, systems, behaviours and standards that survive leadership transitions.

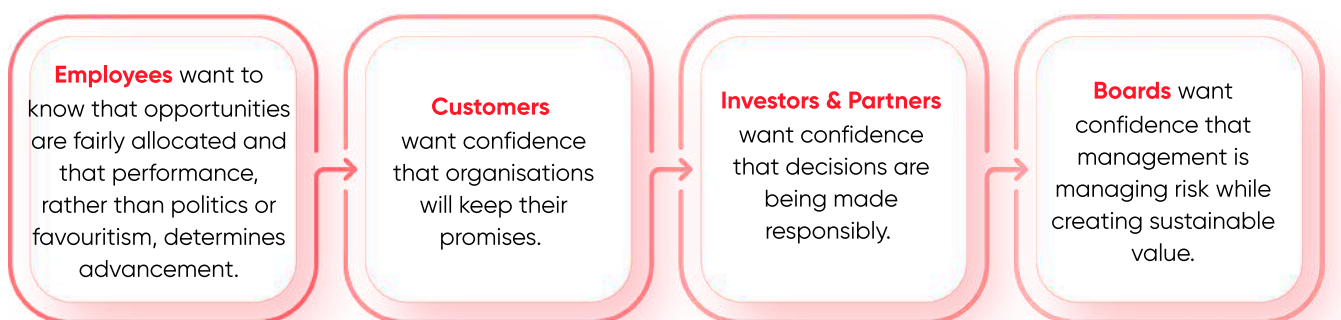
It is the confidence that decisions will not depend solely on who is in the room. That rules will be applied consistently. That accountability will extend to senior leaders. That resources will be responsibly managed. That commitments will be honoured, and that the organisation will continue to behave with integrity even when circumstances become difficult.

This Requires

- Clear Accountability
- Effective Oversight
- Transparent Decision-Making
- Strong Ethical Standards
- Appropriate Checks and Balances
- A culture in which people understand that leadership comes with responsibility.

The objective is not to create bureaucracy.

It is to create consistency, confidence and continuity.





Governance as a Trust Infrastructure

Governance provides the infrastructure through which trust is sustained.

It answers fundamental questions:

- Q Who makes decisions?
- Q How are decisions challenged?
- Q Who is accountable for outcomes?
- Q How are conflicts of interest managed?
- Q How are people treated when they raise concerns?
- Q How are performance and conduct evaluated?
- Q How does the organisation protect its values when under pressure?
- Q How does the institution ensure that today's decisions do not compromise tomorrow's sustainability?

When these mechanisms work effectively, governance becomes more than a control system.

It becomes a trust system.

This is particularly important as organisations become more complex and technology increasingly influences decision-making. Artificial intelligence, data, automation and digital platforms may improve efficiency, but they also introduce new questions around accountability, transparency, privacy and responsible use.

The institution must ultimately remain accountable for the decisions it makes regardless of whether those decisions are supported by technology.

The Test of Institutional Trust

The real measure of institutional trust is often revealed when an organisation is under pressure.

It is relatively easy to demonstrate values when business is performing well. The harder test comes during a crisis, difficult restructuring, leadership transition, ethical dilemma or major strategic decision.



DO THE PRINCIPLES STILL HOLD?

- ✓ Do leaders apply the same standards to themselves that they apply to others?
- ✓ Does transparency increase when uncertainty increases?
- ✓ Are difficult decisions explained rather than simply imposed?
- ✓ Are people given a voice?
- ✓ Does the organisation protect its long-term reputation even when a short-term gain is available?

These moments reveal whether trust is genuinely embedded or merely communicated.

In the Trust Economy, this will increasingly become a source of competitive advantage.

Strong leadership creates trust.

Strong governance sustains it.

Strong institutions turn it into lasting value.

Building Institutions That Last

Nigeria's corporate future will depend not only on the companies we build, but on the quality and resilience of the institutions within those companies. Businesses that aspire to become enduring institutions must look beyond quarterly performance.

They must build governance systems capable of supporting responsible growth, leadership succession, ethical decision-making, talent development and long-term value creation. The ambition should be to build organisations that people can trust even when the individuals leading them change.

That is the difference between an organisation that is successful today and an institution capable of creating value for generations.

Institutional trust is ultimately the confidence that the organisation will do the right thing not because a particular leader is watching, but because the institution has been designed to do so.

Great Place To Work.



CASE STUDY



Keeping Faith on the Factory Floor: How GZ Industries Built Trust at Line Speed

01 The Trust-Related Challenge or Opportunity

GZ Industries (GZI) began production in Agbara in 2010 with a workforce of about 250. Today, 1,422 people run a continuous, round-the-clock aluminium can operation that supplies some of Africa's largest beverage brands. That growth brought a quieter risk: as shifts multiplied and the business expanded across sites, the distance between leadership and the shop floor widened. Then, in 2023 and 2024, naira devaluation and rising living costs squeezed households and raised uncertainty about jobs and pay. In a high-speed plant, where a moment's lapse in attention can cost a line or a life, leaders recognised that Trust was not a soft issue; and then took action.

02 Specific Actions Taken by Leadership

Leadership chose to close the gap in person rather than by memo. Senior executives committed to regular shop-floor walks, including during night shifts, and to have bi-annual town halls. During the currency crisis, leaders explained the company's position candidly, introduced COLA (palliatives), and held to a firm rule: salaries are paid on time.

Safety was reframed as a matter of mutual trust and Operators were adequately empowered to take action where a safety may be jeopardised.

Leaders also acted on employee feedback promptly; the Great Place To Work® Trust Index™ results were shared with all staff, and intervention plans were co-created and implemented. For example, when operations staff flagged slow career progression and Technical skill exits, the company introduced clearer technical career paths and invested in Nigerian talent through its graduate support programme (GSP) as a feeder pipeline.

03 The Outcomes Achieved

The results show up in both people and performance measures. GZI's Trust Index™ score rose from 79% in 2024 to 82% in 2025, earning platinum Great Place To Work® Certification™ (5 years in a row). Voluntary attrition fell from 10.8% to 8.2% and is currently below 5% FY 2026 YT September. Safety performance strengthened, with zero LTI recorded. On the line, spoilage fell to below 3% and 1 billion cans were produced last year. Employees consistently cite prompt pay, strong welfare and a safety-first culture as reasons they stay.

Most tellingly, 80% of employees say management is honest, credible and ethical in its business practices.

04 Key Lessons for Other Leaders

Trust is built in the hard moments. Employees remember how leaders behave during difficult times, not what the values poster says. Be predictable on the basics: paying people on time and telling them early when something changes does more for credibility than any campaign. Go where the work happens, including the night shift. Share survey results, even the uncomfortable ones, and let teams own the fixes.

Finally, invest visibly in local talent. When people see colleagues grow into leadership, they believe the organisation has a future for them too and that truly, people are the greatest assets of a business.

Our Global Methodology and The Trust Scorecard

Great Place To Work's methodology is built on a single, powerful premise: trust is the foundation of organisational performance. For more than three decades, across more than 180 countries, this methodology has been refined through the experiences of millions of employees. It combines rigorous measurement with practical transformation, enabling organisations to move from insight to sustained improvement.

