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Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

THE LONG-LASTING CREDIBILITY: A LEADERSHIP MODEL FOR BUILDING TRUST
IN MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Global Leadership and Change

by

Suelen Schneider Demaríá

July, 2024

Gabriella Miramontes, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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DEDICATION

To my loved godmother, Elza Iñes Schneider (r.i.p.), who was always there for me. To my dear, loving daughter, Elza Schneider Demaría, may I always be there for you. To my dear husband, Nicolás, who is always there for me in good and challenging times.

VITA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to examine the strategies, challenges, and measures of trust-building between leaders and team members in multinational organizations. This topic is significant because (a) the deficit of trust in leadership has spread across industries and nations over the last decades (Edelman, 2023), imposing a high penalty on organizations and society (Covey & Merrill, 2018); (b) in contrast, in a trusting environment, happiness, cooperation, and results are enhanced (Zak, 2017); and (c) trust is also an issue in cross-cultural settings because the traditional notion of trust is binary and Western, leaving out cultural awareness necessary to trust (Kwantes & Kuo, 2021). Therefore, there is room for improvement in the current literature and models and to offer a better understanding and actional steps to build trust. To address this problem, this research utilized a theoretical framework with theories of trust (Covey et al., 2022; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022), emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2019), and cultural intelligence (Livermore, 2015). It is assumed that emotional and cultural intelligence are positively related to trust. Qualitative methodology with a phenomenological approach is applied to understand the lived experience of leaders in multinational organizations (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The inquiry technique is appreciative (Cooperrider et al., 2008) and semi-structured, allowing a deeper analysis of the strategies and challenges leaders encounter. The expected outcome is a new model of trust with actionable steps that can be applied by leaders in multinational organizations and new knowledge to build up the current literature.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Global Context for Trust

The world lives amid a crisis of trust (Bachmann et al., 2015; Soderberg & Romney, 2022; Stickel, 2022) that affects leaders from public and private institutions. The overall American confidence in institutions dropped from 2020 to 2021 (Brennan, 2021). Recent events such as civil unrest, political polarization, and other corruption scandals contribute to eroding trust in leaders (Soderberg & Romney, 2022). A low level of trust creates friction-related problems and undesired costs for everyone, resulting in slow decisions and barriers to communication (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Cooperation, shared understanding, and agreements rarely occur when there is little or no trust and a high level of friction (Folkman, 2022).

The lack of trust in private organizations has been a significant problem for years. On average, only one-third of professionals trust their leaders (Harter, 2019), one-quarter claim to strongly trust their leaders (Ratanjee & Robinson, 2022), and 18% believe that corporate leaders are truthful (Covey & Merrill, 2018). These statistics confirm a significant claim: trust is consistently diminishing and will jeopardize the future of organizations and their leadership if not addressed.

The reason might be that employees observe inappropriate behaviors. These misleading behaviors include unethical or illegal conduct at work, cheating, or misinformation (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Overestimating individual trustworthiness and lack of dedication to building trust are frequent hurdles for leaders and can result in distrust (Kramer, 2009; Stickel, 2022).

Several studies have demonstrated that in an environment with significant distrust, few professionals feel safe enough to rely on their leaders' integrity and capability to do the work or support them during difficult times (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Folkman, 2022; Harter, 2019;

Ratanjee & Robinson, 2022; Robinson, 2021; Stickel, 2022). Employees usually resign due to deteriorated relationships with their leaders (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Distrust leads to inefficiency, passive management, stagnation, high turnover, low customer satisfaction, and decreased business value (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Stickel, 2022).

Employees must feel safe at work to ensure an environment where they feel included and do not fear judgment or repression for expressing opinions (Francis-Winters, 2017). Safe, trusting environments help employees thrive (Covey et al., 2022; Francis-Winters, 2017). They feel comfortable and capable of suggesting new ideas and solutions, leading to companies' innovations. With such a feeling of safety, employees are happier and fulfilled, accessing their highest level of creativity and contributing to organizational performance (Clark, 2020; Francis-Winters, 2017).

Organizations, societies, and economies cannot operate without trust (Fukuyama, 1995; Stickel, 2022). Trust is key for social interactions and exchange between institutions, leaders, and employees (Bachmann et al., 2015; Soderberg & Romney, 2022). Fostering trust is a valuable leadership skill, as illustrated by a Gallup survey with over 10,000 employees from diverse sectors (Robinson, 2021). On average, employees who trust their leaders and organizations exhibit six times more engagement than those who do not (Robinson, 2021). Higher engagement increases motivation and creativity, which improves overall organizational performance.

In a nutshell, trust can create abundance for leaders and organizations (Covey & Merrill, 2018). High trust levels help organizations function better, have more resilient relationships, achieve better agreements, collaborate actively, and obtain more meaningful outcomes (Stickel, 2022). However, building trust is arduous and requires effort. Changing and uncertain

environments and balancing stakeholders' interests are critical challenges leaders face in building trust (Stickel, 2022). Therefore, fostering trust while delivering results is a significant leadership challenge (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018).

Trust and Culture

Trust is a global matter (Crabtree, 2018). Building trust is even more complex in organizations with culturally diverse teams, such as multinational companies (Meyer, 2014). In today's organization and business environments, culture matters more than ever (Schein & Schein, 2017), yet people from different cultures and backgrounds understand and value trust in distinct ways (Fukuyama, 1995; Kwantes & Kuo, 2021; Meyer, 2014). Global shifts affect leaders as they compete in global marketplaces and manage multicultural workforces (Livermore, 2015). Therefore, analyzing the association between trust and culture is necessary to establish effective relationships and achieve prosperity (Bird, 2018; Fukuyama, 1995; Kwantes & Kuo, 2021; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014).

Some national cultures require leaders to use more relational behavior to connect and create bonds with their employees (House et al., 2004; Meyer, 2014). For those cultures, relational bonds provide the social interaction and exchange that emanate from building trust. For example, highly relational countries, such as those in the Middle East or Latin America, tend to rely mainly on affective trust, which is less direct, situational, and emotional-oriented. In this context, the expectation is to build relationships that go beyond the work setting. In contrast, less relational nations, like the United States, favor the development of cognitive trust, which is objective and task-oriented (Meyer, 2014).

Within multinational companies with a substantial immigrant workforce, particularly in the United States, leaders have both high- and low-relational cultures in the same team. This

condition imposes an extra challenge, as leaders must create different relationships with employees. On the one hand, leaders will establish a more directive relationship to earn trust from low-relational culture-oriented people, as they value more straightforward guidelines and clarity. On the other hand, they will need to show more of themselves by being humble and vulnerable and getting to know their employees more in a highly relational culture to earn the same trust (Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014; Schein & Schein, 2021).

In conclusion, in the current working environments, leaders must cultivate cultural intelligence to navigate and influence various organizational, ethical, and national cultures (Livermore, 2015). Leaders who do not develop this cultural awareness tend to spend more time getting things done, which increases costs and leads to poorer working relationships and overall performance (Livermore, 2015).

Problem Statement

Trust is a personal choice to be vulnerable and take risks in relation to another person (Kramer, 2009; Mayer et al., 1995; Nienaber et al., 2015; Stickel, 2022). It is also foundational to building meaningful relationships and exchanges in organizational settings (Covey et al., 2022). Establishing trust ensures successful leadership (Harter, 2019; Stickel, 2022). Nevertheless, the world faces a crisis of trust that harms the speed and cost of doing business, leaders' and companies' reputations, employees' morale and psychological safety, and the quality of social interactions and exchanges in organizations (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Gallup, 2018; Soderberg & Romney, 2022; Stickel, 2022). The main constraints that lead to this situation are (a) overestimation of a person's ability to build trust, (b) a leader's misleading behaviors, (c) absence or low expression of caring for others, (d) high uncertainty in today's working

environments, (e) complex structure of stakeholders with distinct, sometimes conflicting, interests, and (f) failure to analyze the context (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Stickel, 2022).

In multinational companies, leaders must deal with an extra challenge: the impact of national cultural differences (Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). This challenge requires leaders to analyze the context of a situation with cultural intelligence lenses (Livermore, 2015). Although some models of trust have previously mentioned organizational context, there is room for improvement regarding best practices and the inclusion of cultural aspects related to communication, values, norms, and approaches to distinct cultures.

The objective of this research was to address the problem of building trust between leaders and team members in multinational companies, which includes (a) the absence of a comprehensive framework that can be efficiently implemented in multinational companies to foster trust, (b) a lack of cultural intelligence aspects in existing models of trust, (c) need for the inclusion of emotionally intelligent practices related to trust-building, and (d) need for a comprehensive and practical guide for building trust that leaders can use.

Purpose Statement

Trust ensures safe environments conducive to meaningful relationships, motivation, innovation, and results (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Francis-Winters, 2017; Stickel, 2022). This study offers leaders a framework for building and increasing trust that can be applied in multicultural environments. It expands on the current body of research on trust by incorporating insights derived from literature on cultural intelligence (Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014) and emotional intelligence (Goleman et al., 2017). It investigated leaders' essential favorable standards and best practices (Cooperrider et al., 2008) for establishing trustworthy relationships with team members. This study also sought to assess the unique elements of contexts or

environments with people from different national cultures and backgrounds. The findings from that investigation underpin a new framework for building trust. The proposed framework reflects the best practices leaders in multinational companies utilize to build trust within their teams.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following four research questions (RQs):

- RQ1: What are the strategies and practices employed by leaders to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?
- RQ2: What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices employed in building trust among their team members in multinational organizations?
- RQ3: How do the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations?
- RQ4: Based on their experiences, what recommendations would participants make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?

Theoretical Frameworks

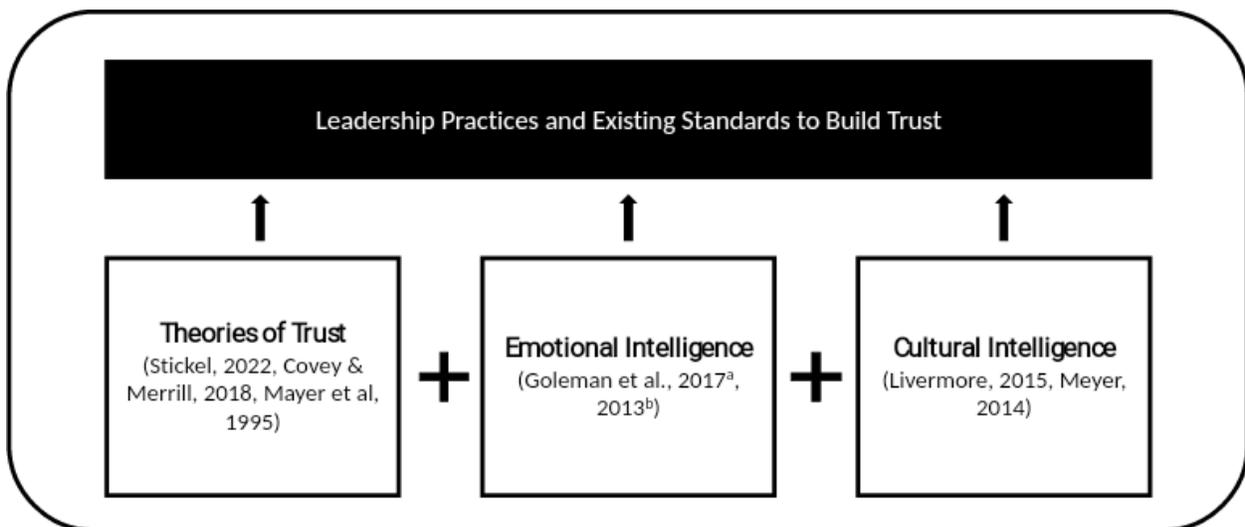
This study relied on two theoretical frameworks to examine the RQs. The first framework centers around practices to foster trust that derive from trust theories, cultural intelligence, and emotional intelligence. The primary purpose of this framework is to assess what the current literature offers regarding models, practices, standards, and actionable steps to create trustworthy relationships in culturally diverse environments. The second framework is appreciative inquiry (AI), which is applied to the interview questions to capture the best practices leaders in multinational companies use when they try to build or increase trust in their teams.

Best Practices from the Theories of Trust, Emotional, and Cultural Intelligence

This study's first framework is a three-fold theoretical approach. It combines theories of building trust in organizational environments with emotional intelligence (Goleman et al., 2017) and cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). Those theories provide a foundational compendium of practices and standards leaders may use for building or increasing trust. Figure 1 depicts this framework in detail.

Figure 1

Theories of Trust, Emotional Intelligence, and Cultural Intelligence



Note. This figure represents the central theories examined in this dissertation.

Psychology, economics, politics, organizational studies, and other disciplines have all examined and implemented the notion of trust (Covey et al., 2022; Deutsch, 1958, 1960; Gallup, 2018; Stickel, 2022). The theories of how leaders build trust in corporate environments inspired the first part of the framework shown in Figure 1. It includes an examination of the trust models proposed by Mayer et al. (1995) and Stickel (2022), the four cores of credibility model (Covey & Merrill, 2018), and the trust and inspire leader model (Covey et al., 2022). Despite the pre-

selection of such models, the research is not restricted to them exclusively. The literature on trust supports best practices and other standards documented over the last few years.

Stickel's (2022) proposed trust model is an extension of the model Mayer et al. (1995) presented. These models explain the elements individuals consider when deciding to trust another person. Those elements are perceived uncertainty and vulnerability, which are influenced by the individual's perception of feelings, emotions, and expected outcomes. In essence, uncertainty and vulnerability determine the cognitive level of perceived risks. However, individuals' feelings, emotions, and personal evaluations of expected outcomes influence this risk (Stickel, 2022).

In Stickel's (2022) model of trust, individuals might calibrate perceived risks as they get to know one another better. The lower the perceived risk compared to expected outcomes, the higher the propensity to trust. Uncertainty and vulnerability are both contextual and individual. Also referred to as trustworthiness attributes, the individual elements (Mayer et al., 1995) are benevolence, integrity, and ability. This study follows the theorists who defend that individual attributes, behaviors, and skills can be developed (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Goleman, 2020; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022).

Based on the premise that leaders can cultivate trust-building behaviors, characteristics, and talents, this research investigated an alternative model of trust: the four cores of credibility (Covey & Merrill, 2018). The four cores model complements the basic set of individual elements that Stickel (2022) and Mayer et al. (1995) suggested. The trust-building model proposed by Covey and Merrill (2018) consists of four essential components: integrity, intent, capacity, and outcomes. The initial two cores refer to a leader's character, which includes honesty, purpose,

and agendas. The last two cores relate to a leader's competence to accomplish things and deliver positive outcomes.

The leadership approach is vital to trust-building (Covey et al., 2022; Stickel, 2022). Therefore, Covey et al. (2022) proposed a leadership style to inspire trust. However, it is not the only leadership style or set of practices related to trust-building. In fact, several styles are effective in building relationships and trust with team members, such as democratic (Goleman, 2019; Short, 2014), resilient leadership (Coutu, 2002; David & Congleton, 2013; Kopans, 2017), authentic leadership (George et al., 2018; Soderberg & Romney, 2022), and others. The leadership approach depends on the situation (Goleman, 2019).

Emotional intelligence offers characteristics and attributes for leaders to build relationships and trust and deal with complex contexts (Goleman, 2019). A leader's emotional state impacts employees' feelings and behavior (Goleman et al., 2013). The ability to control their emotions determines how individuals, teams, and organizations perform. Great leaders distinguish themselves because of their emotional intelligence attributes (Goleman, 2019). To optimize their and others' performance, those leaders master five emotional domains: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Goleman et al., 2017). In other words, emotional intelligence helps leaders to build or increase trust with their team members (Goleman, 2020). Due to the importance of controlling emotions for trustworthy relationships, emotional intelligence theories form the foundation for the second part of the framework in Figure 1.

Finally, this research examined leaders in multinational companies. This research assumed that multicultural workforces and environments influence trust-building. However, the problem is that most leaders do not have the knowledge, capacity, or accurate understanding of

how different cultural settings affect their work and performance (Meyer, 2014). Furthermore, interpretations of trust might differ by culture, and how a person interprets trust is up to them (Livermore, 2015). That means the same conduct may foster trust in one person but undermine it in another.

The third part of the framework in Figure 1 addresses the need for a greater ability to lead and earn trust in complex multicultural environments: cultural intelligence. Livermore (2015) defined cultural intelligence as the capacity to adapt and succeed in multicultural backgrounds that vary by country, ethnicity, organizational culture, and age. To increase their cultural intelligence, leaders must develop (a) motivation to build confidence and adapt cross-culturally, (b) knowledge of the intercultural norms and their differences, (c) strategies to make sense of those differences and plan their approaches accordingly, and (d) action to adapt their behaviors when interacting cross-culturally (Livermore, 2015).

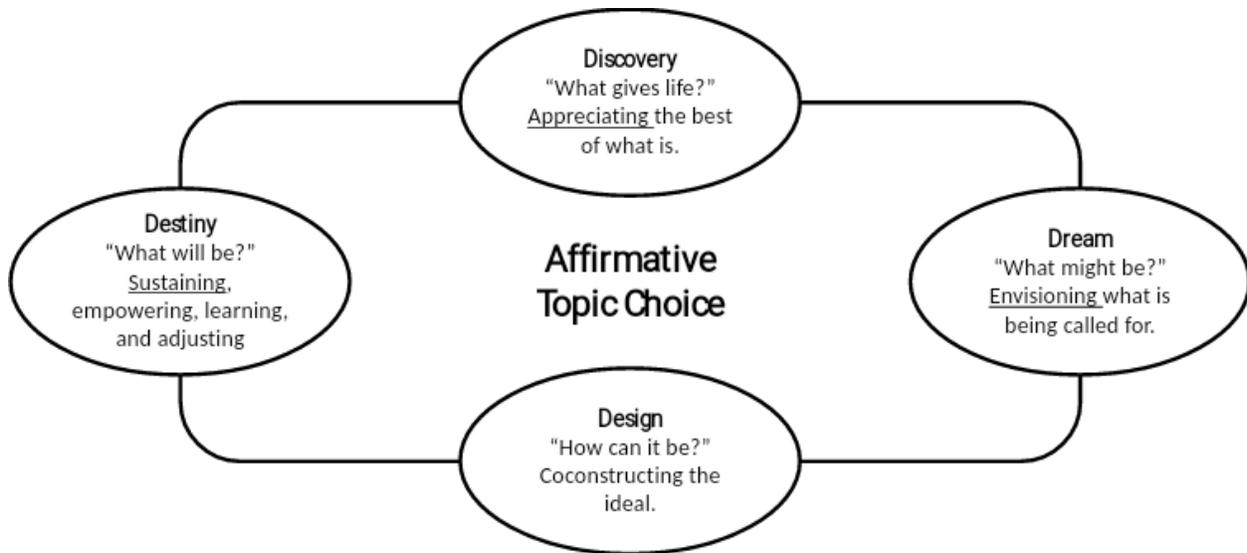
In sum, this study's first framework combines three sets of theories about trust, emotional intelligence, and cultural intelligence to provide best practices and standards to build or increase trust. This combination offers an approach to trust that combines individual and contextual elements present in multinational companies, which is essential for answering the RQs.

Appreciative Inquiry

This study also collected leaders' practices in multinational companies using AI as the second foundational framework. AI is a collaborative methodological approach used to identify organizational, group, and individual best practices. The skill of humble inquiry strengthens the system's ability to comprehend, foresee, and elevate its potential (Cooperrider et al., 2008). As Figure 2 shows, four stages comprise AI: discovery, dream, design, and destiny, referred to as the 4-D cycle (Alpium & Ehrenberg, 2023).

Figure 2

Appreciative Inquiry 4-D Cycle



Note. From *Appreciative Inquiry Handbook: For Leaders of Change* (2nd ed., p. 34) by D. L. Cooperrider, D. Whitney, & J. M. Stavros, 2008. Berrett-Khoeler Publishers. Copyright 2008 by Crown Custom Publishing.

The AI 4-D cycle is built around an affirmative topic choice, which is the topic that will become the focus of analysis or intervention (Cooperrider et al., 2008). The first stage in the AI framework is discovery. It consists in asking questions to understand what gives life to that individual, group, or organization. The intention is to identify the best or the potential that already exists in the system under analysis. The second stage, dream, consists of asking questions to assess what the individuals imagine is needed toward the affirmative topic. The third stage, design, asks questions to draw the ideal future regarding the analyzed system and affirmative topic. Finally, the last stage, destiny, relates to asking questions about sustaining that ideal future.

In this study, the affirmative topic is the best practices to build trust in leaders' relationships with their team members in multinational organizations. The system under

consideration is the leadership practices in multinational companies. Moreover, the individuals considered to answer the AI questionnaire were leaders in multinational companies.

This research applies humble inquiry to complement the AI framework. According to Schein and Schein (2021), humble inquiry increases awareness and trust in relationships. Humble inquiry is the skill of asking questions without knowing the answers and genuinely intending to create a connection out of curiosity and interest in another person. It is about listening actively, responding properly, and making profound revelations. This ability is paramount to assessing the most critical and profound practices of building and increasing trust.

Significance of the Study

This study is relevant for leaders and organizations seeking to improve credibility, motivation, inclusiveness, and overall performance. First and foremost, behavioral integrity is essential for any leader or organization. Leaders should keep their promises, walk the talk, and avoid spinning (Simons, 2002). These are behaviors of a trustworthy character. However, recent studies have noted a deficit in leadership behavioral integrity that must be addressed (Brennan, 2021; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Soderberg & Romney, 2022).

Second, trust boosts employees' productivity, happiness, cooperation, and loyalty (Zak, 2017). A study on the neuroscience of trust showed that organizations that nurture a culture of trust perceive meaningful differences among employees (Bookbinder, 2018; Zak, 2017). They experience less stress, burnout, and sick days. They also demonstrate more life satisfaction, engagement, energy, and productivity (Zak, 2017). When employees feel valued, included, safe, and satisfied, their loyalty to their leader and organization increases, bringing more positive feelings and results for everyone. That is the most significant positive effect of trust.

Third, with the advances in globalization and nations' interdependency, building trust in a culturally diverse environment is even more relevant (Friedman, 2005, 2017; Livermore, 2015). When leaders ignore their employees' cultural backgrounds, they fail to communicate appropriately and create inclusive relationships with them (Meyer, 2014). In contrast, when they build cultural intelligence, they avoid unnecessary friction, increase cohesion, and increase organizational performance. The current models of trust do not entirely address the cultural lens of a team in a multicultural environment. Therefore, there is a call for a model that thoroughly covers the impact of multicultural backgrounds in the building trust process.

Finally, there is a call for clarifying practical steps for building trust and training organizational leaders. There is a need to further develop future leaders' behavioral integrity and trustworthiness. Despite the existing models of trust, in this ever-changing world, there is room for a more integrative and practical framework for trust.

Assumptions of the Study

This study considered five main assumptions. The first is that building or increasing trust consists of behaviors and abilities that can be learned. Specifically, leaders can learn or develop the social art of building trust (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Changing and learning behaviors are individual choices; thus, organizations can effectively train leaders and increase their trustworthiness with a proper framework, set of practices, and methodology.

The second assumption refers to AI. AI operates on the premise that every organization possesses particular strengths that may serve as the basis for further improvement or change (Cooperrider et al., 2008). In this sense, it is necessary to invite leaders to a profound dialogue to understand the practices and distinctive competencies they use to enhance their trustworthiness.

The third assumption is related to multicultural differences among teams formed by people of different nationalities. This study assumed that people from diverse cultural backgrounds, such as different nationalities, respond to trust-building differently and require specific strategies from leaders (Livermore, 2015). Therefore, the analysis of trust-building must incorporate an appropriate cultural lens.

The fourth assumption is about emotional intelligence. This study stemmed from the premise that leaders who master emotional intelligence perform better in the complex task of building and increasing trust among their team members. Therefore, the theoretical framework used in this research also considers emotional intelligence to complement the theories of trust.

The fifth assumption is that best practices for building and increasing trust are still uncovered. Those practices can be combined with the current literature to give life to a new and more integrative trust framework. This new framework will be foundational in organizational training for leaders in the future.

Limitations of the Study

This study also presents some boundaries. The first regards the analysis spectrum. This research focused on leaders' perceptions of the best practices for building trust. Moreover, the leader assumes the role of the trustee, not the trustor. The trustor in this study is the employee. This author understands that the leader's perspective is the first step in building a new framework for trust. However, there is a need for further research also involving employees as trustors to validate the framework in practice.

Another limitation of this study is the regional perspective. This study focused on leaders working for multinational companies in the United States. Although those leaders are exposed to the global environment and people from different nationalities, North American culture may still

influence their perceptions. Therefore, to amplify the cross-national perspectives, further studies with leaders from different cultural backgrounds, such as Latin American, Middle Eastern, and Asian, may be necessary to provide a broader perspective on this topic.

Most of the work on trust is limited (Stickel, 2022). For example, Stickel's (2022) work was based on trust in hostile environments. The study focused on trust between leaders and employees in multinational companies. It did not assess how the external political or economic environment influences the perception of trust in this relationship. The study considered that leaders cannot control those external influences. Thus, additional research must seek a greater understanding of the impact of those factors on leader's behavior or their employee's willingness to trust.

Definition of Terms

Ability or capability: Ability is the leader's capacity to carry out their promises and fulfill their obligations. A high level of ability leads to excellence (Stickel, 2022). Capability is considered a synonym for ability.

Affective trust is a consequence of empathy, emotional closeness, or friendship with another person (Meyer, 2014). For example, long-term friendships create an emotional bond and care deeply for each other, resulting in a greater willingness to trust.

Appreciation: The definition of appreciation in this study relates to the feeling of admiration, approval, or gratitude with sensitive awareness (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Schein & Schein, 2021). It relates to finding and elevating positive aspects of a person or organization. Sensitive awareness is paramount in the process of AI.

Appreciative inquiry (AI): Cooperrider et al. (2008) defined AI as the cooperative and reciprocal exploration of the best practices that exist within individuals, organizations, and the

surrounding environment. It consists of finding out what fuels the organization as a system by asking humble questions that increase its learning capacity. As its fundamental principle, AI assumes that every organization and individual has qualities to be appreciated. Those qualities must be used to anchor the desired change.

Belief is a state of mind in which a person has confidence in someone or something else (Schwitzgebel, 2006). In other words, beliefs are something that is taken as true by a person or a group of individuals. For example, for Christians, God's existence is something considered to be true. Thus, it is a belief. For atheists, it is not a belief. What is a belief in a group of people may not be for another. A shared belief creates a commonality and, most of the time, a bond among members of a particular group.

Benevolence is a behavior that refers to the disposition to do good (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Being benevolent means having another person's best interest in mind and acting accordingly, even when doing so is not in their own best interest (Stickel, 2022). Leaders who genuinely want to know what matters to others, how they feel, or who make themselves helpful or at the disposal of others demonstrate this behavior.

Best practice is a process demonstrated to provide optimum outcomes via research and experience and which has been either developed or recommended as a standard that is appropriate for broad implementation (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). In this dissertation, best practices consist of procedures that leaders have used and shown consistent results or procedures that have been documented in the literature as positively related to building trust.

Building and increasing trust: In this study, building trust is a process that leaders conduct to earn trust when they do not have a story with their team members. Increasing trust

happens when the leader has already gained the trust of their team members but wants to enhance or boost their trustworthiness (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022).

Cognitive trust happens when one person trusts the other person's abilities and competencies to perform a specific task in an organizational environment and deliver results (Meyer, 2014). In this situation, there is not necessarily any emotional attachment.

Cultural intelligence is the ability to work effectively across national, racial, and corporate boundaries (Livermore, 2015). For example, when a leader has team members from distinct religions or countries, understanding how each religion or national culture operates and acting respectfully and considerably toward the differences is a form of cultural intelligence that a leader can develop.

Culture is related to the shared learning of a specific group. A group of individuals utilizes it to adapt, integrate, and solve difficulties (Schein & Schein, 2017). A culture is formed by shared thoughts, perceptions, values, and beliefs, shaping how a group of people prefers to operate. While there are several types of cultures (Schein & Schein, 2017), this dissertation discusses two. The first is a national culture that relates to everyday learning and a way of operating that a group of people with the same or similar origins share. The second one is organizational culture, which relates to common learning and ways of operating that people in the same organization share.

Distrust happens when one person or group is suspicious about another person's intent, integrity, and abilities (Covey & Merrill, 2018). For example, Covey and Merrill (2018) explained that most employees have witnessed some unethical behavior in their workplace. When people notice this kind of negative behavior, they tend to be suspicious, more skeptical, and not trust others.

Emotional intelligence: This study adopts the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) Goleman et al. (2017) described. Goleman author popularized the term “emotional intelligence” in 1995. According to Goleman et al. (2017), EI refers to a person’s capacity to regulate their emotions to convey them responsibly and successfully. The five domains of EI are (a) self-awareness, (b) self-regulation, (c) motivation, (d) empathy, and (f) social skills.

Humble inquiry consists of understanding someone else and building relationships by asking questions out of curiosity and with a humble attitude to listen actively, respectfully, and without judgment (Schein & Schein, 2021). The person who uses humble inquiry shows appreciation, genuine concern, and interest in another person’s perspectives.

Integrity relates to the standard norms of what is right or wrong by a group of people or society (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Leaders who have integrity keep their promises and act in line with their declared principles (Stickel, 2022). In other words, they do not just speak; they walk the talk.

Intent concerns a leader’s motives and agendas (Covey & Merrill, 2018). It also relates to genuine care for people and having no hidden agenda. The leader’s intent refers to what they do and why they do so.

Mindset can be either a mental attitude or inclination or a fixed state of mind (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Understanding the concept of a mindset is essential in this study because it will also assess the mindsets of leaders who build trust among their team members.

Multinational companies: Multinational is a term used to describe something relating to more than one nationality (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Multinational companies are companies with businesses established in two or more countries. This study assessed leaders who work for multinational companies.

Outcomes or results: These two terms are explained together because they are synonyms. The outcome is something that follows as a result or consequence (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). For example, the positive expected results or outcomes when applying a model of trust is the increased level of trust in a given relationship. Covey and Merrill (2018) described it as the performance or track record. It is through the obtained results that a leader can see if they are on the right path toward their vision and mission.

Risk: In this dissertation, risk refers to the possibility of loss or injury (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The loss can be tangible and quantifiable, such as money, a job position, and time-wasting. It can also be intangible, such as personal credibility or exposure. Injury in this study can be physical or emotional. The most common type of injury created by lack of trust is emotional distress, burnout, and anxiety.

Trust or confidence: In short, trust means confidence in another individual's integrity and abilities (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Trust is

the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor,

irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other part. (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 712)

Being vulnerable denotes that an individual who is prepared to place their faith in another is deliberately exposing themselves to potential dangers or the loss of something significant

(B. Brown, 2018; Stickel, 2022). Vulnerability is a choice a person makes in a scenario with some uncertainty, as it is impossible to predict another person's actions (Stickel, 2022).

Confidence is considered a synonym for trust.

Trustee: The trustee is the recipient of the trust (Mayer et al., 1995). Considering the same case of the new leader who is trying to earn the trust of the team members, the leader will be the trustee once the team members deposit their confidence in him.

Trustor: The trustor is an individual who has a proclivity or is inclined to place trust in another person (Mayer et al., 1995). For example, suppose a leader is taking over a new team, and the members do not know this new leader. In this case, the team members assume the position of trustors toward the new leader.

Uncertainty refers to being uncertain or having doubts about what people or groups will perform a certain action (Stickel, 2022.). The uncertainty comes from the context, which is influenced by external factors such as national policies, economy, or politics. However, uncertainty can also be perceived from individual behaviors. For example, when an individual gets to know another, they do not understand entirely how the other person behaves, their history, or preferences. Thus, there will be several questions and doubts about the new acquaintance.

Values, as defined in this research, pertain to a group of individual's inherently useful or desirable principles or qualities (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Vulnerability and perceived vulnerability: Vulnerability concerns uncertainty, risks, and emotional exposure (B. Brown, 2018). One person is vulnerable when they are willing to risk losing something important to them or expose themselves (Mayer et al., 1995). Perceived vulnerability is an evaluation of what a person could lose or fear to lose in a particular circumstance (Stickel, 2022).

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced this dissertation's topic: building trust between leaders and team members in multinational organizations. This study is structured into five chapters to examine this topic. Chapter 1 is the introduction, and it states the problem examined, the RQs, and the theoretical frameworks underpinning this research. Additionally, the chapter presented the limitations and concepts essential to understanding the narrative presented in this study.

Chapter 2 is the literature review. In that chapter, the key concepts and frameworks in the literature that are crucial to this study are examined and summarized. The literature around building trust, EI, and cultural intelligence are further assessed to capture the practices, challenges, and measurements leaders use to build trust. The end of this chapter summarizes the main themes for practices and challenges found in the literature.

Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology. This study applies a qualitative methodology with a phenomenological approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, the participant selection occurred through purposive sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2017) to intentionally select participants with leadership experience in multinational organizations. The type of inquiry is semi-structured (Creswell & Poth, 2017), built upon the literature appraisal, AI, and humble inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Schein & Schein, 2021).

The last two chapters of this dissertation contain this study's results. They were constructed after the preliminary defense of this dissertation. Chapter 4 includes the data analysis, and Chapter 5 will convey the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. It also presents the proposed framework for trust.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In emotionally important situations, trust happens when a person uses predictability to define whether the expected outcome might occur (Deutsch, 1958; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). It may happen in all fields of life: family, academic, professional, and others. When a mother allows another person to take care of her baby, it is an emotionally important event for her, and she predicts that the person will fulfill her expectations concerning how well her child will be taken care of (Deutsch, 1958; Kee & Knox, 1970). A parallel can be drawn when analyzing a leader in an organization. When an employee says they trust their leaders, they mean that their job is important to them and that they predict their leader will fulfill their expectancies about honesty, work conditions, compensation, or other specifics in that relationship (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995).