The Foundation: Trust as the Core of the Employee Experience

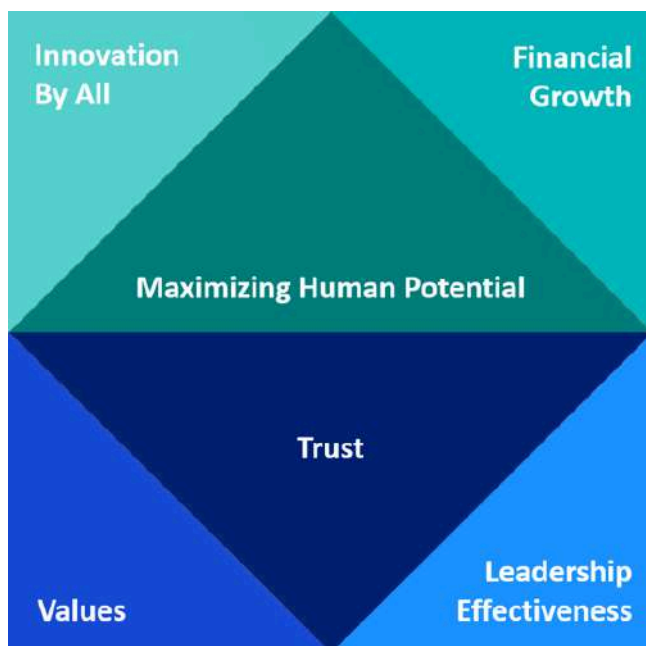
At the centre of the methodology is the recognition that every employee's experience of work is shaped by three critical relationships; with management, with colleagues, and with the work itself. These relationships are measured through the Great Place To Work Trust Index® across five globally validated dimensions:



When these dimensions are strong, trust becomes the operating system of the organisation. When they are weak, friction increases, discretionary effort declines, and performance suffers.

From Trust to Performance: **Financial Growth**

Trust does not exist for its own sake. It is the foundation that enables organisations to maximise human potential that results in financial growth. High-trust cultures unlock five critical outcomes:



Values

Shared values become lived behaviours rather than wall statements. When trust is present, the organisation's principles are consistently reflected in decisions, recognition, and accountability.

Leadership Effectiveness

Leaders who earn trust create clarity, inspiration, and accountability. They set direction honestly, develop people deliberately, and hold themselves to the same standards they expect of others.

Maximising Human Potential

People are able to contribute their full capability. Energy that would otherwise be spent on self-protection, politics, or uncertainty is redirected toward meaningful work, collaboration, and growth.

Innovation By All

People feel safe to contribute ideas, challenge assumptions, and experiment. Psychological safety and confidence in leadership turn the entire workforce into a source of continuous improvement and creative problem-solving.

Financial Growth

Organisations with high trust consistently deliver stronger productivity, higher retention, greater customer advocacy, and superior long-term value creation. Trust reduces organisational friction and releases discretionary effort, converting human potential into measurable business results.

At **Great Place To Work**, one of the most important lessons from studying thousands of organisations worldwide is that great workplaces begin with leadership. Culture is often spoken about as if it is something abstract, something that simply exists within an organisation. But research consistently shows that **employees do not experience culture first - they experience leadership first**. They experience how leaders communicate, how decisions are made, whether promises are kept, and whether people are treated with respect and fairness.

Through the Great Place To Work platform and benchmarking, organisations gain deep insight into the drivers of employee experience, including the nine key leadership behaviours that build trust across the organisation. When leaders understand these behaviours and intentionally practise them, they begin to create something extremely powerful. Leaders set the tone through vision, integrity, and consistency. Their actions and communication create the foundation for how employees experience the workplace.

“Leadership isn't just about strategy - it's about human connection and modeling values.”

Leaders shape experience. The daily reality of employees - how they are treated, supported, and recognised - flows directly from leadership behaviour. When leaders listen, empower, and appreciate, employees feel valued.

Experience is the lived reality of culture: the policies, practices, and interpersonal interactions that define everyday work.

Experience shapes culture. Shared experiences accumulate into organisational culture. Positive experiences foster trust, collaboration, and innovation. Negative experiences erode morale, create silos, and breed disengagement. **Culture is essentially the collective memory of leadership actions.**

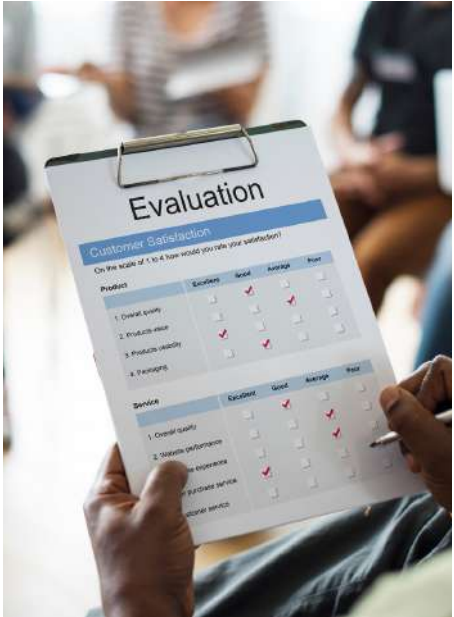
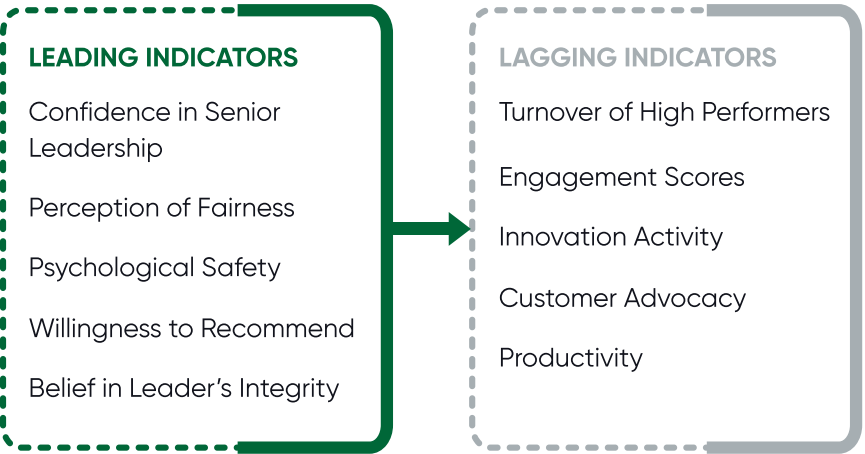
01. Leadership Listening Inspiring Speaking Caring Developing Thanking Celebrating Sharing Hiring	02. Experience Trust Pride Camaraderie For All	03. Culture Collaboration Innovation Agility Opportunity Belonging Well-Being	04. Performance Profitability Productivity Efficiency Customer Satisfaction Social Impact Market Resilience Talent Acquisition Retention
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Finally, culture drives performance. A strong culture translates into engagement, where employees give discretionary effort; retention, where people stay longer and grow with the company; customer excellence, where internal trust becomes external trust; and resilience, where teams adapt quickly to change. Performance is not just about hitting numbers – it is about sustaining success through people.

This is the Great Place To Work Effect: great leaders build trust, trust shapes culture, and culture drives performance.

The Trust Scorecard: Measuring What Matters

In the Trust Economy, trust must be measured with the same discipline applied to financial results. The Trust Scorecard distinguishes between early signals and downstream outcomes.

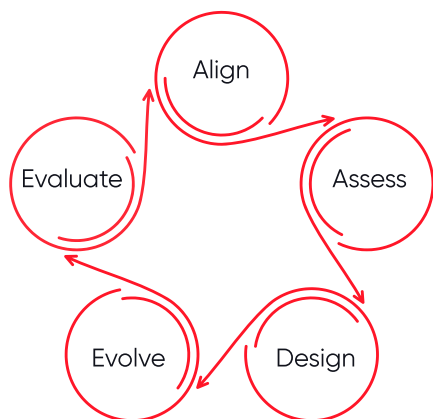


Leading Indicators measures move first and provide advance warning of cultural health while Lagging Indicators confirm whether trust is translating into results.

Leading indicators move first. Boards and executive teams that monitor them gain the ability to intervene before lagging measures deteriorate.

From Measurement to Transformation

Measurement alone is insufficient. The methodology supports organisations through a continuous cycle of improvement:



The Culture Transformation Framework is a strategic approach designed to systematically shift and develop an organisation's culture to align with its overarching goals, vision, and values. This framework provides a structured pathway for organisations to evolve their cultural identity, ensuring that their internal environment fosters trust, collaboration, innovation, and high performance.

The flow from Align to Evaluate represents a continuous, cyclical process. Each stage builds on the previous one, creating a strong foundation for the next. This cyclical approach allows the Organisation to adapt and evolve continuously, ensuring the culture remains aligned with organisational goals as the company grows and changes.

The **Align** stage focuses on creating a shared vision and purpose across the organisation. It begins with engaging leadership and key stakeholders to define the desired cultural outcomes and ensuring these align with the company's broader strategic goals.

The **Assess** stage involves a deep dive into the current organisational culture to understand strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

The **Design** stage focuses on creating the blueprint for the desired culture. This involves: Strategic, System and Process Design, Cultural Initiatives.

The **Evolve** stage is where the designed cultural changes are put into action. This stage is dynamic, requiring ongoing adjustments based on real-time feedback and outcomes. Key activities include: Pilot Programs, Change Management, Ongoing Support.

The **Evaluate** stage focuses on measuring the impact of the cultural transformation and making necessary adjustments to ensure sustainability. This includes: Performance Metrics, Continuous Feedback, Refinement.

This full Culture Transformation Framework is supported by bespoke offerings that includes executive advisory, leadership coaching, manager capability development, action planning, pulse surveys, continuous listening, and organisational development interventions.

The complete value chain can be summarised as:

Employee Voice → Trust Measurement → Advanced People Analytics → Leadership Insights → Culture Transformation → Organisational Performance → Employer of Choice

By combining the Trust Index®, the Culture Audit®, the Trust Scorecard, and a structured transformation framework, Great Place To Work enables organisations to treat trust not as a soft aspiration, but as a measurable, manageable, and strategically decisive capability.

This is the practical power of the methodology: it turns the abstract idea of trust into a disciplined system for building organisations that perform and endure.

A New Framework for Understanding Value Creation

Introduction

If trust has become one of the defining assets of modern organisations, an important question naturally follows:

- Q How does trust actually create value?
- Q How does leadership influence trust?
- Q How does trust shape organisational culture?
- Q How does culture affect employee behaviour?
- Q How do these behaviours translate into productivity, innovation, governance, enterprise value, and ultimately, national prosperity?

These questions lie at the heart of the Nigeria Trust Economy Outlook.

To help business leaders understand how trust translates into measurable organisational and economic outcomes, **Great Place To Work® Nigeria** introduces the **Trust Economy Value Chain™**, which is a strategic framework that explains how leadership creates trust, trust shapes culture, culture influences behaviour, behaviour drives performance, performance creates enterprise value, and collectively, high-performing organisations contribute to national prosperity.

The sections of this outlook that follow build upon this framework, providing business leaders with a practical lens through which to understand why trust is no longer simply a cultural aspiration, but one of the most important strategic assets of the twenty-first-century organisation.





A Strategic Framework for Organisational Performance and National Prosperity

Introducing the Trust Economy Value Chain™

The emergence of the Trust Economy requires leaders to rethink one of the most fundamental questions in business:

The emergence of the Trust Economy requires leaders to rethink one of the most fundamental questions in business:

How is sustainable organisational value created?

For decades, organisations have focused on strategy, technology, operational excellence,

financial capital, and market expansion as the principal drivers of business success. While these remain essential, experience and research increasingly demonstrate that they are not the true starting point of sustained organisational performance.

Every strategy depends on people to execute it.
Every innovation depends on people to conceive it.
Every customer experience depends on people to deliver it.
Every transformation depends on people to embrace change.

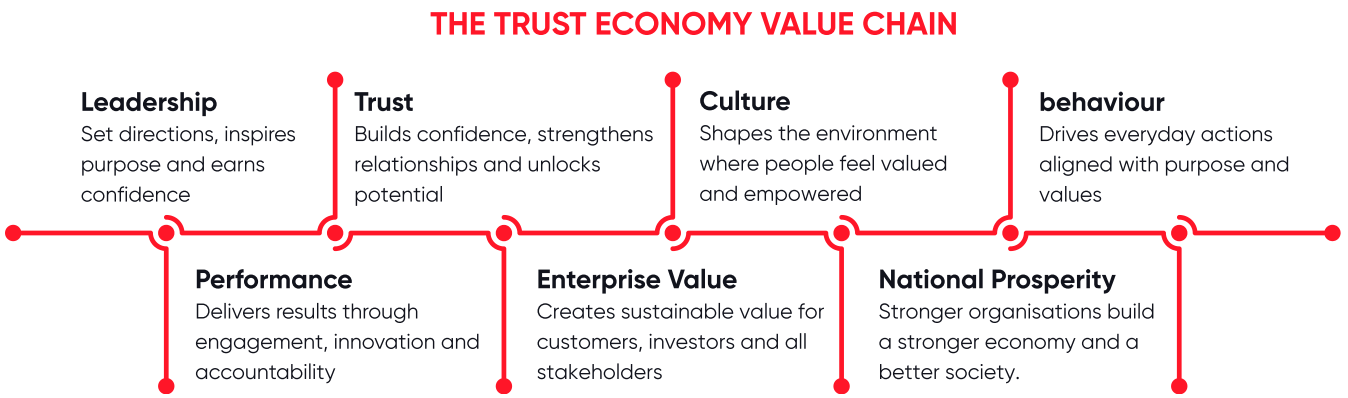
And people perform at their best only when they trust the leaders they follow and the organisations they serve.

This insight forms the basis of the Great Place To Work® Nigeria Trust Economy Value Chain™, which is a strategic framework that explains how trust creates value, not only for organisations but for economies and societies as a whole.

The framework proposes that organisational success is neither accidental nor purely financial. Rather, it is the outcome of a sequence of interconnected factors, each building upon the one before it.

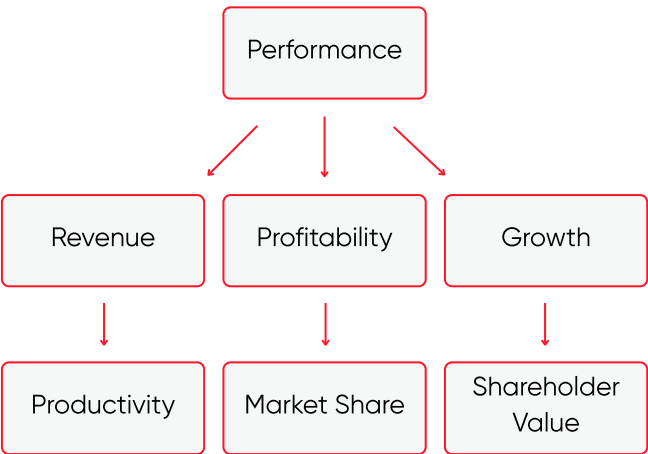
When any link in this chain is weak, organisational performance suffers. When every link is intentionally strengthened, organisations become more resilient, innovative, productive, and sustainable.

The Trust Economy Value Chain™ therefore provides leaders with a practical roadmap for understanding how their daily leadership decisions ultimately influence enterprise performance and national prosperity.



This framework challenges one of the most persistent and costly assumptions in management: that financial performance is the starting point of business success. It is not.

Financial results are an outcome, not a foundation.



They are the lagging indicator of earlier choices; choices about how leaders behave, how decisions are made, how people are treated, and whether trust is deliberately cultivated or left to chance. Organisations that treat financial performance as the primary driver often end up managing symptoms rather than causes: they push harder on targets, tighten controls, and demand more output, while the underlying conditions that enable consistent high performance remain weak or broken.