Interpersonal trust theories study an individual or group's confidence that another individual or group will fulfill their promises and expectations (Chun & Campbell, 1974; Rotter, 1967). Trust is about one person's willingness to be vulnerable toward another person whose behaviors they cannot control (B. Brown, 2018; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Short, 2014; Stickel, 2022). When people trust one another, they believe they will not be betrayed (Deutsch, 1958) or harmed (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Stickel, 2022).

Trust is the coin supporting leaders in earning employee commitment (Hill & Lineback, 2012a). Referring to the example of an employee who trusts their leader, when that employee signs the labor contract, they decide to be vulnerable toward their leader's and organization's decisions and behavior because they have faith in them (Covey & Merrill, 2018). The employee believes the leader will not betray them, and this belief goes beyond the labor agreement. It is a

personal choice (Kramer, 2009) that shapes how the leader and their employees build a relationship, work together, and create results (Covey et al., 2022; Hill & Lineback, 2012b).

Despite its importance as a leadership skill, interpersonal trust has been neglected for several decades (Crosby, 2016), culminating in a crisis of trust that affects most nations (Crabtree, 2018; Edelman, 2023; Gallup, 2018). During the last 30 years or so, several publications have discussed the increasing fragility of employees' confidence in their institutions and leaders (Brennan, 2021; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Crosby, 2016; Edelman, 2023; Gallup, 2018; Harter, 2019; Mayer et al., 1995; Soderberg & Romney, 2022). According to the Edelman Trust Barometer Global Report, in 2022, the world entered into a cycle of distrust fueled by disinformation, usually in the form of fake news, and by the inability of leaders to solve existential and societal problems. Job loss, income inequality, discrimination, and cyber-attacks—which are part of a new leadership paradigm—are among the problems people expect leaders and institutions to solve (Crabtree, 2018; Edelman, 2023).

The higher the rank of a leader, the lower the trust (Edelman, 2023; Keltner, 2017). A survey with over 36,000 respondents in 28 countries found that CEOs and government leaders are, respectively, 25% and 32% less trusted than co-workers (Edelman, 2023). Trust deficit has spread across industries, leading to a call for research, action, and solutions (Brennan, 2021; Crosby, 2016; Gallup, 2018; Harter, 2019; Soderberg & Romney, 2022). According to the same report, employees believe leaders from business and non-governmental organizations are more ethical and competent to break the cycle of distrust. Therefore, they expect CEOs to be more involved in public policies that solve existential and societal problems, speak up publicly about controversial issues, and give visibility about what their organizations have done to benefit society (Edelman, 2023).

Building interpersonal trust is critical in solving challenges, managing conflicts and divides, operating under new paradigms, and improving organizational outcomes (Covey & Merrill, 2108; Edelman, 2023; Rice et al., 2021; Soderberg & Romney, 2022; Stickel, 2022). In a globalized and connected world, trustworthy leadership matters more than ever (Friedman, 2005, 2017; Fukuyama, 1995), especially when the organizations and team members hold different cultural, religious, and political backgrounds (Borum, 2010; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). Trust is context-sensitive (Hill & Lineback, 2012a). For example, people from different nationalities operate under distinct social norms and build trust differently (Borum, 2010; Fukuyama, 1995). Cultural and EI have the role of supporting leaders in building meaningful relationships grounded in trust and humanity (Borum, 2010; Covey et al., 2022; Fukuyama, 1995; Goleman, 2019; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014; Stickel, 2022).

This literature review presents the history of interpersonal trust research on organizations and leadership. It discusses the strategies, practices, and challenges to build trust in the leader-follower relationship. First, the chapter reviews the historical context of research on trust. This study rests on the assumption that leaders pull their best trust-building practices from three theoretical lenses: interpersonal trust, EI, and cultural intelligence. Therefore, the second section analyzes what these three theoretical lenses offer as strategies and practices to build trust. Third, this author examined the challenges leaders encounter in their journey. Fourth, the author analyzes what the literature offers to measure leaders' success and trust levels. This author also looked for critiques and gaps in the literature. The last section contains the chapter summary.

A Brief History of Trust Applied to Organizations and Leadership

According to Deutsch (1958), the idea of trust and betrayal has been studied ever since philosophers, theologians, politicians, and others began to write about the nature of human

relationships. A social group's readiness, adaptation, and endurance depend on whether the individuals trust each other (Rotter, 1967). The prosperity of a group relies on their level of trust (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Fukuyama, 1995). That is one of the first reasons several authors restated the importance of trust and engaged in research to discover how to measure trust, the practices and behaviors to build trustworthiness, and the challenges suffered when there is a lack of trust in social relationships (Chun & Campbell, 1974; Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Deutsch, 1958; Mayer et al., 1995; Rotter, 1967; Stickel, 2022).

Seminal studies on trust started in the fifties, considering everyday relationships, familial relationships, and situations involving money decisions. Those studies were conducted in the field of psychology or applied psychology (Chun & Campbell, 1974; Deutsch, 1958, 1960; Rotter, 1967). They focused on identifying the constructs of trust, understanding how trusting behaviors happened, and how to measure them (Deutsch, 1958, 1960; Rotter, 1967).

Erikson's work on childhood and society in 1950 set the tone for psychologists to view trust and mistrust as essential components of human development (Barnes, 1981). However, one of the first scholars to call the psychology community's attention to the phenomenon of trust in adult relationships was Deutsch in the 1950s and 1960s (Chun & Campbell, 1974). Deutsch (1958, 1960) conducted experimental studies using the non-zero-sum game to evaluate trusting behavior among individuals and determine whether mutual trust, the behavior of trusting each other, could be measured with experiential work tests. In his first study, Deutsch (1958) found that risk-taking and trusting are correlated. Additionally, the author deduced that people with a positive orientation toward the well-being of others are more prone to be trusted.

Deutsch (1958, 1960) also found important constructs that influence willingness to trust. According to Deutsch, people can trust each other even though they do not have previous

knowledge of one another. That might occur in four situations. The first is when an individual has the opportunity to communicate openly and better understand the factors involved before making the decision. The second is when one of the individuals has the power of influence to get the expected outcomes. The third happens when there is the influence of a third person whom both individuals know and trust beforehand and who would also benefit from the expected outcomes. The fourth is when there is reciprocity among the individuals seeking trust. That means people who trust others tend to be considered more trustworthy themselves (Deutsch, 1960; Rotter, 1967).

Following the first experiential works on understanding interpersonal trusting behaviors, the interest in understanding the phenomenon of trust, its constructs, and measurement increased (Chun & Campbell, 1974; Rotter, 1967). In the 1960s, Rotter (1967) developed the Interpersonal Trust Scale, which he validated using 547 academic students (Chun & Campbell, 1974; Rotter, 1967). There was a significant correlation between the trust scores of this cohort and familial position, socioeconomic level, and religious commonalities. The author also found positive correlations between trust, humor, friendship, popularity, and trustworthiness. However, trust is negatively correlated with dependency, meaning people tend to trust people who do not depend on others or other factors to complete their responsibilities (Rotter, 1967). Rotter (1967) contributed to the literature with the first instrument for measuring trust and new constructs that influence the willingness to trust.

Researchers started to analyze trust in organizational contexts in the 1970s (Kruglanski, 1970). Kruglanski (1970) analyzed the trusting behavior in supervisor-employee relationships. He studied trusting behavior toward the supervisor, considering the frequency of monitoring an employee and the type of power the supervisor was using, whether reward or coercion. The

author found that having power over another person was enough to incite trustworthiness, confirming the relationship between power and willingness to trust from previous studies (Deutsch, 1958; Kruglanski, 1970; Rotter, 1967). The study also highlighted that coercion was more likely to be linked to distrust, while reward and trust were connected. The author found that the frequency with which the supervisor checks on employees' work does not necessarily measure their willingness to trust, but conditions such as whether the employee is considered competent in their job significantly affect willingness to trust (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Kruglanski, 1970).

As the relevance of measuring interpersonal trust boomed, Rotter's Interpersonal Trust Scale was the most prominent instrument (Chun & Campbell, 1974). Other authors engaged in experiments with the tool, as it was constructed during a time when little theory and attention existed around that subject. For example, Chun and Campbell (1974) pointed out that Rotter's scale was multidimensional. Thus, these authors recommended that the scale include scores of the new dimensions such as dependable role performance, political cynicism, interpersonal exploitation, and social. All dimensions affect the level of distrust or willingness to trust another individual. For example, if a child experiences interpersonal exploitation in the form of abuse at home, it might affect their willingness to trust others in adulthood (Rotter, 1967).

Other studies also confirmed the critique that trust is a complex and multidimensional variable. Corazzini (1977), for instance, noted that four factors affected trust, suggesting that trust is, indeed, a complex variable. The author proposed that the four factors are suspicious, personal risk-taking, financial risk-taking, and credibility (Corazzini, 1977).

In the 1980s, three articles deserved attention because they highlighted trust in organizational settings, specifically in the relationship between the leader and employees. Barnes

(1981) spotlighted the assumption that trust is a product of past and present experiences; trust begins early in childhood, is easy to create and destroy, is influenced by personality and leaders' actions, and is an important construct in effective performance and satisfaction. Complementing Barne's ideas, Melohn (1983) presented a case study on trust and suggested practices through which leaders might increase their trustworthiness. Those practices include recognizing employees for excellence, rewarding every employee, building personal relationships with employees like family members, sharing ownership and wealth with them, valuing and complimenting them, promoting equitable and fair compensations, providing resources necessary to achieve their goals, and not blaming individuals for failures (Melohn, 1983). In contrast, Bartolomé (1989) discussed the barriers to employees trusting their leaders. Those barriers include fear of telling negative news, distortion, or holding of important information, especially in cases of merger office politics, and not giving credit to the person who actually did the job or delivered the results (Bartolomé, 1989).

Throughout the 1990s, there were advancements in the study of organizational trust. During this decade, Mayer et al. (1995) introduced the first integrative model of organizational trust, and discussions began to revolve around the influence of cultures on trust-building (Fukuyama, 1995). Schneider Demaría (2022) explained that Mayer and colleagues developed the first model of organizational trust in 1995 to fill a gap in the literature, and it became the primary model of trust-building for organizations and leaders at the time (Mayer et al., 1995; Schneider Demaría, 2022; Stickel, 2022). This model has since been used to explain and explore trust outcomes in both public and private institutions, as well as leadership-team members' relationships (Fricker, 2014; Schoorman et al., 2007). The main contribution of this model was the definition of the process by which a person decides to trust another and the factors that

influence that decision. This model assumed that for a person to decide to trust another, they considered the perceived risk of the situation and balanced it against the factors of an individual's perceived trustworthiness: ability, benevolence, and integrity (Fricker, 2014; Mayer et al., 1995; Schoorman et al., 2007).

The model of organizational trust offers a good start, but pieces of the puzzle are missing. First, it is a unidimensional model (Schoorman et al., 2007). As such, it does not explain how a person understands and defines their propensity to take risks and how feelings and emotions might influence the decision to trust (Kahneman, 2012; Schoorman et al., 2007; Stickel, 2022). Second, it lacks an explicit delineation of practical measures that leaders may take to proactively foster confidence (Soderberg & Romney, 2022). Third, as the authors noted, there are new dimensions that could be researched and added to the model, such as emotions, international and cross-culture, context-specific trust, and repair of trust (Schoorman et al., 2007)

Parallel to those studies, Fukuyama (1995) published his best-selling book, *Trust: The Societal Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*. He made the case that trust is a virtue that varies significantly between different cultural nationals. At that time, he related trust to the level of prosperity a society could achieve. For instance, low-trust nations of the time, such as Russia and Taiwan, achieved less prosperity than high-trust nations, such as Japan or the United States (Fukuyama, 1995). The level of trust of those nations might have changed over the last 3 decades, but his contribution stands. This study brought attention to the fact that different national cultures have distinct societal norms, and because of that, they interpret and build trust differently.

The number of books and studies published on trust increased over the last 2 decades, offering new models and revising prior ones (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Hurley,

2006; Stickel, 2022), practices to build, enhance and restore trust (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Frei & Morriss, 2020; Hill & Lineback, 2012a; Lewis, 1999; O’Hara, 2014; Stickel, 2022; Zak, 2017; Zenger & Folkman, 2019), challenges of trust (Crabtree, 2018; Gallup, 2018; Kramer, 2002; Soderberg & Romney, 2022; Stefano et al., 2014), indexes to measure trust in a broader context (Edelman, 2023; Schoorman et al., 2007; Stickel, 2022), and even inputs from neuroscience that contribute to the leadership practices (DePaoli et al., 2017; Zak, 2017).

This dissertation spotlights three of the newest models of trust: the TU model (Stickel, 2022), the four cores of trust (Covey & Merrill, 2018), and the three stewardships of trust and inspiring leaders (Covey et al., 2022). The TU Trust Model (Stickel, 2022) is built on the previously presented model of organizational trust (Mayer et al., 1995) and includes the analysis of context and influence of personal feelings and emotions as drivers for the decision to trust (Stickel, 2022). The four cores of trust (Covey & Merrill, 2018) complement the characteristics of trustworthiness in the TU model. The three stewardships of trust and inspiring leaders focus on leadership behaviors of modeling themselves, inspiring others, and inciting trustworthiness (Covey et al., 2022).

Other models are not detailed in this study. The reason is that those models are less connected to this study’s purpose, do not offer insights different from those in the selected models, or this author did not know their existence at the time of this study. For example, the model that Hurley (2006) proposed for predicting whether a person will trust another is not covered in detail, as this study did not aim to predict trust. Yet, this study included the practices and competencies to build trust recommended by Hurley (2006).

Trust correlates to leadership effectiveness (Zenger & Folkman, 2019). The idea that a leader’s perception of trustworthiness can be consciously and intentionally encouraged has

gained evidence (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Hill & Lineback, 2012a), and scholars and professionals have recommended several strategies and practices. Some strategies and practices proposed by those recent studies that confirm the ones in the existing trust models are integrity (Hill & Lineback, 2012c; Sinha, 2021), consistency (Hill & Lineback, 2012c; Zenger & Folkman, 2019), ability, or competency (Hill & Lineback, 2012b; Sinha, 2021; Zenger & Folkman, 2019), benevolence (Sinha, 2021). However, there are several new strategies listed as trust-builders. Some examples are creating positive relationships and personal connections (O'Hara, 2014; Zenger & Folkman, 2019), showing warmth (Cuddy et al., 2013), using effective communication (O'Hara, 2014; Okello & Gilson, 2015), and teamwork (Okello & Gilson, 2015), explicitly acknowledgment of emotions (Yu et al., 2021), and cultural sensitivity or awareness (Bird, 2018; Borum, 2010).

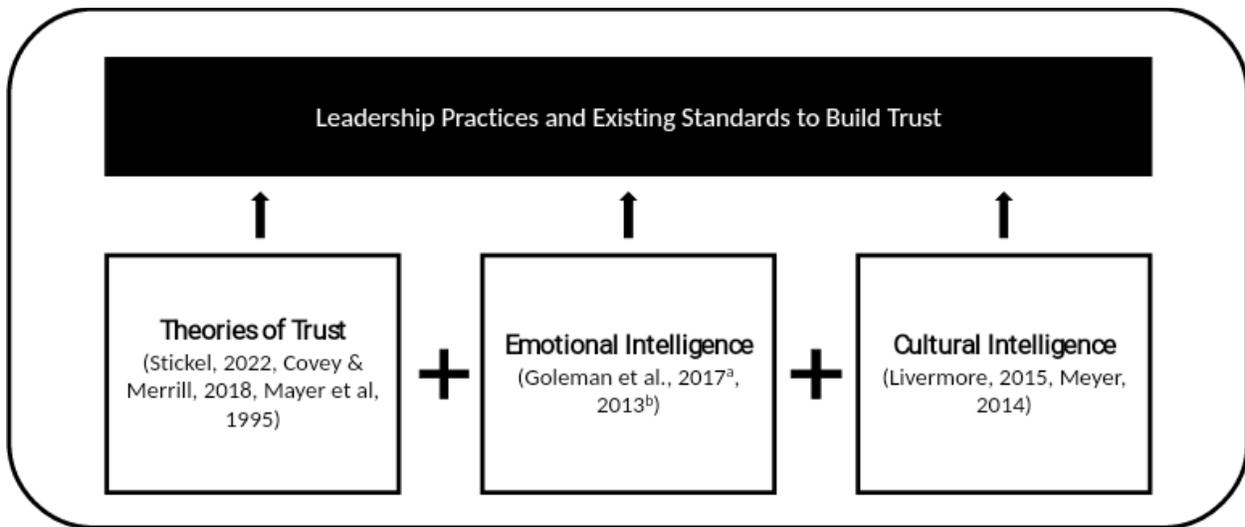
Finally, prior studies have uncovered the crisis of trust over the last decades (Brennan, 2021; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Crosby, 2016; Edelman, 2023; Gallup, 2018; Harter, 2019; Mayer et al., 1995; Soderberg & Romney, 2022); therefore, the cost of non-trust in organizations also received much attention (Covey & Merrill, 2018). The cost of non-trust shows up in the form of employee demotivation, unsafe and unhealthy environments, team collapse, and low performance and results (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Gallup, 2018). The leadership approach and strategies to build trust are part of the solution to avoid those costs. Trust is the first step in empowering and stewarding leadership (Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2020), which can transform toxic, unproductive environments into a safer and prosperous one (Covey & Merrill, 2018).

Theoretical Framework Based on Trust, Emotional, and Cultural Intelligence

The framework of this study is a three-tiered theoretical approach. It blends theories of interpersonal trust (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022) with EI (Goleman et al., 2017) and cultural intelligence (Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). The idea is to provide a core compendium of practices leaders can utilize to build or increase trust and examine trust-building challenges. The researcher selected the authors cited in the framework because they offer the central idea or model to underpin this research. However, the literature review is not limited to them. Figure 3 recalls the theoretical framework already presented in Chapter 1.

Figure 3

Theories of Trust, Emotional, and Cultural Intelligence



Note. This figure represents the central theories examined in this dissertation.

Theories of Trust

Trust-Building Waves. Trust-building is an inside-out process that happens in waves: self-trust, relationship trust, team and organizational trust, stakeholder and market trust, and societal trust (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018). The first wave is the leader's belief in themselves that they can fulfill their promises and deliver what is expected. In doing so, a person

builds their credibility based on integrity, intent, capability, and results (Covey & Merrill, 2018). The second wave consists of others' confidence in the leader because of their behavior and consistency. The third wave is the trustworthiness a leader creates with their teams as a whole or organizations, and that happens through a high level of alignment that allows systems and processes to boost performance and results. The fourth wave is the organizational reputation the leaders and their teams create and share with stakeholders and the market. The fifth wave is the contribution or benefits leaders and organizations offer to society (Covey & Merrill, 2018).

Organizational Trust Model. Mayer et al. (1995) proposed the first comprehensive model of organizational trust, describing the process and factors that influence the decision to trust a leader or organization (Fricker, 2014; Mayer et al., 1995; Schoorman et al., 2007). According to Mayer et al. (1995), the trustor is the person who is inclined to trust, whereas the trustee is the individual who will confer such trust. The process of trusting another individual starts with analyzing perceived individual trustworthiness factors, typically shown by the person seeking to be trusted (Schneider Demaría, 2022). These characteristics influence the trustee's motivation to engage in wrongdoing or propensity to do right. The trust propensity decreases if the trustor perceives the trustee is highly motivated to lie. The perceived risk in a given situation is another critical factor the trustor considers. In sum, the decision to trust or not trust is the outcome of an individual's perceived trustworthiness and the perceived risks of a situation (Fricker, 2014; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022).

The three factors of perceived trustworthiness are (a) ability, (b) benevolence, and (c) integrity (Mayer et al., 1995). Ability refers to competence, knowledge, and skills (Fricker, 2014; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). This ability is related to the capacity of an individual to create results, solve problems, and satisfy expectations (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018;

Stickel, 2022). Benevolence is the goodwill and assurance that the other individual is concerned about the first person's welfare and best interest (Fricker, 2014; Mayer et al., 1995; Schneider Demaría, 2022; Stickel, 2022). Benevolence and the leader's intent and character are linked (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Lastly, integrity is associated with truthfulness, character, and authenticity (Fricker, 2014; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). It is the primary characteristic of trust because it means a person is ethical, honest, follows the rules and values, and is congruent with what they say (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018).

The trust model facilitates understanding the process and factors involved in trust formation. Schneider Demaría (2022) illustrated how the process happens: assume a follower has the belief that their leader exhibits enough competence, benevolence, and honesty and that the perceived risks are minimal for him. As a consequence, this follower will be willing to trust the leader and be susceptible to his directions. In this model, when someone tries to earn trust and demonstrates all three qualities, they are considered trustworthy (Fricker, 2014; Schneider Demaría, 2022).

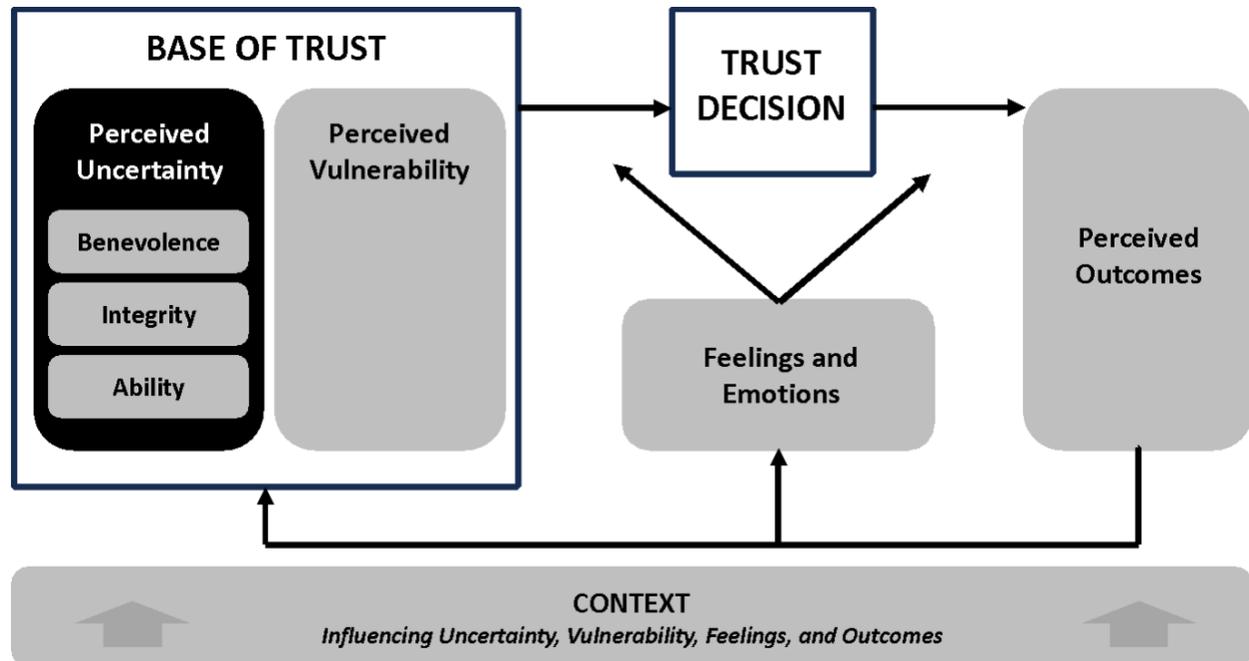
This conclusion is rather simple in light of the rapid pace at which the world is transforming and the complexities of social interactions (Schneider Demaría, 2022; Soderberg & Romney, 2022; Stickel, 2022). Stickel's (2022) model tries to address some of the new dimensions missing in the previous model: emotions, context, and trust repair. The author shows through actual case study applications that this model can be used to build and repair trust (Stickel, 2022).

As Stickel (2022) explained, perceived risk is a combination of uncertainty and vulnerability perceptions, both of which arise from individual and contextual elements. If the perceived risks are higher than what a person can support, they will not trust the other individual.

However, their willingness to trust increases when the perceived uncertainties are lower than what the other person can stand. The outcome will always be the decision to trust or not the other individual. Figure 4 illustrates this rationale and the levers of trust.

Figure 4

Stickel's Model of Trust and Its Levelers



Note. Adapted from *Building Trust: Exceptional Leadership in an Uncertain World*, pp. 132–156, by D. Stickel, 2022. Forefront Books. Copyright 2022 by Darryl Stickel.

The first perception of this model is uncertainty (Stickel, 2022). The elements of individual uncertainty are the same as in the model of organizational trust: benevolence, integrity, and ability (Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). They also resonate with the four cores of credibility: results, capability, intent, and integrity (Covey & Merrill, 2018). However, Stickel expanded the idea that an individual chooses to trust another based just on the individual perceived trustworthiness. In his model, the context influences the perceived uncertainty.

The second element of perceived risk is perceived vulnerability. Stickel (2022) detailed the concept of vulnerability, explaining it as a personal choice in which an individual might think

they will lose if anything goes wrong (B. Brown, 2018; Kramer, 2009). Vulnerability is the willingness to face uncertainties, take risks, and expose oneself emotionally (B. Brown, 2018; Covey et al., 2022). Individuals form their perceptions according to their knowledge, experiences, emotions, and feelings (Stickel, 2022). Therefore, the level of perceived vulnerability varies according to what is at risk and how much a particular person values it (Stickel, 2022).

The third element refers to feelings and emotions. They relate to whether a person likes another one (Stickel, 2022) and their physical and mental reactions toward this other individual (Goleman, 2019). Individual perceptions, previous experiences, and context influence feelings and emotions (Beard & McGinn, 2019; Stickel, 2022). Theories of EI discuss approaches to identifying and controlling feelings and emotions (Goleman, 2019).

The fourth element is the context, which plays a significant role in Stickel's (2022) model. According to the author, the context stems from the social mechanisms of control that influence the individual's behavior in a given situation, along with constraints in the micro and macro environments and how vulnerable a person feels in that situation (Stickel, 2022). The context influences the decision of trust (Hill & Lineback, 2012a) via formal and informal mechanisms, as well as at the macro and micro levels (Stickel, 2022). Informal control mechanisms refer to culture, social norms, and reputation (Fukuyama, 1995; Schein & Schein, 2017; Stickel, 2022). They might be represented through organizational artifacts, manifested via organizational or team symbols, memories, shared knowledge, or written and formalized rules and policies (Schein & Schein, 2017). Formal mechanisms are written laws, rules, codes of ethics, job descriptions, and others. The micro-level consists of the contexts inside an organization, while the macro-level consists of the context outside the organization (Stickel,

2022). Both influence organizational culture and the relationships inside and outside the organization (Schein & Schein, 2017). Organizational factors such as positive climate and ethical norms positively relate to trust. Structural factors such as the workplace, technical conditions, and occupational composition also affect the willingness to trust (Nienaber et al., 2015).

Finally, the outcomes refer to what is at stake in this relationship or the expected results (Covey et al., 2022; Stickel, 2022). It is about the expected results, performance, or object of exchange in the relationship between two individuals. The combination of the elements in Stickel's (2022) model (Figure 4, highlighted in gray) forms the levers of trust. In Stickel's model, there are 10 levers of trust: (a) benevolence, (b) integrity, (c) ability, (d) vulnerability, (e) perceived outcomes, (f) feelings, (g) the context of uncertainty, (h) the context of vulnerability, (i) the context of the outcomes, and (j) context of the feelings. Leaders will have more control and influence over their own benevolence, integrity, ability, willingness to be vulnerable, outcomes, feelings, and emotions. However, leaders cannot precisely change the context, but they can learn and try to navigate the uncertainty (Stickel, 2022).

Leadership Approach to Trust. Covey et al. (2022) explained that people and organizations want to move to a more meaningful way to lead. These authors claimed that building trust and inspiring people is the new way to lead. Strong leadership gives employees the confidence to build long-term relationships (Crabtree, 2018).

Even though trust is the most important type of capital a leader can have, it is not easy to acquire (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Frei & Morriss, 2020). Developing trustworthiness involves a shift from the traditional leadership mindset of focusing solely on themselves - their competencies, achievements, talents, vision, and needs - to focus on empowering others (Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2020). That requires breaking with the

leadership paradigm created by traditional thinking, meaning how leaders see things, the language they use, and how they behave might boost their relationships and inspire trust from others (Covey et al., 2022).

The leadership approach is critical to determining the level of trust between leaders and employees (Nienaber et al., 2015; Zenger & Folkman, 2019). Trusting leader-follower relationships is increasingly crucial in uncertain business environments to overcome challenges to organizational sustainability and progress (Kleynhans et al., 2021a). The propensity to trust a leader can be influenced by their characteristics, behaviors, strategies, and practices (Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2020; Kleynhans et al., 2021a; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). Furthermore, it is sensitive to the situational context (Hill & Lineback, 2012a; Stickel, 2022), the employee's mindset, previous experiences (Bartolomé, 1989; DeSteno, 2014; Kruglanski, 1970; Rotter, 1967), and personal choice (Beard & McGinn, 2019; Kramer, 2009; Nienaber et al., 2015). Therefore, several leadership strategies and practices influence the propensity of employees to trust their leaders (Asencio, 2022; Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2020; George et al., 2018; Goleman, 2019; Schein & Schein, 2021).

Different leadership styles have been used to build trust. Stewardship, servant, emotionally intelligent, and authentic leadership approaches work in diverse business settings, fostering affect-based trust (Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2020; George et al., 2018; Goleman, 2019; Kleynhans et al., 2021a; Nienaber et al., 2015). A caring and less authoritative leadership style functions well in virtual environments, where personnel is usually mature enough to work without direct supervision (Short, 2014). Culturally intelligent leadership performs well in environments in which people have distinct cultural norms, use distinct language, or have distinct religious beliefs (Fukuyama, 1995; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014).

Emotionally intelligent leadership and its variants proposed by Goleman (2019), especially authoritative, affiliative, democratic, and resilient leadership styles (Coutu, 2002; David & Congleton, 2013; Kopans, 2017), functions well either in diverse business environments seeking outstanding performance or in times of crisis (Coutu, 2002; David & Congleton, 2013; Goleman, 2019; Kopans, 2017). The transformational and transactional leadership approach can also increase trust by emphasizing an active orientation toward the relationship with employees and their participation in decision-making, fostering cognition-based trust (Asencio, 2022; Nienaber et al., 2015).

In sum, the leadership approach should be modeled on the situation faced, the people involved, and the leader's characteristics (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019). A leadership behavior that is congruent with a positive relationship (Zenger & Folkman, 2019) between the leader and employee and promotes open communication, intellectual stimulation, coaching, training, task support, feedback, and shared perspectives is positively related to trust (Nienaber et al., 2015; Okello & Gilson, 2015).

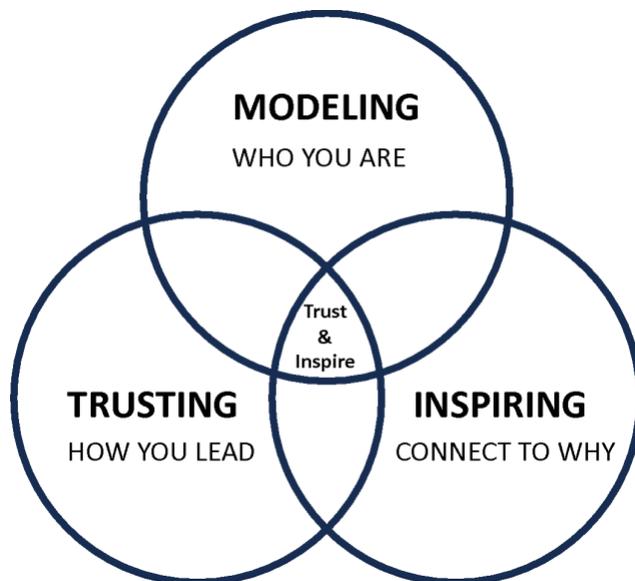
Recently, Covey et al. (2022) proposed a leadership model focusing on the leader's trustworthiness: the three stewardships of a trust and inspire leader, or simply the trust and inspire model (Covey et al., 2022). In this model, the leader is expected to empower team members, uplift caring for others, serve others, and influence by giving an example (Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2020; Sinek, 2017). This model suggests an inside-out process, passing through the five waves of trust, from self-trust to relationship trust, team trust and organization trust, stakeholders and market trust, and society trust. The leadership beliefs underpinning this model are cultivating positive things, understanding the whole person (body, heart, mind, and

spirit), promoting abundance for everyone, caring for others, and promoting collaboration so that the sum of the parts is better than the individuals (Covey et al., 2022).

Figure 5 illustrates the trust and inspire model. The three stewardships are connected and complement one another. The point where they intersect is where the inspire and trust leader stands.

Figure 5

The Three Stewardships of a Trust & Inspire Leader



Note. From *Trust and Inspire: How Truly Great Leaders Unleash Greatness in Others* by S. M. R. Covey, D. Kasperson, M. Covey, & G. T. Judd, 2022. Simon & Schuster. Copyright 2022 by CoveyLink, LLC.

The first stewardship in this model is tailoring who the leader is. Inspiring leaders present the following behavior virtues: (a) humility, (b) courage, (c) authenticity, (d) vulnerability, (d) empathy, and (e) performance. Those attributes relate to a leader’s character (Covey et al., 2022; Hill & Lineback, 2012c). Leaders can learn all these behaviors and influence how others perceive their trustworthiness (Covey et al., 2022; Hill & Lineback, 2012a, 2012c; Soderberg & Romney, 2022).