In reality, sustained financial performance is the natural consequence of the quality of trust that exists within an organisation. When trust is high, people share ideas freely, execute with greater discipline, adapt faster to change, and take ownership of results. When trust is low, the same strategies, technologies, and capital produce far weaker returns.

This is why so many well-funded transformation programmes fail, why talented people underperform in otherwise promising organisations, and why two companies with similar strategies and resources can deliver radically different results. The decisive difference is rarely the plan itself; it is the level of trust that determines whether people will fully commit to the plan, challenge it when necessary, and persist through difficulty. Trust, therefore, is not a soft cultural preference. It is the foundational condition that converts strategy into sustained performance.

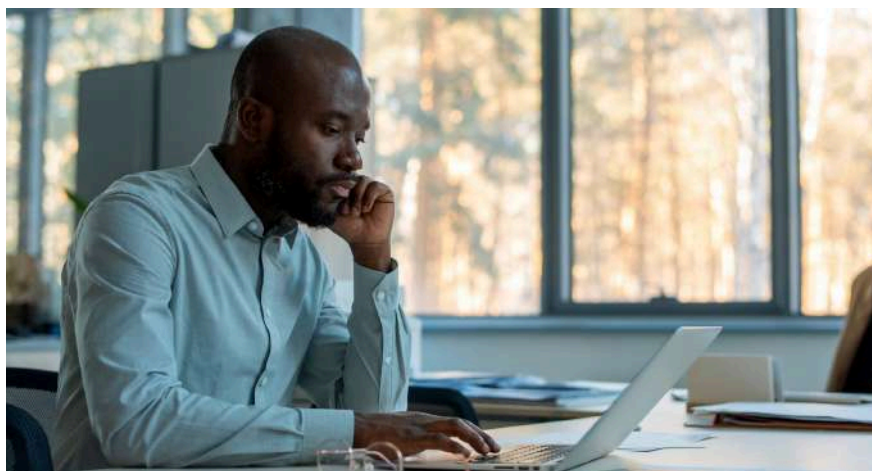
| From Leadership to National Prosperity

The Trust Economy Value Chain™ illustrates that the influence of leadership extends far beyond organisational boundaries.

- ⇒ A decision made in a boardroom influences leadership behaviour.
- ⇒ Leadership behaviour influences employee trust.
- ⇒ Employee trust shapes organisational culture.
- ⇒ Culture determines how people collaborate, innovate, solve problems, serve customers, and make ethical decisions.
- ⇒ These behaviours influence organisational performance.
- ⇒ High-performing organisations create greater economic value for shareholders, customers, employees, suppliers, and communities.
- ⇒ Collectively, these organisations strengthen productivity, create employment, attract investment, stimulate innovation, and contribute to national economic growth.

In this way, the journey from leadership to national prosperity is neither theoretical nor abstract.

It is measurable. It is observable. It is repeatable.



Why the Trust Economy Value Chain™ Matters

The Trust Economy Value Chain™ illustrates that the influence of leadership extends far beyond organisational boundaries.

Instead of asking:

How do we improve performance?

Leaders are encouraged to ask a more fundamental question:

What kind of leadership experience are we creating, and what level of trust does it inspire?

This is relevant because every improvement in performance can ultimately be traced back to behaviours.

Every behaviour is influenced by culture.

Every culture is shaped by trust. And every trusting culture begins with leadership.

The framework therefore shifts the leadership conversation away from managing outcomes toward intentionally creating the conditions that produce those outcomes.

Rather than treating culture as an HR initiative, it positions culture as a strategic capability.

Rather than viewing trust as a soft value, it recognises trust as an economic asset.

Rather than measuring success only through financial results, it acknowledges that sustainable enterprise value is created by organisations that consistently earn the confidence of their people and stakeholders.

The Leadership Imperative

The Trust Economy Value Chain™ carries an important implication for today's leaders. Every leadership decision either strengthens or weakens the chain.

THE VIRTUOUS CYCLE: VALUE CREATION

- 01** When leaders communicate transparently, trust grows.
- 02** When trust grows, culture becomes healthier.
- 03** Healthy cultures produce positive behaviours.
- 04** Positive behaviours improve organisational performance.
- 05** Strong performance creates lasting enterprise value.
- 06** And organisations that consistently create value become catalysts for national development.

THE VICIOUS CYCLE: VALUE EROSION

- 01** Conversely, when leadership lacks credibility, fairness, transparency, or care, trust begins to erode.
- 02** As trust declines, culture weakens.
- 03** Employee engagement falls.
- 04** Innovation slows.
- 05** Productivity decreases.
- 06** Governance becomes more difficult and enterprise value diminishes.

The lesson is clear:

Leadership is not merely the first link in the Trust Economy Value Chain™. It is the force that determines the strength of every link that follows.

The Foundation of the Nigeria Trust Economy Outlook

The **Great Place To Work® Nigeria** Trust Economy Value Chain™ is more than a conceptual model. It is the intellectual foundation of this Outlook.

Every chapter that follows explores one or more elements of this value chain; from trust and workplace culture to leadership effectiveness, employee experience, innovation, governance, organisational performance, entrepreneurship, and national competitiveness.

Together, these chapters demonstrate a single, powerful truth.

“

The organisations that will lead the future will not simply be those with the best products, the largest budgets, or the most advanced technology.

They will be those whose leaders intentionally build trust, cultivate high-performing cultures, and create enduring value for people, organisations, and society.

Understanding Each Stage of the Trust Economy Value Chain™

The Trust Economy Value Chain™ illustrates that sustainable organisational success is not the product of isolated initiatives or individual decisions. Rather, it is the cumulative outcome of a sequence of interconnected factors that begin with leadership and culminate in national prosperity.

Every organisation, regardless of its size, industry, or ownership structure, is operating somewhere along this value chain. Organisations that intentionally strengthen each stage create an environment where people thrive, businesses perform, and economies prosper. Those that neglect these stages often experience declining trust, disengagement, poor execution, and weakened competitiveness.

Understanding each stage of the Value Chain enables leaders to identify where organisational value is created, and where it can be lost.

LEADERSHIP

The Starting Point of Every Great Organisation

Everything begins with leadership.

Leadership is not merely the exercise of authority or the management of organisational resources. It is the ability to influence people towards a shared purpose through credibility, competence, integrity, consistency, and genuine care.

Employees experience an organisation primarily through its leaders.

They observe whether leaders communicate honestly, make fair decisions, keep their commitments, demonstrate competence, recognise contributions, and model the behaviours they expect from others.

Every leadership action either strengthens or weakens trust.

This is why leadership occupies the first position in the Trust Economy Value Chain™. Without credible leadership, no strategy, technology, organisational structure, or financial investment can sustainably compensate for the absence of trust.

Great leaders do not merely direct performance.

They create the conditions under which performance naturally emerges.

Leadership therefore represents the origin of organisational culture and the foundation upon which sustainable success is built.



TRUST

Organisational Capital in the Twenty-First Century

Trust is the confidence people place in leadership and in the organisation itself.

It is earned when leaders consistently demonstrate credibility, respect, fairness, transparency, competence, and care.

Unlike financial capital, **trust cannot be purchased.**

Unlike technology, **it cannot be installed.**

Unlike strategy, **it cannot simply be documented.**

Trust must be intentionally built over time through consistent leadership behaviour.

In the Trust Economy, trust functions as a form of organisational capital.

High levels of trust reduce organisational friction, accelerate collaboration, strengthen employee commitment, improve communication, and encourage innovation.

Conversely, low levels of trust increase bureaucracy, political behaviour, employee disengagement, turnover, operational risk, and the cost of doing business.

Trust therefore creates measurable economic value. It is an investment that generates returns through stronger organisational performance.

CULTURE

Trust Made Visible

Culture is often described as "the way things are done around here."