Humility means that the leader lives by principles and values and elevates service to others above their own interest (Covey et al., 2022; Schein & Schein, 2021). Humble leaders ask questions to understand the situation instead of judging others or the situation. They are not arrogant, selfish, or egocentric. Instead, they are more concerned about doing what is right than being right (Covey et al., 2022). Courage complements humility, as it is the value that makes an individual act toward their beliefs and values. Inspiring leaders are courageous and stand for others and themselves when the situation requires it (Covey et al., 2022; Lewis, 1999). Even when the situation requires them to admit mistakes and take responsibility (Covey et al., 2022; O'Hara, 2014). Authenticity is when the reality matches the words. Authentic leaders are real and humane; they do not fake or try to be someone they are not. The leaders allowed themselves to be whole (brain, heart, spirit), complete, and integrated (Covey et al., 2022; George et al., 2018; Soderberg & Romney, 2022). Vulnerability is when leaders open themselves and are transparent (Covey et al., 2022). Vulnerability is an act of love and greatest courage (B. Brown, 2018). Empathy is about caring for others and making them feel they are understood. An empathetic leader desires to make life better for someone else (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019).

Finally, performance is broadly highlighted by the current literature as positively correlated to a leader's trustworthiness (Hill & Lineback, 2012a, 2012c; Hurley, 2006; O'Hara, 2014; Sinha, 2021; Soderberg & Romney, 2022). Performance is the culmination of all those virtues. It is about delivering promises and expected results to their team members (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019). By using them, they can model who they are according to each situation (Covey et al., 2022).

The second stewardship refers to the way an individual leads other people. By trusting others, the leader builds the capacity and confidence of those who are trusted (Deutsch, 1960; Rolfe, 2022; Rotter, 1967). The ultimate job of a leader is to unleash other's potential. It is not to control others (Covey et al., 2022). People who develop reciprocated trust perform better and put new capabilities at the service of the organization. The crucial practices of this stewardship are (a) clarifying expectations, (b) practicing accountability, and (c) promoting people's growth (Covey et al., 2022).

To clarify expectations, leaders explain what the expected results are, what they are expected to accomplish, and the reason for that (Covey et al., 2022). They also transparently share information about the present and the future (O'Hara, 2014). Leaders also provide guidelines, support, and norms (Covey et al., 2022; Okello & Gilson, 2015), set clear boundaries, and reveal their intentions (Hill & Lineback, 2012c). Lastly, the leader also provides the resources for the task (Melohn, 1983; Okello & Gilson, 2015). They are logical and conscious of what is possible and what is on hand (Frei & Morriss, 2020). To practice accountability, leaders make clear how they will check and measure the results; they define responsibilities, communicate them, and explain the consequences of not getting the expected results (Covey et al., 2022). These leaders hold people accountable for their results in all situations, giving credit to them for excellent jobs and results (Bartolomé, 1989; Covey et al., 2022; O'Hara, 2014).

Other recent practices might be added to how leaders lead others. Leaders should be consistent and avoid acting unpredictably with their employees because it increases the perception of uncertainty (Hill & Lineback, 2012a; Zenger & Folkman, 2019). They might establish human bonds through positive relationships (Zenger & Folkman, 2019) or personal connections with employees and colleagues (O'Hara, 2014). Acknowledging other people's

emotions truthfully and respectfully, especially destructive emotions, also increases the leader's perception of trust (Yu et al., 2021). Using gestures of warmth instead of coercion facilitates trust-building (Cuddy et al., 2013). Finally, emphasizing similarities and alignment of interest between the leader and employee also increases the perception of trustworthiness (Hurley, 2006).

The third stewardship is connected to the why (Covey et al., 2022). This last stewardship is about connecting to the purpose of a person, a team, or an organization. Purpose is about the meaning and contribution of each individual in their professional and personal lives. It is why people do what they do (Sinek, 2017). Thus, the third stewardship refers to the connection between every member of the team, their purposes, and the organizational purpose. The connection must be made in three levels: (a) individual or self-level, meaning the leader seeks to understand what motivates everyone in the team; (b) relationship level is about caring for each person as a whole (body, mind, and spirit); and (c) team level is about making everyone feel they belong (Covey et al., 2022).

Emotional Intelligence

Being emotionally intelligent means that individuals are aware of their emotions and regulate them (Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2019). Successful leaders generally display high EI, consisting of five primary skills: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Goleman et al., 2013). According to Goleman et al. (2013), those attributes are more valuable than any other intelligence quotient, and when leaders practice them, they create an environment conducive to results and confidence. Furthermore, EI is associated with leadership characteristics and traits such as authenticity (Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2020; George et al., 2018; Kleynhans et al., 2021b), power of influence (Cialdini, 2018; Deutsch, 1958; Hill & Lineback, 2018; Rice et al., 2021; Rotter, 1967), resilience (Coutu, 2002; Goleman,

2017; Radu, 2022), and civility (Keltner, 2017; Porath & Pearson, 2013), which impact positively the creation and nurture of trustful relationships. Therefore, EI can be considered a key intelligence in building trust in a leader-employee relationship.

An emotionally intelligent leader can manage their emotions, feelings, and relationships efficiently (Goleman, 2019). They can choose and use different leadership styles depending on the situation (Coutu, 2002; George et al., 2018; Goleman, 2019). According to Goleman (2019), they tend to navigate among four styles: authoritative, democratic, affiliative, and coaching. However, when the situation requires, they can assume other leadership positionalities, such as resilient leadership (Coutu, 2002; Goleman, 2017) and authentic leadership (George et al., 2018). For example, they might assume a resilient leadership approach to navigate uncertainties (Coutu, 2002; Goleman, 2017).

An emotionally intelligent leader focuses on themselves, others, and the wider world (Goleman, 2019). Their focus on themselves manifests when they listen to their inner voice of self-awareness, pay attention to their gut feelings, and practice self-control through self-restraint and self-gratitude (Goleman, 2019; Keltner, 2017; Kopans, 2017). Their focus on others shows up when they listen carefully, pay attention to what others bring to the discussion, and are attentive without judgments (Goleman, 2019; Schein & Schein, 2021). They are aware of other's needs, practice empathetic concern, invest in solid and meaningful relationships, and guide their followers (Goleman, 2019). Lastly, the wider world focus refers to leaders' competencies to build their business strategies, be competitive, and create the expected results. It manifests when those leaders build and share a strategy to explore innovations and exploit capabilities. In so doing, they develop a system of awareness to show the team the big picture (Goleman, 2019).

These three lenses proposed to an emotionally intelligent leader resonate with the five waves of trust a leader should inspire by Covey and Merrill (2018). The focus on the self resonates with the wave of self-trust. The focus on others echoes the relationship and organizational trust waves. Finally, the focus on the wider world resonates with the market and societal trust waves. Table 1 summarizes the similarities between an emotionally intelligent leader (Goleman, 2019) and a trust and inspire leader (Covey et al., 2022).

Table 1

Emotionally Intelligent Leader versus Trust & Inspire Leader

Trust & Inspire Leader (Covey et al., 2022)	Emotionally Intelligent Leader (Goleman, 2019)	Example of Shared Positive Skills
1 st Wave: Self-trust	Focus on themselves	Self-awareness, self-control, self-restraint, self-gratitude, and motivation (Goleman, 2019; Keltner, 2017; Kopans, 2017).
2 nd Wave: Relationship Trust 3 rd Wave: Organizational Trust	Focus on others	Active Listening, suspended judgment, empathy, and social skills (Goleman, 2019; Schein & Schein, 2021).
4 th Wave: Market Trust 5 th Wave: Societal Trust	Focus on a Wider World	Shared strategies, culture, and a system of awareness (Goleman, 2019; Schein & Schein, 2017).

Note. This table is a comparative analysis based on the literature of Covey et al. (2022), Goleman (2019), and Schein & Schein (2021, 2017). The shared skills highlighted aim to illustrate some of the skills leaders use in each wave of trust. Therefore, they are not exhaustive.

Integrating Emotional Intelligence Leadership and Trust. The leader’s behavior sets the tone for how the team members will behave in a relationship with their leader and colleagues (Covey et al., 2022; Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2019). Cultivation of emotionally intelligent behavior elevates leaders ability to foster trust (Coutu, 2002; Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2019; Goleman et al., 2013; Keltner, 2017; Porath & Pearson, 2013). Several behaviors, skills, and practices proposed through the EI literature appraisal might form a pull of competencies leaders can use to build trust. Those behaviors will determine the level of

commitment and the performance of the team and the organization. For example, if a leader is inspirational, inclusive, and trustworthy, the team is willing to follow the leader even in challenging times (Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2017, 2019).

Leaders should develop their emotionally intelligent leadership and foster a group's EI (Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2019). The individual's mood, mainly the leader's, can spread around the team quickly. If they are positive, they catalyze benevolence, happiness, fairness, optimistic behavior, higher performance, and trust (David & Congleton, 2013; Goleman, 2019). But, if they are negative, they will implicate incivility, low motivation, lack of collaboration, low performance, and distrust (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Porath & Pearson, 2013).

When analyzing leaders' EI, a starting point is the five behaviors Goleman et al. (2013) described in their seminal work. They are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The first three behaviors—self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation—are related to the leader inwardly (Goleman et al., 2013). Self-awareness means a person is attentive and mindful of their own feelings, perceptions, needs, and weaknesses. They are honest and realistic and speak openly about themselves (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019; Goleman et al., 2013). Self-regulation is the ability to control one's emotions and impulses, be reasonable, and create a safe environment full of trust and fairness (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019; Goleman et al., 2013). Self-regulation boosts individual and organizational integrity (Goleman, 2019; Goleman et al., 2013). Motivation is the willingness to get results just for the sake of the achievement itself. It is connected to the sense of purpose and worthiness at work (Goleman, 2019; Goleman et al., 2013).

The last two behaviors, empathy and social skills, refer to outwards or to others and are part of social intelligence (Goleman et al., 2013). Empathy relates to understanding other

emotional states and treating others accordingly (Goleman, 2019; Goleman et al., 2013). It might manifest in different ways. While cognitive empathy focuses on understanding the other person's perspective, emotional empathy focuses on feeling what the other person feels (Goleman, 2017). Feeling everything another person does might be dangerous because it can cause a leader to burn out and have judgmental biases (Goffee & Jones, 2018; Goleman, 2017; Waytz, 2018). Empathic concern, however, allows the leader to sense what others do and need, but they will manage their emotions without feeling the pain others do (Goffee & Jones, 2018; Goleman, 2017). Leaders can practice empathic concern by being compassionate toward others (Seppala, 2018) and using tough empathy, which means giving others what they need, not what they want (Goffee & Jones, 2018).

The last behavior pointed out by Goleman is social skills (Goleman et al., 2013). They consist of abilities that determine the aptitude of a leader to build and manage relationships (Goleman et al., 2013). They include the capacity to create a vast network, find common ground more easily with different people, build rapport (Goleman et al., 2013; O'Hara, 2014), create personal connections and positive relationships (O'Hara, 2014; Zenger & Folkman, 2019), showing warmth (Cuddy et al., 2013) and appreciation (Okello & Gilson, 2015). Social skills culminate all other four previous behaviors (Goleman, 2019). Ultimately, social skills offer a leader a connection to a wider world where they share strategies and culture and promote a system of awareness (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2016; Schein & Schein, 2017).

All five main behaviors of EI resonate with the core elements that boost a leader's trustworthiness, such as integrity, honesty, competency to deliver results, and benevolence—or good intentions—toward others (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). Moreover, those behaviors can be learned to influence the perception of a leader's

trustworthiness (Goleman, 2017, 2019). That is because EI starts mainly in the limbic system, which controls people's emotions. This system can learn from one's desire to learn, routinely practice, and respond to feedback received when learning new skills (Goleman, 2017, 2019).

Building on Goleman's studies on EI, several scholars expanded the type of behaviors and competencies emotionally intelligent leaders develop. Such competencies comprehend resilience (David & Congleton, 2013), emotional agility (Coutu, 2002), positiveness or happiness (Achor, 2010; Csikszentmihalyi, 2008; Kopans, 2017), people development (Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2017, 2019; Goleman et al., 2013), authenticity (George et al., 2018), vulnerability (B. Brown, 2018), and influence (Cialdini, 2018; Hill & Lineback, 2018; Morgan, 2018). According to the literature appraised, these competencies, along with the five main EI behaviors (Goleman, 2019), complement each other and support the process of building trust.

Emotionally intelligent individuals might face hardships, which are the most challenging moments to keep a clear mind and pass through difficult situations (Coutu, 2002; Goleman, 2017). Such moments include economic recession and layoffs (Coutu, 2002). In those moments, one thing that defines how they will face that situation is their ability to be resilient (Coutu, 2002; Goleman, 2017). When people face a lot of pressure, danger, or cumulative hassles, it triggers a reaction in their limbic system to fight or flee, which might not have positive effects, causing them to regret their acts later. The key to resilience is how fast those individuals recover from the hijacked brain state (Goleman, 2017). This ability indicates a high degree of self-regulation, which tends to inspire trust (Coutu, 2002).

Coutu (2002) found three characteristics common to resilient leaders. First, leaders accept and soberly face their reality. Second, they have purpose, or meaning, in life and whatever they engage to do. Third, they do what they are supposed to with whatever resources they have

(Coutu, 2002). Resilience can be developed through self-reflection and retraining the brain through practices such as mindfulness (Goleman, 2017).

Emotional agility is the ability to manage negative thoughts and feelings mindfully and productively (David & Congleton, 2013). This capacity to manage one's own emotions effectively is also found in resilience literature (Coutu, 2002; Goleman, 2017). According to David and Congleton (2013), leaders with high levels of emotional agility can recognize and name their feelings. They evaluate the emotional pattern, accept the emotions because feeling is part of human nature, access their values, and calibrate their responses to feelings (David & Congleton, 2013).

Once leaders can control their emotions, they can develop a more positive and happier approach toward leadership (David & Congleton, 2013; Goleman, 2019). Positiveness and happiness are contagious and impact other's motivation and confidence (Achor, 2010; Csikszentmihalyi, 2008; Kopans, 2017). Optimistic individuals can create a positive currency, which consists of positive interactions and memories, and they express gratitude (Covey et al., 2022; Frankl, 2006; Kopans, 2017). Those leaders can spread positivity throughout the organization by keeping track of those joyous moments and sharing them broadly with their teams, colleagues, and others (Kopans, 2017).

Happiness is a state of mind and spirit that a person experiences when they reach their potential (Achor, 2010; Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). Happiness is obtained through the state of flow, which is achieved when a person can develop and use their skills in a highly challenging and meaningful situation (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). Happiness positively relates to employees' motivation, retention, and trust (Achor, 2010). A leader can boost happiness among their employees by checking on them, providing assistance and benefits, promoting their

development, and creating networking events so that people can bond and create relationships (Achor, 2010).

Emotionally intelligent leaders pursue self-development and the development of others (Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2017, 2019; Goleman et al., 2013). For example, they ask for feedback regularly despite the criticism they receive (Jackman & Strober, 2003). By asking for feedback, they show they are open to improving their relationship with others and learning from their pitfalls. Those leaders also want to develop others by providing assertive and respectful feedback, especially when solicited (Jackman & Strober, 2003), or developing behavior or skills that the team members need (Covey et al., 2022; Druskat & Wolff, 2015).

Authenticity is another characteristic of leaders related to EI that inspires trust (Covey et al., 2022; George et al., 2018). According to George et al. (2018), authentic leaders emerge from their life stories, and because of that, they are passionate about their purpose, practice their values, and lead with their hearts. Those leaders know their authentic selves and values and have a high level of self-awareness, courage, and willingness to be vulnerable and honest about themselves. These characteristics allow them to learn and reframe their behavior when they face hardship (George et al., 2018). Moreover, they are not static but vulnerable, dynamic, and adaptable (George et al., 2018; Seppala, 2018).

Authenticity and vulnerability are part of the psychology of human connection (Seppala, 2018). Being vulnerable in the field of EI is not a sign of weakness but only a choice to be courageous enough to take the risk to expose one's true self, values, and choices and maintain the coherence between what one says and does (Ibarra, 2018; Seppala, 2018). This personal state resonates with the primary definition of trust in this dissertation:

The willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other part. (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 712)

Therefore, being vulnerable and authentic is an act of trust that a leader can perform toward others, which might be reciprocated by their employees (Deutsch, 1960; Rolfe, 2022; Rotter, 1967).

Influence and persuasion are competencies found in the realm of EI (Hill & Lineback, 2018; Morgan, 2018). According to Morgan (2018), emotions, knowledge, positional authority, and nonverbal cues are ways in which leaders exert influence over others. By integrating nonverbal cues, knowledge, and emotions, one might potentially establish a more credible and influential rapport with others compared to relying just on positional authority. For example, suppose a leader has the emotional agility to control their mood and negativity, has deep knowledge about their field, and uses body language and tone of voice that emanates confidence. In that case, they will master the interaction with others (Morgan, 2018).

Trust is foundational in influencing or persuading (Hill & Lineback, 2018). To influence and build trust, leaders use diverse principles such as reciprocity, kindness, generosity, consistent behavior, social proof of their argument, and authority in the subject matter (Cialdini, 2018). Charisma, defined as the capacity to articulate one's vision with clarity and inspiration, in conjunction with the aforementioned criteria, bolsters the process of influence and trust (Antonakis et al., 2018).

Team's Emotional Intelligence and Trust. Group EI supports team trust, which is a condition for teamwork (Lencioni, 2009) and group effectiveness (Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2017, 2019). To develop a group's EI, leaders will first develop their own EI. They

must work inwardly and set an example before moving to the team's development (Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2017, 2019). Only then will leaders work on team EI by setting for group emotional awareness, group regulation (Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2017, 2019), civility (Porath & Pearson, 2013), process fairness (Brockner, 2006), and a positive organizational culture (Barsade & O'Neill, 2017; Schein & Schein, 2017).

A case from Harvard Business Review tells the story of IDEO, one of the world's most innovative organizations, which increased team effectiveness, performance, innovation, and trust through group EI (Druskat & Wolff, 2015). Group EI consists of member's self-management skills and the ability to relate to others (Druskat & Wolff, 2015). The team's effectiveness comes from group EI, which fosters values such as trust, group identity, and a sense of efficacy. Trust among team members emerges through norms of emotional awareness and regulation among them. In other words, those values create the type of environment that invites all members to participate wholeheartedly, to be open with one another, to have the courage to discuss their feelings, to receive and provide feedback, and to solve their own conflicts and evolve from them (Druskat & Wolff, 2015). In such an environment, conflicts are not avoided (Bunker et al., 2002; Lencioni, 2009) but are solved civilly (Porath & Pearson, 2013).

Fostering civility is another characteristic that EI leaders work on to raise the team's morale and build trust (Porath & Pearson, 2013). Civility consists of good behavior, respect, and consideration of others, and it connects to an individual EI. Incivility, in contrast, is being rude and disrespectful or even engaging in abusive action (Keltner, 2017; Porath & Pearson, 2013). This kind of behavior tends to increase with power, creating what Keltner (2017) called the power paradox. This type of behavior has a high cost for people and organizations, tearing off

motivation, engagement, and credibility and deteriorating morale and relationships (Keltner, 2017; Porath & Pearson, 2013).

Leaders intentionally model their behavior to foster civility by reaching for role models, asking for feedback, and tracking their progressions (Keltner, 2017; Porath & Pearson, 2013). Regarding their teams, these leaders prefer to hire for civility or teach civility to the current team. They also create norms conducive to good behavior, reward the ones who follow them, and penalize the ones with bad behavior (Porath & Pearson, 2013). These leaders also practice empathetic concern and show gratitude (Keltner, 2017; Kopans, 2017) and generosity (Keltner, 2017). Those leaders give an example and show respect by putting the employees first (Sinek, 2017). By doing so, they confirm they are consistent with their own words and norms (Covey & Merrill, 2018) and show they care for others (Sinek, 2017; Stickel, 2022).

Process fairness is essential for a culture of trust that supports the organization's strategy and innovations (Brockner, 2006). It relates to integrity, which means being consistent, honest, following the rules, and behaving fairly toward others (Brockner, 2006; Covey et al., 2022). This practice avoids the cost of non-trust, that is, when organizations are sued for wrongdoing by employees and clients or even have their credibility and brand destroyed (Brockner, 2006; Covey & Merrill, 2018). Process fairness happens when leaders do not put money first. Instead, they prioritize dignity and respect (Brockner, 2006; Covey et al., 2022).

According to Brockner (2006), a leader must take several steps to implement a process of fairness. The first is to address organizational communication gaps while aligning expectations. The second is offering purposeful fair-process training that connects with the organization's and employees' needs. Finally, leaders must put fairness first in discourse and behaviors. In other

words, emotionally intelligent, trustworthy leaders walk the talk (Brockner, 2006; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Goleman, 2017, 2019; Sinek, 2017).

Culture refers to group dynamics, which determines how this group learns, survives, and deals with internal and external environmental challenges (Schein & Schein, 2017). A group's culture includes shared perceptions, thoughts, feelings, behaviors, artifacts, values, and norms (Barsade & O'Neill, 2017; Schein & Schein, 2017). According to Barsade and O'Neill (2017), two types of culture exist: emotional culture and cognitive culture. The emotional culture consists of the shared affective ideals, conventions, and assumptions that regulate the emotions and sentiments of individuals. They are usually not written but expressed by individuals' expressions, cues, and behaviors. Conversely, cognitive culture is usually written or formalized and refers to intellectual norms, values, and artifacts that support organizational success (Barsade & O'Neill, 2017).

A positive emotional and cognitive culture allows the team to learn together, ask questions, create bonds, and challenge one another (Goleman, 2019; Schein & Schein, 2017, 2021; Senge, 2006). Leaders can influence a group culture (Schein & Schein, 2017) by focusing on internal relationships and their relationship with the wider world (Goleman, 2019). That happens, for example, when leaders encourage compassionate behavior (Seppala, 2018) and appreciation for others (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Grant, 2014). They increase the team's confidence in the leaders and their peers.

Additionally, when discussing the wider-world focus proposed by Goleman (2019), leaders might consider that they will share strategies in a cross-cultural environment. Being emotionally intelligent and building a positive culture helps leaders navigate across cultures (Molinsky, 2017). Globalization has increased the need for empathy. Leaders should engage in

candid discussions with individuals of diverse cultural heritage (Goleman, 2019; Latif et al., 2021), beliefs, norms, and languages (Borum, 2010; Fukuyama, 1995). Misunderstandings might happen without empathy and cultural intelligence (Goleman, 2019; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). Therefore, leaders need a more substantial body of knowledge, including the cultural differences in cross-cultural teams (Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014).

Cultural Intelligence

Perception of Trust Across Cultures. Trust is a must-have attribute in a globalized and interconnected world, where integrity is the brand organizations and leaders seek to survive in the long run (Crabtree, 2018). Nevertheless, two-thirds of adults believe dishonest behaviors are present in business (Gallup, 2018). According to an annual report about trust published by Gallup, even with low confidence levels, these statistics vary among global regions (Crabtree, 2018; Gallup, 2018). In comparison, developed countries tend to present higher confidence in private organizations and business leaders. In the United States, for example, the trust level is 60%, which is among the highest scores among developed countries. Meanwhile, developing countries present the highest levels of corruption and distrust. For example, most Latin American countries fall over 80% (Crabtree, 2018).

Trust is built in different manners depending on the country or region (Fukuyama, 1995; Kwantes & Kuo, 2021; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). There are distinct national cultures around the world. They are formed around norms, values, religions, languages, family structure, beliefs, artifacts, geography, economics, and other aspects that determine how that region works and how problems are solved between the group members (Borum, 2010; Fukuyama, 1995; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014; Schein & Schein, 2017). People from different cultures also interpret and accept emotions in different ways. For example, while in the United States, it is

acceptable to show enthusiasm on an ordinary workday, in Japan, there are restrictive limits to showing emotions like enthusiasm (Molinsky, 2017).

Due to those differences, people from different national cultures tend to make sense of the world in particular ways (Kwantes & Kuo, 2021; Meyer, 2014). A recent scholarly book on cross-cultural trust and trustworthiness confirmed that trust is understood differently across nationalities (Kwantes & Kuo, 2021). This book comprises research on Brazil, Africa, Taiwan, Iran, the United States of America, Canada, and Japan. It calls attention to the fact that current literature on interpersonal trust has been binary, focused on the American lens, and neglecting intracultural variability. For example, Iran's concept of trust relies on religious principles, and Taiwan's concept is influenced by Confucianism, both divergent from the previously studied theories of trust (Kwantes & Kuo, 2021).

Meyer (2014) pointed out that even though the national culture offers an idea of how people in that region make decisions, personality within a specific cultural bucket impacts their choice. The leadership approach to multinational teams includes understanding the dimensionality of their cultures (House et al., 2004) and acquiring cross-culture competencies (Bird, 2018; Meyer, 2014) to build a leader's cultural intelligence (Livermore, 2015). Nonetheless, it also requires comprehending the dimensions intrinsic to the individual personality (Meyer, 2014), such as those appraised in the subsections about trust theories and EI.

One of the most comprehensive and recognized studies on national culture dimensionalities is the GLOBE Project (House et al., 2004). It examines the interconnections between organizational leadership, societal effectiveness, and societal culture (GLOBE Project, 2020). These authors found nine dimensions in which individuals tend to be rewarded or not for their behavior. Interestingly, those dimensions resonate with the strategies to build trust, as

appraised in the literature on trust and EI. However, these dimensions are analyzed considering cross-cultural sensitivity, which means that the behavior in each dimension may vary, requiring leaders to adapt their leadership styles (Borum, 2010; House et al., 2004).

The dimensions that are perceived differently around the globe are (a) performance orientation, which refers to the group competencies and excellence; (b) level of assertiveness in their relationships, which means the type of approach in the interaction from aggressiveness to assertiveness; (c) future orientation, that is related to how that group plan for future realizations, (d) humane orientation, which relates to being fair, kind, altruistic and benevolent toward others, (e) institutional collectivism, which refers to the distribution of resources and actions, (f) in-group collectivism pertains to the sense of loyalty and unity that individuals feel toward their groups and families, (g) endorsement of gender egalitarianism, (h) power distance, which means how the group see structure, hierarchy and power distribution, and, (i) uncertainty avoidance, which relates to the group aversion to risk and normless (House et al., 2004).

Different leadership approaches might occur depending on the national culture dimension: charismatic, team-oriented, humane-oriented, participative, autonomous, or self-protective (House et al., 2004). To define the best approach to leadership and build trust with multinational teams, cultural intelligence strategies, which include comprehending the scales underlying each culture, are recommended (House et al., 2004; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014; Molinsky, 2017). According to Livermore (2015), the capacity to work well within national, ethnic, and organizational cultures is known as cultural intelligence. It facilitates effective communication and understanding of individual's perspectives, behaviors, manners, and expectations from diverse origins.

Cultural Leadership and Trust. To become culturally intelligent and work well across multinational teams, leaders must have the will to be proficient in other cultures (Livermore, 2015). Livermore (2015) recommended that those leaders cultivate an open mindset, acquire knowledge about similarities and differences between national cultures, understand the strategies to build relationships with people who are different from their national culture, and be proactive in building those relationships (Livermore, 2015). It is a work that goes from self-development to wider-world relationship development. The development stages of culturally intelligent leadership relate to the five waves of trust (Covey et al., 2022) and the three focuses of an emotionally intelligent leader (Goleman, 2019), as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Emotionally Intelligent, Trust & Inspire, and Culturally Intelligent Leaders

Trust & Inspire Leader (Covey et al., 2022)	Emotionally Intelligent Leader (Goleman, 2019)	Culturally Intelligent Leader (Bird & Stevens, 2018; Livermore, 2015)
1 st Wave: Self-trust	Focus on themselves	The internal motivation to be proficient in other cultures with an open mind
2 nd Wave: Relationship Trust 3 rd Wave: Organizational Trust	Focus on others	Knowledge about similarities and differences between national cultures and the competencies to manage people and build relationships
4 th Wave: Market Trust 5 th Wave: Societal Trust	Focus on a Wider World	Strategies and Actions to build relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds

Note. This table is a comparative analysis based on the literature of Covey et al. (2022), Goleman (2019), and Livermore (2015).

Cultural intelligence is built upon other types of intelligence, such as motivational, behavioral, cognitive, and metacognitive (Bird & Stevens, 2018; Earley & Ang, 2003). Bird and Stevens (2018) explained that when leaders are curious and self-motivated to seek knowledge about other cultures, they use both motivational and cognitive intelligence. When they move

forward, make sense of the acquired cultural knowledge, and put it into action, they use metacognitive and behavioral intelligence. Such a combination of intelligence elements allows leaders to be influential in cross-cultural environments (Livermore, 2015).

Several studies assess the competencies of effective global leadership in distinct domains (Bird, 2018; Bird & Stevens, 2018; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). However, from the appraised literature, this dissertation author could not find the exact competencies or practices leaders use to build trust with teams in multinational organizations. Only a few exceptions were found to identify practices to build trust in cross-cultural groups (Borum, 2010; Latif et al., 2021; Meyer, 2014; Pornpitakpan, 2003). Even those studies are limited to analyzing binary scales or the community relationship between two nationalities. To address that issue, this subsection of the literature review focuses on best practices related to effective relationship competencies utilized in the domain of global leadership. That focus was given because trust is a behavior that underpins effective human relations and social exchange (Mayer et al., 1995).

Global Leadership Competencies to Effective Relationships. A comprehensive meta-analysis of articles, journals, and books published for 23 years displays over 200 competencies connected to global leadership (Bird, 2018). From that analysis, a particular set of competencies is vital for the analysis of trust-building in multinational teams: the global leadership competencies for managing people and relationships, which refers to how a global leader interacts with others directly (Bird, 2018). The author highlighted five groups of competencies: (a) interpersonal skills, (b) cross-cultural communication, (c) valuing people, (d) empowering others, and (e) teaming skills (Bird, 2018).

According to Bird (2018), interpersonal skills are a primary group of leadership competencies, including cognitive and behavioral intelligence. Some new competencies in Bird's

(2018) analysis differ from the previous analysis on trust theories and EI. They are social flexibility, sensitivity, intercultural sensitivity, intercultural relationships, conflict management, and diplomacy (Bird, 2018). Interestingly, Bird (2018) classifies instilling trust as an interpersonal skill of effective global leaders.

Cross-cultural communication is the second most prominent group of leader competencies (Bird, 2018). This group of competencies includes knowing another language, cross-cultural communication, understanding cross-cultural aspects and diversity, the experience of working with or leading people from different nationalities, and cultural self-awareness (Bird, 2018).

The last three compounds of competencies – valuing people, empowering others, and teaming skills – might be used as complementary competencies. According to Bird (2018), valuing people refers to how a leader treats other individuals, respecting, understanding, and orienting them. Empowering refers to the leader's ability to elevate another individual's engagement and sense of self-efficacy. Those characteristics are similar to the ones assessed by trust and inspire leaders (Covey et al., 2022) and emotionally intelligent leaders (Goleman, 2019). Lastly, teaming skills relate to building, leading, and collaborating in intercultural teams. New competencies included in those groups are cultural awareness, cultural acumen, inclusiveness, and multicultural teaming (Bird, 2018). Interestingly, Bird's (2018) analysis suggests that creating and building trust is under the umbrella of valuing people.

Cultural Map and the Trust Scale. One of the cross-national cultural scales proposed by Meyer (2014) is trust. The author suggests that trust builds in two ways: based on a task or based on a relationship. When a national culture is more task-oriented, competence is the foundation of trust. People trust someone if they are qualified to accomplish the work.

Relationships at work are readily formed and broken. When a national culture is relationship-based, people need to know one another, eat together, and go out to dinners, all contribute to the development of trust. They have faith in the other person's capabilities due to the bonds they create. For example, the United States would be more task-oriented than most Middle Eastern countries (Meyer, 2014). Additionally, demographic similarities are a positive factor in trust in established relationships between leaders and employees (Nienaber et al., 2015).

Cases of Trust-Building Between Multinational Groups. Although this dissertation author did not find studies highlighting the practices to build trust in multinational organizations, two cases of trust between different cultures stood out while appraising the literature because they corroborate some competencies highlighted by Bird (2018). The first is a study that analyses the effect of cultural adaptation on trust-building for expatriates from America and China (Pornpitakpan, 2003). Pornpitakpan (2003) found that when people do not seek language adaptation, the individuals are rated lower in interpersonal trust. This case supports the use of cross-cultural communication (Bird, 2018) to increase the perception of interpersonal trust in a bi-cultural environment.

The second study analyzes the process of recovering trust between Muslims and the broader community in the United Kingdom (Latif et al., 2021). Latif et al. (2021) found that the increase in perceived trustworthiness between Muslims and the wider community was influenced by the opportunity to have an open dialogue. This opportunity allowed them to share their stories and experiences, recognize mutual values, and redefine previous negative stereotypes (Latif et al., 2021). This case demonstrates the use of interpersonal skills, cultural awareness, cross-cultural communication (Bird, 2018), and similarities (DeSteno, 2014; Rheu et al., 2021) to recover trust among the intergroup members.