More accurately, culture is the visible expression of trust.

It reflects the shared values, behaviours, attitudes, norms, and expectations that shape everyday organisational life.

Culture is not determined by mission statements displayed on office walls.

It is determined by the experiences employees have every day.

Employees quickly learn what is truly rewarded, what behaviours are tolerated, how decisions are made, and whether leaders consistently uphold organisational values.

HEALTHY CULTURES

Openness, respect, accountability, inclusion, collaboration, continuous learning, and psychological safety.

UNHEALTHY CULTURES

Fear, politics, blame, inconsistency, and mistrust.

“

Culture therefore serves as the bridge between leadership intentions and employee behaviour.

It transforms trust from an abstract concept into a daily organisational experience.

BEHAVIOUR

The True Driver of Organisational Results

Organisations do not produce results.

People do.

And people produce results through their behaviour.

Policies establish expectations.

Behaviour determines outcomes.

An organisation may have world-class policies, governance frameworks, strategic plans, and operational procedures. However, if employees lack trust, these systems rarely produce their intended results.

Behaviour is shaped by the environment leaders create.

In high-trust organisations, employees are more likely to:

- Take ownership.
- Share ideas openly.
- Collaborate across teams.
- Challenge assumptions respectfully.
- Solve problems proactively.
- Deliver exceptional customer experiences.
- Act ethically even when unsupervised.

In low-trust organisations, employees often become risk-averse, defensive, disengaged, and reluctant to contribute beyond minimum expectations.

Behaviour is therefore the mechanism through which culture influences organisational performance.

**Culture changes behaviour.
Behaviour changes results.**

PERFORMANCE

Where Trust Becomes Measurable

Performance is the visible outcome of leadership, trust, culture, and behaviour working together.

It is here that trust becomes measurable.

High-trust organisations consistently demonstrate superior outcomes across multiple dimensions, including:

- Employee engagement
- Productivity
- Innovation
- Customer satisfaction
- Talent retention
- Innovation
- Organisational resilience
- Leadership effectiveness
- Operational excellence

Performance should therefore not be viewed solely as a financial indicator.

It reflects the overall health of an organisation.

Financial results reveal what an organisation has achieved.

Trust explains how those results were achieved, and whether they can be sustained.

Organisations that intentionally invest in trust are generally better positioned to adapt, recover from disruption, and achieve consistent long-term success.

ENTERPRISE VALUE

The Market Increasingly Rewards Trust

Traditionally, enterprise value has been associated with tangible assets, financial performance, and market share.

Today, investors increasingly recognise that intangible assets often determine long-term business success.

These include:

- Leadership quality
- Workplace culture
- Employee engagement
- Brand reputation
- Innovation capability
- Governance effectiveness
- Organisational resilience

All of these are influenced by trust.

Investors understand that organisations with healthy cultures are more likely to attract and retain exceptional talent, innovate consistently, manage risk effectively, and sustain profitable growth.

Likewise, boards increasingly recognise that organisational culture is a leading indicator of future performance rather than merely a reflection of past success.

Trust therefore contributes directly to enterprise value by strengthening stakeholder confidence, reducing organisational risk, and improving long-term competitiveness. Increasingly, the market rewards organisations that demonstrate not only financial strength but also cultural strength.

NATIONAL PROSPERITY

Great Organisations Build Great Nations

The Trust Economy Value Chain™ does not end with enterprise value. Its ultimate destination is national prosperity. Every organisation contributes to the economic and social development of the nation in which it operates.

When organisations consistently build high-trust cultures, they create benefits that extend far beyond their own walls.

- » They produce capable leaders.
- » They develop future entrepreneurs.
- » They strengthen corporate governance.
- » They create healthier workplaces.
- » They generate employment.
- » They improve productivity.
- » They attract investment.
- » They stimulate innovation.
- » They contribute tax revenues.
- » They build stronger communities.

Collectively, these outcomes shape national competitiveness.

A nation's prosperity is not defined solely by its natural resources, public infrastructure, or government policies. One of Africa's enduring challenges is the belief that natural resources alone will secure our future. In truth, lasting prosperity also depends on the strength of its institutions and the leadership cultures they nurture.

Imagine a Nigeria where half of all organisations intentionally commit to becoming great workplaces.

The result would be a healthier workforce, stronger businesses, better corporate governance, increased investor confidence, reduced talent migration, more successful entrepreneurs, greater innovation, and higher economic productivity.



The Trust Economy recognises that when organisations build trust, they unlock human potential.

When human potential is unlocked, businesses create sustainable value.

And when value-creating organisations become the norm, nations prosper.

Concluding Reflection

The Trust Economy Value Chain™ demonstrates that organisational success is neither accidental nor purely financial. It is the predictable outcome of intentional leadership.

Leadership creates trust.

Trust shapes culture.

Culture influences behaviour.

Behaviour drives performance.

Performance creates enterprise value.

Enterprise value contributes to national prosperity.

For today's leaders, the message is both simple and profound:

“

“The future of every Organisation, and ultimately the future of every nation is determined by the quality of trust its leaders choose to build.”

”

CASE STUDY



Listening and Acting on Employees Feedback

01 The Trust-Related Challenge or Opportunity

Following the 2023 Great Place To Work survey, we recognised that asking employees for feedback would have limited value if we did not respond to what we heard. The opportunity was to create a clearer connection between employee feedback and management action. We wanted employees at different levels to be able to raise concerns openly and for those concerns to be considered beyond the survey process. The challenge was to make employee listening part of how leaders managed the business, rather than something handled only by HR. We also recognised that not every concern could be addressed immediately, but employees needed to know that their views had been considered and that there was follow-through where action was appropriate.

02 Specific Actions Taken by Leadership

Following the 2023 survey, leadership established Departmental Focus Groups with employees across junior, senior and managerial levels. Heads of Department were excluded to allow for more open discussion. The groups identified key concerns and developed practical actions. Leadership made these actions part of HR departmental KPIs for 2024 and Management Team accountability, giving the issues clear ownership and a way to monitor progress. The approach continued through a 2025 Employee Pulse Survey, with findings converted into action plans and presented to Management. Feedback also led to changes including a new canteen service provider, improved leave planning, an Employee Assistance Programme and wellness champions, as well as STEM tutoring and environmental initiatives. Feedback on rewards was considered in broader decisions around performance bonuses.