Leadership Strategies and Practices for Trust-Building

Dr. Zak (2017), a professor of economics, psychology, and management at Claremont Graduate School, discovered that trust had a favorable influence on businesses and professionals. The positive effects were as follows: 76% more engagement, 50% more productivity, 29% more life satisfaction, and 40% less burnout. Based on recent organizational neuroscience discoveries, Zak (2017) disclosed that oxytocin, a hormone released by the brain, relates to the level of sociability and trust. This hormone lessens the anxiety of trusting a stranger and enhances empathy, both of which are necessary for relationship building. He also explains that leaders can use leadership practices to help promote oxytocin in the employee's system and trigger their willingness to trust.

Based on the literature appraised in the previous subsections about trust, EI, and cultural intelligence, several compounded competencies support leaders' advancement of trust-building. Those competencies fall into 15 proposed themes illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3

Thematic Analysis of Competencies to Build Trust

Thematic Analysis	Compounded Competencies from the Literature	Literature Lenses		
		Trust Theory	Emotional Intelligence	Cultural Intelligence
Results	Ability/Competence/Accountability/Performance/Positiveness	X	X	X
Knowledge	Expertise/Knowledge/Logic/Experiences/Self-development	X	X	X
Benevolence	Benevolence/Valuing People/Compassion/Civility/Respect/Warmth/Appreciation	X	X	X

Thematic Analysis	Compounded Competencies from the Literature	Literature Lenses		
		Trust Theory	Emotional Intelligence	Cultural Intelligence
Integrity	Integrity/Process Fairness/Transparency/Honesty/ Consistency/Reveal Intentions	X	X	X
Authenticity	Authenticity/Vulnerability/Courage	X	X	
Humility	Humility/Being Humble/Suspend judgments/Absence of pride	X	X	
Emotional Readiness	Resilience/Emotional Agility/Self- Motivation/Self-Awareness/Self- Regulation	X	X	X
Social Intelligence	Empathy/Empathic Concerns/Caring for others/Social Skills/Interpersonal Skills/Human Orientation/Positive Relationship/Active Listening	X	X	X
Effective Communication	Effective Communication/Clarifying Expectations/Cross-Culture Communication/Communication Strategies	X	X	X
Influence Power	Influence/Persuasion/Authority/ Position of Power/Common Ground/Common Acquainted	X	X	
People Development	People Development/Mentoring/ Recognition/Providing Resources/Autonomy/Reciprocity	X	X	
Team Development	Teaming Skills/Group Awareness/Group Regulation/Group Regulation/Team motivation/Teamwork/Conflict resolution	X	X	X

Thematic Analysis	Compounded Competencies from the Literature	Literature Lenses		
		Trust Theory	Emotional Intelligence	Cultural Intelligence
Cultural Sensitivity	Cultural Awareness/Cultural Sensitivity/Cultural Intelligence/System of Awareness		X	X
Cultural Inclusiveness	Positive Culture/Emotional and Cognitive Cultures/Belonginess/Empowering others/Equitable Conditions	X	X	X
Plasticity	Open mindset/Context Understanding/Context Adaptation/Leadership Modeling	X	X	X

Note. This table summarizes the main compounded competencies of trust, EI, and cultural intelligence, as presented in the literature.

As trust is a complex and multidimensional variable (Kee & Knox, 1970), isolating competencies used to build trust is challenging. Therefore, the researcher acknowledges that those themes are interdependent. That means the explanations and additional examples provided might relate to and or benefit other themes. For example, the ability to create results might depend on specific knowledge or emotional readiness in some situations. Moreover, the thematic analysis might have been influenced by personal biases, as explained in Chapter 1.

Additional examples of practices pulled from current literature support the explanation of the initial 15 suggested themes.

Results. Results refer to the consequences, outcomes, resultants, or effects that are traceable to a cause (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). This theme refers to the leader’s capacity to deliver results and combines competencies such as ability, competence, accountability (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022), performance (Covey et al., 2022; Hurley, 2006; O’Hara, 2014), and positiveness (Achor, 2010). Leaders who demonstrate competence by

delivering the promised results and achieving expectations increase their perceived trustworthiness (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Lewis, 1999; Rolfe, 2022; Rotter, 1967).

An additional illustration of results-oriented leadership is the capacity to coordinate the obligations of personnel and provide a structured framework of procedures (G. Brown, 2021; Schneider Demaría, 2022; Soderberg & Romney, 2022), dedication to creating the expected results along with the team members (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Lewis, 1999), and envision future perspectives so that followers will understand the expected outcomes (Covey et al., 2022; House et al., 2004; Kosonen & Ikonen, 2022). These leaders monitor how they are doing by keeping track of the results according to the resources and time available (Covey et al., 2022; Kosonen & Ikonen, 2022). Therefore, they hold themselves accountable for the results, good and bad, assuming the consequences and not blaming others (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018). These leaders use good judgments, ideas, and reasoning to make decisions or solve problems, which increases confidence in their capabilities (Frei & Morriss, 2020; Zenger & Folkman, 2019).

They also tend to display low dependency on others, confirming their autonomy to get the results (Rotter, 1967). This theme is interdependent with other leader's compounded competencies, such as knowledge, emotional readiness, social intelligence, effective communication, culture, and plasticity.

Knowledge. People acquire knowledge through a learning process involving studying and living (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). This theme includes competencies such as knowledge, expertise, logic, and experiences (Bird, 2018; Covey et al., 2022; Kosonen & Ikonen, 2022; Lewis, 1999; Rotter, 1967; Zenger & Folkman, 2019). Leaders who are knowledgeable in the

field or industry are considered more trustworthy (Covey et al., 2022; Kosonen & Ikonen, 2022; Lewis, 1999; Zenger & Folkman, 2019). Additional examples of knowledge-oriented leadership practices are investing in developing their traits (Kerfoot, 1998), learning through their lived experiences to build up their expertise (Rotter, 1967), asking for feedback and advice from multiple individuals (Jackman & Strober, 2003; Joni, 2004), and learning about other cultures, norms, and languages when immersed in a multinational environment (Bird, 2018; Livermore, 2015). The cultivated knowledge collaborates with leaders' good judgments, ideas, and reasoning to make decisions or solve problems, which increases confidence in their capabilities (Frei & Morriss, 2020; Zenger & Folkman, 2019).

When leaders assess themselves, they understand areas they need to expand their knowledge to produce the expected results (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018) or enhance relationships (Goleman, 2019). Knowledge is not static, and a leader's self-assessment triggers their continuous self-improvement. Knowledge is interdependent with other themes, such as emotional readiness, social intelligence, and cultural sensitivity. It also helps to create results.

Benevolence. It refers to the disposition to do good (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), and sometimes, benevolence and respect are semantically related (Thesaurus.Plus, n.d.). This theme combines attributes such as benevolence (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022), valuing people (Bird, 2018), compassion (Seppala, 2018; Soderberg & Romney, 2022), respect, civility (Keltner, 2017; Ohemeng et al., 2020; Porath & Pearson, 2013), warmth (Cuddy et al., 2013), and appreciation (Okello & Gilson, 2015).

Benevolent leadership practices examples entail authentic and proactive compassion (Seppala, 2018; Soderberg & Romney, 2022), genuine appreciation of others' work and values

(Cooperrider et al., 2008; Grant, 2014), consideration for others (Covey & Merrill, 2018), kindness, and politeness (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Lewis, 1999; Soderberg & Romney, 2022). Benevolent leaders respect people for who they are (Ohemeng et al., 2020) and treat them with civility (Keltner, 2017; Porath & Pearson, 2013), being cognizant of other's dignity (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Lewis, 1999). They apply the principle of helpfulness, which is manifested in a leader's desire and willingness to help without hidden agendas (Covey et al., 2022; Lewis, 1999). They speak about others fondly in their absence and never badmouth people (Covey & Merrill, 2018) or engage in gossip (Soderberg & Romney, 2022). These leaders avoid coercive approaches (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019), threats, and punishment, which diminish the intrinsic motivation to be truthful, making the employees less likely to take risks to support the leader (DeSteno, 2014).

Benevolence is a positive leadership characteristic in other trust models (Hurley, 2006; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). As this theme displays a human orientation, it is interdependent on other themes related to EI (Goleman, 2019), such as emotional readiness, social intelligence, people development, and team development.

Integrity. It relates to the standard norms of right or wrong (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). This theme is a composite of attributes such as integrity (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022), process fairness (Brockner, 2006), transparency (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Rolfe, 2022), honesty (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Soderberg & Romney, 2022; Stickel, 2022), and consistency (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Hill & Lineback, 2012c; Zenger & Folkman, 2019).

Additional examples of integrity-based leadership practices are being congruent between speech and actions (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Rolfe, 2022; Soderberg & Romney, 2022),

promotion of openness and transparency by being honest in relation to information and intentions (G. Brown, 2021; Herrera & Kydd, 2022; Lewis, 1999; Radu, 2022; Rheu et al., 2021; Rice et al., 2021; Schneider Demaría, 2022; Zhao & Tan-Mullins, 2021), and allowing people to verify facts (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Crabtree, 2018; George et al., 2018; Rolfe, 2022). Leaders build their credibility (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Ohemeng et al., 2020) and do not betray others because it erodes their credibility (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Schneider Demaría, 2022; Zhao & Tan-Mullins, 2021). They comply with the rules, procedures, and standards, have a good character, do the right things (Covey & Merrill, 2018), and promote process fairness (Brockner, 2006). They keep their word and promises (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Rolfe, 2022; Rotter, 1967) and demonstrate loyalty and fidelity toward others (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Rotter, 1967).

Leaders who live by the principle of integrity admit their mistakes, apologize for them, and, when possible, correct them (Covey & Merrill, 2018). They demonstrate readiness to address social issues, especially against minority groups, and invest in workplace ethics (Crabtree, 2018). Living by integrity beliefs also requires leaders' moral courage to stand up for their values and beliefs no matter how hard it is (Covey & Merrill, 2018). This theme is also shown as a positive leadership characteristic in other models of trust (Hurley, 2006; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022).

Authenticity. It is about being true, accepted, and believed (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). This theme is a composite of authenticity, vulnerability, and courage. Despite the working conditions, being authentic and genuine tends to elevate leader-follower trust (Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2020; Kleynhans et al., 2021b). Authentic leaders show their real selves (Frei & Morriss, 2020), so they cultivate self-awareness and an internalized moral worldview (Kleynhans et al., 2021b), all characteristics related to EI skills (Goleman, 2019). They are devoted to their

purpose and values and lead with both emotion and rationality (Covey et al., 2022; George et al., 2018). Authentic leaders are whole, integrating mind, heart, and soul (Covey et al., 2022) and balancing family, work, community, and friends (George et al., 2018). Those leaders are authentic as a consequence of their life story (George et al., 2018).

Authenticity comes with vulnerability (B. Brown, 2018) because their authentic selves make them truthful and courageous to be vulnerable and open up about who they are. Moreover, because of that, they become more humane (George et al., 2018) and connect with people in a more loving way (B. Brown, 2018). Authentic leaders balance intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (George et al., 2018). The first comes from leaders' values and sense of fulfillment. The second comes from their relationships and the need for external endorsement of their attainments (George et al., 2018). Authentic leaders build a support team in which they confide in good and bad times.

Humility. Humility happens when a person is not arrogant (Merriam-Webster, n.d.) and does not let pride get in the way (Covey & Merrill, 2018). This theme includes characteristics such as humility (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Schein & Schein, 2021; Soderberg & Romney, 2022), ask feedback, and suspending judgment (Schein & Schein, 2021). Examples of humble leadership practices are choosing to do the right thing as opposed to being right, working on excellent ideas rather than owning them, accepting the truth rather than maintaining old viewpoints, developing steam rather than exalting the self, and recognizing contribution rather than being acknowledged (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Schein & Schein, 2021; Soderberg & Romney, 2022).

Humble leaders suspend judgment (Schein & Schein, 2021) and ask questions that encourage candor and challenge assumptions (Rice et al., 2021; Schein & Schein, 2021;

Schneider Demaría, 2022; Soderberg & Romney, 2022). They express gratitude, which is known for increasing the perception of trust in a relationship (Keltner, 2017; Kopans, 2017). This theme influences leaders' self-improvement because, to be a lifelong learner, leaders seek feedback and help in a humble and vulnerable way (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Maxwell, 2015), which boosts the human nature of cooperation (Zak, 2017).

Emotional Readiness. Emotional readiness is about an individual understanding their emotions in different environments, their actions and reactions to stressful environments, and the ability to control and change their emotions (Eddinger, 2024). Emotional readiness encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation (Eddinger, 2024; Goleman, 2019), self-motivation (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Goleman, 2019), resilience (Coutu, 2002; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Goleman, 2017; Kopans, 2017), and emotional agility (David & Congleton, 2013).

Examples of leadership practices based on emotional readiness include establishing a feedback system to contribute to continuous improvement in emotional control (Covey & Merrill, 2018), self-reflection on leaders' emotions and sense of self-worth (Goleman, 2019), analysis of internal motivations to recognize and adjust possible unconscious biases (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Goleman, 2019). As part of self-regulation, these leaders display honesty, integrity, and conscientiousness about their emotions and responsibilities (Goleman, 2019).

Additionally, those leaders confront reality despite its toughness (Covey & Merrill, 2018) and adapt their leadership, being more resilient and taking action faster, envisioning the common good in times of crisis (Radu, 2022). Radu (2022) found that, in a situation like COVID-19, when there is no clarity of information, those leaders might exercise a higher level of control and emotional regulation to avoid generalized panic and distrust. However, this practice must be further analyzed to confirm its effectiveness in other situations (Radu, 2022). Finally, those

leaders develop emotional agility so that they have an internal mindset to cope with negative thoughts and feelings mindfully and productively (David & Congleton, 2013). Leaders who control their emotions are considered more predictable and reliable (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019).

Social Intelligence. Social Intelligence is the ability of a person to comprehend oneself in relation to others and to construct connections using specific competencies (Goleman, 2007). This theme includes attributes such as empathy, empathic concern, social skills (Goleman, 2019), caring for others (Covey et al., 2022), interpersonal skills (Bird, 2018), human orientation (House et al., 2004), and positive relationships (Zenger & Folkman, 2019). Examples of socially intelligent leadership practices include the leader's ability to read other's emotions and the overall state of the organizational structure, politics, and decisions (Goleman, 2019), readiness to create human bonds with employees, motivate them, and make them feel worthy (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019; Kramer, 2009; Zak, 2017), and invest time to stimulate intentional relationships with and among team members (Zak, 2017).

Socially intelligent leaders show empathetic concern by listening actively, understanding perspectives, and providing necessary support when possible (Frei & Morriss, 2020; Goleman, 2019; Zak, 2017). These leaders also demonstrate interpersonal and social skills by being open (Covey & Merrill, 2018), available (Kerfoot, 1998; O'Hara, 2014), and accessible (Kerfoot, 1998). They welcome diversity, ponder the facts, and might change their position when it is the right thing to do (Covey & Merrill, 2018). When leaders change positions, it is because they increase social awareness (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Leaders' friendship, sense of humor, and popularity are characteristics of positive relationships and correlate to trust-building (Rotter, 1967).

Socially intelligent leaders employ socio-emotional dialogue and empathetic expressions (Rheu et al., 2021). Finally, they create positive relationships with employees in a way that makes them feel whole and respected (Covey et al., 2022; Zenger & Folkman, 2019). This theme depends on other's competencies, such as humility, communication, and emotional readiness. Additionally, it influences other competencies, such as results, group development, and culture.

Effective Communication. Effective communication is a set of competencies related to exchanging information and building rapport (Merriam-Webster, n.d.) effectively so that the communicator and the receiver will understand the purpose of the message (Jolaoso & Main, 2023). This theme includes competencies such as communication, clarifying expectations (Covey et al., 2022; Short, 2014), cross-culture communication (Bird, 2018), and communication strategies to increase trust (G. Brown, 2021). According to Zak (2017), leaders should make information flow broadly, boldly, and transparently, making employees feel they belong to the group. Communication is central to fostering social relationships and bonds and, consequently, building trust (Rice et al., 2021). Leaders can cultivate trust by practicing humble, authentic, and proactive communication (Kerfoot, 1998; Schein & Schein, 2021; Soderberg & Romney, 2022).

Examples of effective leadership communication include consistency of communication strategies (G. Brown, 2021) and inclusive speech—substituting the pronoun “I” for “we” (Kosonen & Ikonen, 2022; Schneider Demaría, 2022). They also include open, transparent, and honest communication of facts (Deutsch, 1958; Kopans, 2017; Lewis, 1999; Rice et al., 2021; Rotter, 1967; Soderberg & Romney, 2022; Zak, 2017), responsibilities, intent, and purpose that are involved in that relationship (Deutsch, 1958; Schein & Schein, 2021; Soderberg & Romney, 2022), as well as expectations (Covey et al., 2022). Leaders should never manipulate or falsify

information (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Instead, leaders should disclose appropriate, relevant, accurate, timely, and thorough information that helps solve real problems (Zand, 1972).