03 The Outcomes Achieved

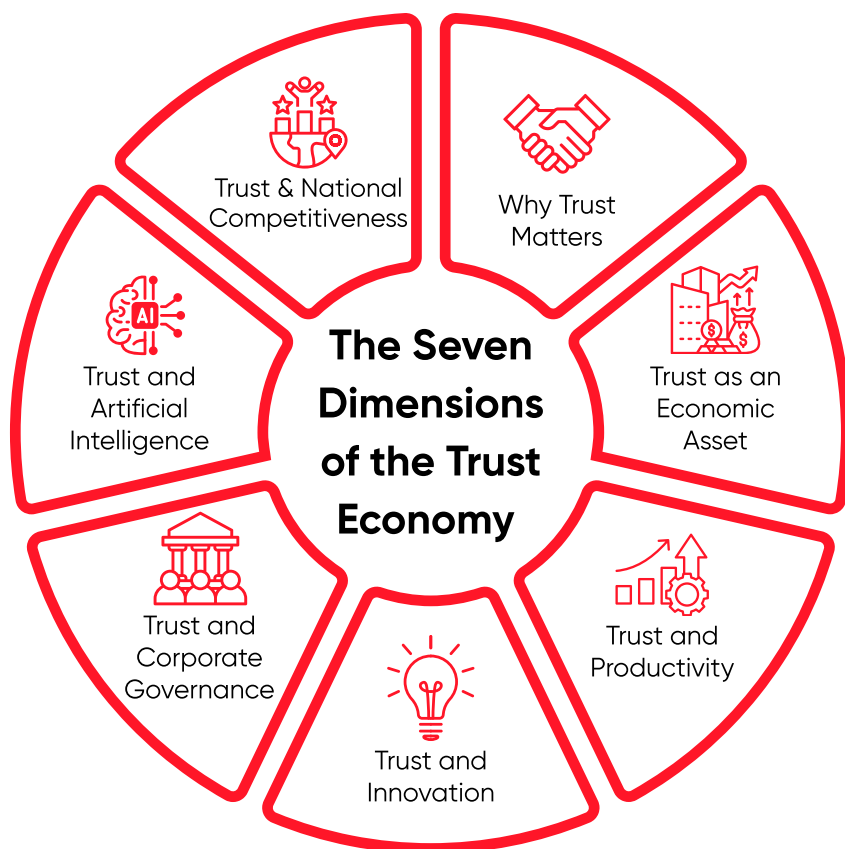
Great Place To Work results show progress between 2023 and 2026. We do not attribute this progress to any single initiative, but the organisation has developed more consistent ways for employees to raise concerns and for management to respond. These now include Departmental Focus Groups, Employee Pulse Surveys, departmental meetings and monthly Town Halls. Feedback has also informed practical changes to canteen services, leave planning, wellbeing support and community initiatives. Making focus-group actions part of HR KPIs strengthened accountability, while the approach continues into the 2026 Great Place To Work survey follow-up. The main change has been from simply asking for feedback to having a clearer process for what happens afterwards: issues are raised, considered, assigned actions and followed up.

04 Key Lessons for Other Leaders

We learned that employee listening only has value when there is follow-through. Asking employees what they think creates an expectation that something will happen next. Leaders therefore need to be clear about what they can act on, what may take longer and what cannot be changed. We also learned that the response does not always have to be a major initiative. Addressing an everyday concern, explaining a decision or providing an update can help employees see that their feedback was considered.

For us, the practical lesson is to keep the process simple: **listen, understand the issue, agree what can be done, communicate the decision and follow up.**

How Trust Creates Organisational and National Value



The Trust Economy Value Chain™ demonstrates how trust creates value from leadership through to national prosperity.

The next question for leaders is equally important:

Where does trust create value?

The answer lies in what Great Place To Work® Nigeria describes as the **Seven Dimensions of the Trust Economy**.

These dimensions represent the principal areas through which trust influences organisational success and national development.

Together, they provide a comprehensive framework for understanding why trust has become one of the most important strategic assets of modern organisations.

They also demonstrate that trust is not confined to workplace relationships. It influences productivity, innovation, governance, investment, technology adoption, competitiveness, and ultimately, economic prosperity.



DIMENSION ONE

Why Trust Matters

Trust is the Foundation of Every High-Performing Organisation
Every successful organisation is built upon relationships.

The relationship between leaders and employees.

The relationship between employees and customers.

The relationship between organisations and investors.

The relationship between businesses and regulators.

The relationship between organisations and the communities they serve.

The quality of every one of these relationships depends on trust.

- Trust reduces uncertainty.
- It encourages cooperation.
- It enables collaboration.
- It strengthens confidence.
- It accelerates decision-making.

WITHOUT TRUST

Organisations become slower, more bureaucratic, and increasingly dependent on supervision, controls, and compliance mechanisms. People spend more time protecting themselves than creating value.

WITH TRUST

Organisations become faster, more agile, and more resilient because people naturally work together toward shared objectives.

Trust is therefore not simply another organisational value.

It is the foundation upon which all other organisational capabilities are built.

DIMENSION TWO

Trust as an Economic Asset**Building Trust Capital**

Traditional business thinking recognises financial capital, physical assets, technology, and intellectual property as sources of organisational value.

The Trust Economy introduces another equally important asset:
Trust Capital.

Trust Capital is the confidence that employees, customers, investors, regulators, suppliers, and communities place in an organisation.

Like every strategic asset, Trust Capital requires continuous investment.

It is accumulated through:

- Credible leadership
- Ethical conduct
- Fairness
- Transparency
- Consistency
- Competence
- Respect
- Accountability

Unlike financial assets, however, Trust Capital compounds through positive experiences and can diminish rapidly when confidence is broken.

Organisations with high levels of Trust Capital generally experience lower transaction costs, stronger customer loyalty, improved employee retention, better collaboration, greater investor confidence, and enhanced reputational strength.

Trust therefore produces tangible economic returns.

It should be managed with the same discipline as financial capital.

DIMENSION THREE

Trust and Productivity**Trust Reduces Friction and Increases Performance**

Many organisations attempt to improve productivity by investing in technology, automation, restructuring, or process optimisation.

While these investments remain important, productivity is fundamentally driven by people.

People perform at their best when they trust.

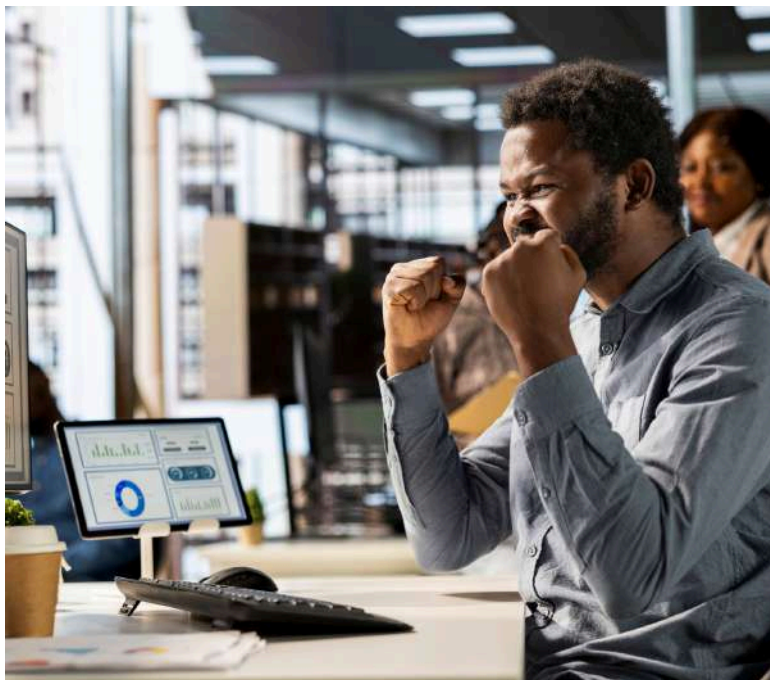
Employees who trust their leaders:

- Solve problems more quickly.
- Collaborate more effectively.
- Require less supervision.
- Take greater ownership.
- Adapt more readily to change.
- Deliver better customer experiences.

Conversely, low-trust environments generate hidden costs. Employees become cautious. Communication slows. Approvals multiply. Innovation stalls. Energy is diverted toward internal politics rather than value creation.

Trust therefore acts as an organisational accelerator. It reduces friction while increasing discretionary effort; the willingness of employees to contribute beyond minimum expectations.

This discretionary effort often becomes the difference between average organisations and exceptional ones.



DIMENSION FOUR

Trust and Innovation**Innovation Begins with Psychological Safety**

Innovation depends upon ideas.

Ideas depend upon people.

People contribute ideas only when they believe it is safe to do so.

Psychological safety, which is the confidence that individuals can speak openly without fear of embarrassment, punishment, or retaliation is therefore one of the most important outcomes of trust.

High-trust organisations encourage employees to:

- Challenge assumptions.
- Experiment responsibly.
- Learn from failure.
- Share knowledge.
- Collaborate across functions.
- Question existing practices.

Innovation rarely emerges from environments characterised by fear. People who fear criticism avoid risk. People who fear failure avoid experimentation. People who distrust leadership rarely volunteer new ideas.

Trust therefore becomes the catalyst that transforms organisational knowledge into innovation.

DIMENSION FIVE

Trust and Corporate Governance**Trust Strengthens Accountability**

Corporate governance is often associated with policies, regulations, board oversight, and compliance frameworks.

While these are essential, governance ultimately depends upon behaviour.

Organisations fail not because policies are absent, but because behaviours fail to reflect organisational values.

Trust strengthens governance by creating cultures where people are willing to:

- Report concerns.
- Admit mistakes.
- Challenge unethical behaviour.
- Share accurate information.
- Accept accountability.
- Make principled decisions.

Boards increasingly recognise that organisational culture is one of the strongest indicators of governance effectiveness.

A culture characterised by trust reduces organisational risk because ethical behaviour becomes part of everyday decision-making rather than merely a compliance requirement.

Trust therefore transforms governance from a system of control into a culture of responsibility.

DIMENSION SIX

Trust and Artificial Intelligence**Technology Advances – Trust Must Advance Faster**

Artificial Intelligence is transforming every aspect of organisational life.

It is changing how organisations recruit talent, analyse data, serve customers, automate operations, and make strategic decisions. Yet no technological advancement can replace human trust.

If anything, AI increases its importance.

Employees now ask:

Q Can I trust the decisions AI makes?

Q Can I trust how my organisation uses my personal data?

Q Can I trust that technology will augment rather than replace me?

Q Can I trust leadership to deploy AI responsibly?

Organisations must therefore develop both technological capability and ethical capability. Successful AI adoption depends not only on technical excellence but also on transparency, fairness, accountability, and open communication. The organisations that lead the AI era will be those that combine advanced technology with high-trust leadership.

Technology creates possibilities.

Trust creates acceptance.

Together, they create transformation.



DIMENSION SEVEN

Trust and National Competitiveness

Great Organisations Build Great Economies

The Trust Economy extends beyond individual organisations.

It shapes entire nations.

Countries compete not only through infrastructure, natural resources, or fiscal policy but increasingly through the quality of their institutions and the trust those institutions inspire.

High-trust economies generally experience:

- Greater investor confidence.
- Higher workforce productivity.
- Stronger entrepreneurship.
- Better corporate governance.
- More innovation.
- Lower costs of doing business.
- Stronger global competitiveness.

For Nigeria, this presents both a challenge and an opportunity. The country's greatest competitive advantage will not simply come from oil, technology, or demographic growth. **It will come from building organisations that people trust.**

Imagine a Nigeria where businesses consistently cultivate high-trust cultures. Employees would become more engaged. Organisations would become more innovative. Entrepreneurs would emerge from stronger leadership environments. Investors would have greater confidence. Corporate governance would improve. Productivity would increase. The nation would become more competitive.

The Trust Economy therefore positions organisational culture as a driver of economic development rather than simply an internal management concern.

Every organisation that builds trust contributes to the prosperity of the nation.

Concluding Reflection

The Seven Dimensions of the Trust Economy demonstrate that trust is no longer a “soft” organisational value. It is a strategic capability that influences virtually every determinant of organisational success, from leadership effectiveness and employee productivity to innovation, governance, technology adoption, investor confidence, and national competitiveness.

For today’s leaders, the implication is clear: building trust is not an optional cultural initiative. It is a strategic imperative. In an environment where products can be copied, technology can be acquired, and capital can be raised, the ability to create and sustain trust remains one of the few advantages that cannot be easily replicated. Organisations that treat trust as a core management discipline will consistently outperform those that regard it as secondary.

Leaders who intentionally invest in these seven dimensions will strengthen the foundations of performance within their own organisations. High-trust workplaces attract and retain talent more effectively, execute strategy with greater speed and discipline, innovate more freely, govern more responsibly, and adopt new technologies with greater confidence. Over time, these advantages compound, creating organisations that are more resilient, more adaptive, and more valuable.

Beyond individual organisations, the cumulative effect is national. When a critical mass of Nigerian companies deliberately builds high-trust cultures, the benefits extend outward to having stronger institutions, reduced talent migration, higher productivity, greater investor confidence, and a more competitive economy. In this sense, the Trust Economy is not only a business opportunity; it is a pathway to national prosperity.

As the Trust Economy continues to evolve, those who understand and systematically strengthen these seven dimensions will be best positioned to create enduring value for their organisations, for the people who work within them, and for Nigeria as a whole.

CASE STUDY



Trust in Practice: How PremiumTrust Bank Turned Recapitalisation into a Collective Commitment to the Future

01 The Trust-Related Challenge or Opportunity

On 28 March 2024, the Central Bank of Nigeria announced new minimum capital requirements to strengthen the banking sector and support Nigeria's \$1 trillion-economy ambition. For PremiumTrust Bank, barely two years into operations, this presented a defining choice: downgrade to a regional bank at ₦50 billion or pursue a national licence with ₦200 billion. The Leadership chose the bolder path. For our 400+ employees across 19 branches, the announcement raised difficult questions. Would the Bank merge or be acquired? Were jobs at risk? Could a young institution raise ₦200 billion without losing its identity and independence? The challenge was twofold: raise the capital our ambition required while sustaining our people's trust in the Bank's future and their place within it.

02 Specific Actions Taken by Leadership

- i. Leadership responded first with openness. Executive Management convened a Bank-wide town hall to explain the regulatory requirements, discuss the strategic options and hear employees' concerns. The Managing Director/CEO directly addressed fears around a possible merger and job losses and communicated Management's commitment to preserving the Bank's independence and its people.
- ii. Leadership also made responsibility visible. Executive Management assumed responsibility for 75% of the recapitalisation target, while employees were invited to support the remaining portion by identifying prospective investors and facilitating introductions and private placements. Successful referrals were recognised through a reward structure. Employees who met the applicable criteria could also choose to invest personally; participation was entirely voluntary.

iii. Communication continued beyond the initial town hall through internal updates and subsequent engagements on the progress of the exercise. Rather than being passive recipients of a major strategic decision, employees were carried along through the uncertainty and given ways to contribute.

03 The Outcomes Achieved

PremiumTrust Bank met the ₦200 billion capital requirement for a national licence, ahead of the March 2026 deadline, thereby securing the foundation for its national banking ambition. Trust was honoured, not just asked for. The no-merger, no-job-cuts commitment held throughout, all critical roles were retained, and the workforce more than doubled from 383 to 900+. Our Trust Index rose from 90% in 2024 to 95% in 2025. The stronger capital base fuelled growth: branches expanded from 19 to 33 by September 2026, and the Bank recorded ₦177.1 billion Profit Before Tax in 2025, with total assets of ₦1.7 trillion. External validation followed. Augusto & Co. upgraded our long-term rating from BBB+ to A-, and DataPro from A- to A.

04 Key Lessons for Other

Our experience reinforced a simple lesson: trust is tested most when leadership does not yet have all the answers. During uncertainty, employees need honest communication, clarity of direction and confidence that their interests will not be ignored. Leaders should communicate before speculation fills the gap, give employees a meaningful place in the journey, visibly share responsibility for difficult objectives and keep the commitments they make. For PremiumTrust Bank, recapitalisation became more than a regulatory exercise; it demonstrated that transparency, inclusion and consistent action can turn uncertainty into shared commitment and strengthen trust in the institution.



A Call to Action

Organisational trust does not exist in isolation from the wider economy and society. The quality of trust inside companies influences productivity, innovation, governance standards, talent retention, and investor confidence. Collectively, these outcomes shape national competitiveness. Building a stronger Trust Economy therefore requires deliberate action beyond individual organisations.

Great Place To Work research demonstrates that the effects of high-trust cultures are not confined to the boundaries of a single workplace. High-trust organisations consistently show 27% greater agility, a 2:1 ratio of empowered innovators to friction, and 42% higher levels of discretionary effort compared with typical workplaces. Employees in these environments are significantly more likely to stay, recommend their employer, adapt quickly to change, and contribute ideas. At the Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For, revenue per employee is 8.5 times higher than the broader market average, and these companies have outperformed the market by a factor of approximately 3.5 times over nearly three decades. Voluntary turnover in Certified organisations is typically less than half the national average.

When such organisations become more numerous within an economy, the cumulative impact is substantial: higher aggregate productivity, stronger innovation pipelines, more stable employment, better governance standards, and greater

attractiveness to both domestic and international capital. The reverse is also true. Economies dominated by low-trust workplaces face higher friction costs, slower adaptation, greater talent leakage, and weaker institutional confidence.

Business associations and chambers of commerce should therefore treat high-trust workplace practices as a core competitiveness agenda. They can encourage member organisations to measure and report on culture using rigorous tools such as the Trust Index™, create structured platforms for sharing practical lessons across sectors, and publicly recognise organisations that demonstrate excellence in building trust. By elevating culture to the same level of attention given to finance, technology, or market strategy, business associations can accelerate the diffusion of high-trust practices throughout the private sector.

Regulators and policymakers should recognise that organisational culture influences compliance behaviour, risk management, and long-term enterprise value. Regulatory approaches that reinforce transparency, accountability, and responsible leadership will support the development of higher-trust institutions. Policy frameworks that focus solely on rules and sanctions while ignoring culture risk addressing symptoms while leaving the underlying behavioural drivers unchanged. Incentives that reward organisations for measuring and improving trust can complement traditional regulatory tools.

Public-sector organisations and state-owned enterprises carry particular responsibility. As major employers and providers of essential services, their internal cultures directly affect public confidence and national productivity. When public institutions operate with high levels of internal trust, they tend to deliver services more effectively, retain capable talent, and model the standards expected of the wider economy. Strengthening trust within these institutions is therefore both an organisational imperative and a national priority.



Educational institutions have a unique opportunity to shape the next generation of leaders. Management and professional education should integrate leadership ethics, high-trust organisational practices, and the practical disciplines of building credible cultures. Future leaders must be prepared not only to manage resources and execute strategy, but to earn and sustain the trust of the people they lead. Curricula that treat trust as a strategic capability rather than a soft skill will produce graduates better equipped for the demands of the Trust Economy.

The evidence is consistent: organisations that intentionally build trust outperform those that do not on measures that matter for both business and national prosperity. A more competitive Nigeria will be built not only through stronger policies, better infrastructure, and increased investment. **It will also be built through stronger organisations, and stronger organisations are built on trust.**

Real Organisations, Real Perspectives

Here's what some Great Place To Work Certified™ Organisations in Nigeria have to say

“



For ProvidusUnity Bank, a great workplace means putting people first: a culture of trust, inclusion, merit and fairness where employees feel supported, grow continuously, belong regardless of title, and are empowered to deliver exceptional results for customers and the whole bank.

Kingsley Ogirri,
Chief Talent Officer, ProvidusUnity Bank

“



At NOLT Finance, we believe great careers are built in an environment where people are trusted, supported, and given the opportunity to grow. That is the workplace we set out to create, and it is a commitment we work to earn every day. Here, ideas are heard, contributions are valued, and ambitions are taken seriously. We invest in our people because we believe that when individuals grow, the Organisation grows with them. We create opportunities for our people to learn, take on new challenges, and make a meaningful impact. Whatever you aspire to achieve in your career, we want NOLT to be a place where you have the opportunity, support, and confidence to pursue it. Being certified as a Great Place To Work is an honour, but more importantly, it is a reflection of the people who bring our culture to life every day. Our commitment is to keep building a workplace where talented people can do meaningful work, realize their potential, and build careers they are proud of.

Babatunde Dada,
MD/CEO, NOLT Finance Company Limited.

“



Being a Great Workplace means creating a culture of trust, integrity, and shared responsibility, where our people feel valued, empowered and inspired to excel. At Griffin Capital Group, we believe exceptional people and a strong culture are fundamental to sustainable success.

Ugonnaya Osi,
MD/CEO, Griffin Capital Asset Management..

“



At TREXM, a Great Workplace is one where people feel trusted to speak, empowered to innovate, supported to grow and accountable to deliver. It is where people and performance thrive together, creating value for our business and communities.

Ayoyimika Odunuga,
Head, People & Culture, TREXM Holdings Limited.

“



A great workplace is one where every individual feels valued, trusted, and equipped to grow, belong, contribute meaningfully, and succeed together. This is the standard to which we consistently hold ourselves.

Olaoluwa Femi-Adeboye,
People & Culture Lead, Esentry.

“



For us, a Great Workplace is one where people are trusted to contribute, empowered to grow, and connected to a shared purpose. At Cybervergent, we believe the same trust we help organisations build externally must also define how we work internally, creating a culture where people can take ownership, challenge ideas, keep learning, and do their best work.

Ifeanyi Akintola,
Head, People & Culture, Cybervergent.

“



A great workplace is one where people have the trust, freedom and accountability to do their best work. At Griffin, we are building a culture where people are empowered to contribute, challenged to grow and proud of what we are building together.

Yemi Sadik,
MD/CEO, Griffin Capital Trustees Limited.

Evidence Base Summary: The Data Behind the Trust Economy

The case for the Trust Economy rests on a growing body of empirical research from Great Place To Work, Gallup, PwC, and Edelman. While not every study measures trust directly, the collective evidence shows that high-trust environments are consistently linked to the employee behaviours and organisational conditions that drive performance.

Key Findings

01 Trust, Agility & Innovation (Great Place To Work)

High-trust organisations show

27% greater agility **2:1** ratio of empowered innovators to friction

9 in 10 employees willing to go above and beyond (42% higher than typical workplaces).

02 Trust and the Bottom Line (PwC 2024 Trust Survey)

93% of executives agree that building trust improves the bottom line.

95% believe organisations have a responsibility to build trust.

However, a clear gap exists:

86% executives highly trust their employees, while far fewer employees feel highly trusted.

03 Employee Engagement and Business Performance (Gallup Q12 Meta-Analysis)

Across 736 studies, 3.3 million employees and 90 countries, top-quartile engaged organisations outperform bottom-quartile ones on key metrics:

+23% Profitability **21–51%** Lower turnover

+18% Sales productivity **78%** Lower absenteeism

+14% Production productivity **63%** Lower safety incidents

+10% Customer loyalty

04 Trust and Retention (Great Place To Work)

Employees in high-trust workplaces are significantly more likely to stay, recommend their employer, give discretionary effort, and believe their organisation can adapt to change.

Key Findings

05 The Leadership Trust Gap (PwC)

86% executives trust their employees

67% employees highly trust their employer

Trust in senior leadership also declined from **68%** (2023) to **62%** (2024).

06 Trust in Nigeria (Edelman 2025)

65% Nigeria's overall trust index rose.

72% citizens still report moderate or high grievance toward institutions.

07 Employers as Trust Brokers (Edelman 2026)

70% people are hesitant to trust those who differ from them.

Employers and CEOs are increasingly seen as key institutions capable of rebuilding trust in an age of growing insularity.

Core Conclusion



Trust is not a magic variable that directly produces profits. It is an enabling condition. It creates the organisational environment in which people are more willing and able to collaborate, innovate, adapt, take ownership, and execute. Those behaviours, in turn, produce measurable improvements in productivity, retention, innovation, customer outcomes, and financial performance.

In short: High-trust environments consistently create the conditions for superior organisational results.

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Great Place To Work Certification isn't bought or self-declared. It's earned through confidential employee feedback and backed by more than 30 years of workplace research.



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