Communication is also central to building trust in times of crisis. For example, a qualitative study of 57 peacebuilders from Northern Ireland found that communication strategies are critical for establishing or restoring trust between individuals, groups, or organizations (Rice et al., 2021). Such communication practices include (a) preparing by discussing expectations in advance, (b) assisting the parties in finding commonality, (c) actively listening to strengthen further dialogue and reflection, (d) openness manifested by establishing broad parameters and a non-judgmental approach, (e) commitment to mutual understanding, (f) challenging assumptions, and (g) using persuasion when there is already some level of trust.

Communication leverages other thematic competencies, such as results, social intelligence, influence, people, and team development.

Influence Power. It refers to the capacity to direct other's thoughts and behavior (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). This theme compounds attributes such as influence (Hill & Lineback, 2018), persuasion (Rice et al., 2021), authority (Kruglanski, 1970; Rotter, 1967), charisma (Antonakis et al., 2018), common ground (O'Hara, 2014; Rice et al., 2021), and common acquainted (Deutsch, 1958). There is a correlation between individual influence and trust (Deutsch, 1958; Rotter, 1967). The power of influence happens when leaders can intentionally influence the expected outcomes and their perception of trustworthiness (Deutsch, 1958; Rotter, 1967). A leader might use positional power, expertise, emotion, and verbal and nonverbal communication to influence others and increase their perceived trustworthiness (Morgan, 2018). Positional power or authority over another individual works when there is no coercion (Kruglanski, 1970) and must be sparingly used (Morgan, 2018).

In times of crisis or conflict, the use of persuasion impacts the perception of trustworthiness (Rice et al., 2021). That happens when each individual has the opportunity to signal—or communicate—their intents, allowing another individual to gain the knowledge necessary for conflict resolution in an honest way (Zhao & Tan-Mullins, 2021). This process facilitates reaching common ground, increasing the level of trust (Rice et al., 2021). This theme depends on the leader's ability to communicate, knowledge, and emotional readiness.

People Development. Leaders increase their perceived trustworthiness by investing in and facilitating other's development and growth (Covey et al., 2022; Kerfoot, 1998; Soderberg & Romney, 2022; Zak, 2017). Such investment includes practices such as providing positive and negative feedback so that others can evolve professionally and personally (Soderberg & Romney, 2022), providing difficult but achievable challenges (Zak, 2017), giving employees autonomy to decide how to work (Zak, 2017), providing resources, and recognizing individual achievements (Covey et al., 2022; Zak, 2017). The principle of reciprocity applies to people's development. By having faith in the worker's job performance, the leaders are likely to earn the employee's trust as well. Several studies showed that when people trust others, they tend to be considered more trustworthy (Deutsch, 1960; Rolfe, 2022; Rotter, 1967).

Leaders might also develop individuals through mentoring (Rolfe, 2022). Building trust is essential in the mentoring process (Maxwell, 2015; Rolfe, 2022). In that process, the mentor and mentee create the trust zone, that is, the conditions that allow someone to trust another person (Rolfe, 2022). Additionally, the emotional dimension of building trust also includes having the sensibility to anticipate someone else's emotions and needs, as well as the ability to give another person encouragement through gestures, such as a firm handshake or verbal acknowledgment and appreciation (Cuddy et al., 2013; Maxwell, 2015).

People development and team development relate to competencies of benevolence and social intelligence, previously discussed, because when leaders develop a person or a team, they show they care for those individuals and want them to grow (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019). Lastly, additional EI practices include developing others and teamwork (Goleman, 2019).

Team Development. This competency composite includes teaming skills (Bird, 2018), group EI, group awareness, group regulation (Druskat & Wolff, 2015), conflict resolution (Porath & Pearson, 2013), team development (Lencioni, 2009), teamwork (Okello & Gilson), and team motivation (Druskat & Wolff, 2015; Goleman, 2019). The literature proposes several practices to develop a team that increases the perception of trust. For example, when leaders take time to perform a positive observation of how others behave in the group and create in-group attachment (Herrera & Kydd, 2022; Schneider Demaría, 2022), provide purpose (Crabtree, 2018; Zak, 2017), disclose expectations (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Short, 2014), and debate those expectations with the role team until there are no more uncertainties about them (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Another practice known for increasing trust is taking time to teach or co-orient so that they can grow together (Rice et al., 2021; Soderberg & Romney, 2022). It is also essential for leaders to acknowledge and praise employees' accomplishments publicly to boost overall motivation (G. Brown, 2021).

Additionally, leaders might apply the principle of mutuality, allowing team members to significantly impact goal setting, strategy development, and assessment of their success (Rolfe, 2022; Zand, 1972). They do so by engaging in conversations with individuals to understand their perspectives and make them feel they belong (Francis-Winters, 2017; Rice et al., 2021). Including other's opinions makes people feel included and safe (Francis-Winters, 2017). Thus, they are also more willing to receive the leader's influence and trust them (Radu, 2022). In

normal times, leaders tend to involve the team in decision-making, using a more decentralized and democratic approach (Radu, 2022).

Similar to what happens in people development, leaders challenge the team to pursue their best (Covey et al., 2022; Zak, 2017), foster a caring orientation among team members, support positive regard, appreciation, respect, validation, and compassion among the team members (Druskat & Wolff, 2015). They tend to avoid command and control leadership and leave tasks, activities, and certain levels of decision-making to the team, reinforcing autonomy and trust (Covey et al., 2022).

Culture Sensitivity. This theme refers to being aware of cultural similarities and differences (Bird, 2018). This theme includes cultural awareness and sensitivity (Bird, 2018; Kwantes & Kuo, 2021; Schein & Schein, 2017), cultural intelligence (Livermore, 2015), and a system of awareness (Goleman, 2019; Schein & Schein, 2017). To build relationships and trust with people from different nationalities, leaders must be cognizant of their norms, cultural aspects, language, voice, religion, artifacts, and other aspects (Fukuyama, 1995; Kwantes & Kuo, 2021; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). Leaders with high cultural awareness and sensitivity understand that they live in a globalized world, and in such an environment, commitment means different things to different cultures (Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). Therefore, they do not assume people will understand them right away; they seek to understand others, be understood, and commit to them (Covey & Merrill, 2018). All cross-cultural competencies and practices previously recommended by Bird (2018) and Livermore (2015) apply to this theme.

Additionally, when an individual finds a commonality or similarity with another person, their perception of trustworthiness intensifies (DeSteno, 2014; Rheu et al., 2021). That happens, for example, when people hear similar accents (Rheu et al., 2021). By finding and emphasizing

that similarity, leaders boost the probability that a mutually beneficial, long-lasting connection will form (DeSteno, 2014).

Cultural Inclusiveness. This theme refers to the ability of a leader to create or support a culture that welcomes differences (Francis-Winters, 2017). This competency composite includes the ability of a leader to create a positive culture, emotional and cognitive cultures (Barsade & O'Neill, 2017; Schein & Schein, 2017), a culture of belongingness (Covey et al., 2022), empowering others (Bird, 2018; Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2020; George et al., 2018), and enforcing equitable compensations (Melohn, 1983). Leaders inspire by empowering personnel at all levels (Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2020; George et al., 2018). Culture is the product of collective learning (Schein & Schein, 2017). Therefore, it stands on the contribution of other compounded competencies such as people development, team development, social intelligence, and culture sensitivity. They all create opportunities for the leader and their team members to learn and grow together. Any group or team may have its own culture, beliefs, norms, and artifacts that influence its relationship, trust level, and prosperity (Covey et al., 2022; Fukuyama, 1995; Schein & Schein, 2017).

Plasticity. It refers to one's ability to be modeled or altered (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). This theme is a composite of competencies that involve having an open mindset (Livermore, 2015), being capable of context recognition and adaptation (Hill & Lineback, 2012a; Stickel, 2022), and leadership adaptability (Asencio, 2022; Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019). From the theories of trust to EI to cultural intelligence, several authors mention the importance of leaders adapting to increase their trustworthiness perception, get expected results, and build relationships (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019; Stickel, 2022).

In the model of trust proposed by Stickel (2022), the author states that context and uncertainties influence the perception of trust. Covey et al. (2022) suggested that to inspire trust, leaders should model themselves. Goleman (2019) suggested that emotionally intelligent leaders adapt their leadership style according to situational needs. Short (2014) made the same suggestion in a study that found that adopting a more empathetic and less authoritative leadership style in virtual teams increases the perception of trust. Finally, for leaders of cross-national individuals, learning and adapting their style is paramount to effectively connecting with other nationalities (Kwantes & Kuo, 2021; Livermore, 2015). For that, there are several competencies (Bird, 2018), map scales (Meyer, 2014), and adapted global leadership styles (House et al., 2004) that might support leaders in building relations and elevating their perception of trust. This last competency influences all other themes proposed from the literature appraisal.

Challenges to Building Trust

The literature appraisal demonstrated several challenges leaders face while trying to build trust. Those challenges fall into 15 themes. Different forces and actors may impose the challenges. To provide clarity on the challenges to building trust, those themes separated them from referential origins: (a) inside the organizations, (b) outside the organization, and (c) personal.

Outside the Organizations

Factors that go beyond organizational and personal boundaries influence the willingness to trust. Uncertainties, public scandals, corruption, and technological advances increase suspicion about people's intentions and what may happen in the future. This subsection explains these challenges in detail.

External Uncertainties. It happens when people are not sure about someone or something. It relates to doubt, suspicion, and skepticism (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Uncertainty is an element of the models of trust proposed by Stickel (2022) and Mayer et al. (1995) that influences a person's choice to trust. According to Stickel (2022), the rapid pace of change combined with uncertain events from 2020—an example is the pandemic—increased the unpredictability of expected outcomes. Therefore, it imposed a new challenge for leaders to build trust. The challenge is to continuously adapt their leadership practices to promote and maintain trust (Stickel, 2022). Inside the organizational boundaries, problems involving structure, power paradox, culture distortion, and lack of communication cause uncertainties. Therefore, in this dissertation, these organizational challenges are kept separate and explained later in this chapter.

Past Public Scandals. A study from Harvard Business Review (Kramer, 2009) showed a series of events that harmed public trust in business. Events from the Great Depression of 1930 to the financial bubble in 2008–2009 made people doubt businesses' good intentions (Kramer, 2009). People tend to engage too quickly in cycles of trust and distrust based on historical financial and business scandals. The leadership challenge relies on how to break those cycles.

Corruption Perception. From a moral perspective, corruption refers to dishonest and illegal behaviors, especially from people in power, and offensive conduct to society (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The corruption perception index (CPI) assesses the level of corruption in 180 countries (Transparency International, 2023). The CPI 2022 report shows that the overall CPI score is 43 on a scale from 0 to 100 and highlights that leaders are failing to combat corruption. The problems contributing to a low overall score include coercive influence on decision-making, insufficient implementation of integrity protections, threats to the rule of law, risks to human rights, dangers to democracy, and abuse of power (Transparency International, 2023). Although

the index varies among countries, two-thirds are under 50, suggesting a global crisis of corruption (Transparency International, 2023). This crisis and the global cycle of distrust are connected (Edelman, 2023; Gallup, 2018). To increase the complexity of this issue, perceptions of trust and distrust differ across countries (Borum, 2010). Therefore, the leadership challenge is to fight corruption (Transparency International, 2023) while being cognizant and sensitive to cultural differences in multinational teams (Borum, 2010; Fukuyama, 1995; Livermore, 2015).

Technology Advances. Technological advances have increased the agility with which things happen and the speed of disseminating information (Crabtree, 2018). People cannot keep up with new technologies and do not feel secure about how data manipulation, raising the risk of ethical concerns and decreasing trust (Crabtree, 2018). A study from Gallup challenges global leaders to (a) establish ethical standards as a brand and implement the idea that everyone is in ethics; (b) be prepared to work ethically even with the agile approach; and (c) properly use technology without invading employee's or other's privacy.

Inside the Organizations

The employees can see the organizational and leader's pitfalls, affecting their decision to trust the leader (Galford & Drapeau, 2003). Organizational challenges and pitfalls that decrease the perception of trust include distinct stakeholders' interests, cultural distortion, misleading communication, poor underperformance, dilemmas about the best leadership approach, power paradox, and distance. This subsection explains these challenges in detail.

Stakeholders Interests. Stickel (2022) explained that corporate leaders have many stakeholders, such as employees, shareholders, board members, customers, and society. Everyone on that list has their own values, interests, and expectancies regarding what the leader should deliver. While shareholders might be expecting a certain percentage of return on

investment (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Stickel, 2022), employees might be expecting fair compensation, opportunities to grow, and others (Melohn, 1983; Rolfe, 2022; Zak, 2017). Pondering and fulfilling all expectations is challenging and may compromise the perception of trust (Stickel, 2022).

Cultural Distortion. A recent study from Gallup shows that organizational culture encourages opportunistic behavior, incites poor leadership morals, and incentivizes hyper-competitive behavior that causes ethical blindness (Crabtree, 2018). All these facts compromise the employees' willingness to trust their leaders, colleagues, and the organization. Crabtree (2018) attributed this phenomenon to the lack of workplace ethics. A lack of standards and misplaced benevolence can obfuscate workplace ethics, allowing unequal treatment of people and wrongdoing (Galford & Drapeau, 2003). With the advance of globalization and digitalization, it is more difficult to prove a leader's or business's ethical work. Therefore, leaders' new challenge is to keep and share an ethical record of the practices the organization and leaders are engaging in (Crabtree, 2018) and promote organizational processes and policies that address diversity and equality issues (Crabtree, 2018; Edelman, 2023).

Misleading Communication. According to Galford and Drapeau (2003), senior leaders convey inconsistent messages and priorities that affect negatively all leadership levels. Fake information, gossip, and lack of information also increase distrust (Covey et al., 2022; O'Hara, 2014). The leader's challenge is to communicate the vision and intentions clearly (Mclain & Pendell, 2023) and be consistent with their message (Covey et al., 2022; Galford & Drapeau, 2003; Mclain & Pendell, 2023; O'Hara, 2014).

Poor Performance. Getting results boosts an organization's overall positivity and confidence (Covey & Merrill, 2018). The opposite is also true. Galford and Drapeau (2003)

explained that when leaders and organizations consistently underperform, the confidence in their abilities to get results is compromised. This problem can also relate to other organizational problems, such as the excess of politics that get in the way of the employee's jobs (Galford & Drapeau, 2003), lack of resources (Melohn, 1983; Okello & Gilson, 2015), and staff shortage (Okello & Gilson, 2015).

Leadership Approach Dilemma. A dilemma occurs when someone has to choose between unsatisfactory options (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). That is what happens with the leadership approach nowadays. Stickel (2022) explained that the concept of leadership evolved with the world, and good leadership is a contradictory definition. Even in the literature, some authors claim that command and control leadership is a barrier to building trust (Bunker et al., 2002; Covey et al., 2022), while others explain that in some situations, a more controlled approach to leadership decreases the risk of generalized panic (Radu, 2022). This literature review mentioned several leadership approaches. Choosing the best one for each situation, context, and personnel is difficult for leaders (Stickel, 2022).

Power Paradox. Studies show that power corrupts people (DeSteno, 2014; Keltner, 2017). The power paradox refers to leaders' propensity to engage in uncivil, disrespectful, and dishonest practices as they move up the leadership ladder (Keltner, 2017). The higher the power and status, the lower the reliability and honesty (DeSteno, 2014). Companies do not do much against those leaders, especially if they deliver short-term results (Keltner, 2017; Porath & Pearson, 2013). Most of the time, those leaders do not realize they are behaving in such a manner. Therefore, disengagement and productivity drop, and confidence in their leader is lost because employees do not see those leaders as someone they can trust (Covey & Merrill, 2018).

The challenge is two-fold: admit that personal integrity may change over time (DeSteno, 2014) and recognize and regulate this behavior (Goleman, 2019).

Distance. Team members who work remotely or virtually impose new challenges to the leadership due to the distance between leaders and members (Short, 2014). This workplace type has increased over the last decade, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (Axtell et al., 2022). The relationship created between team members in a physical environment differs from the virtual workplace (Axtell et al., 2022; Short, 2014). The latter requires more attention to communication, including technological tools and relationship building, moments of connection among team members, and frequent check-ins between leaders and employees (Short, 2014).

Individual

Trust is a personal choice, and usually, people make wrong decisions about trust (Kramer, 2009). Therefore, leaders also face challenges in building trust imposed on them and the individuals who work for them. Such challenges include leader's biases, employee's biases, stereotypes of trust, and inexperience. This subsection explains these challenges in detail.

Leader's Biases. Uncontrolled and unrecognized biases harm a leader's trustworthiness (Brockner, 2006; Covey & Merrill, 2018). Leader's biases are evident when leaders include inappropriate self-interest or hidden agendas in their decisions (Brockner, 2006; Campbell et al., 2009; Covey & Merrill, 2018). It also happens when leaders privilege certain people due to personal relationships or attachment, which makes others feel excluded (Campbell et al., 2009). Arrogance (Covey et al., 2022) and overestimation of one's trustworthiness (Stickel, 2022) contribute to their personal biases. Balancing biases is challenging and requires self-awareness, regulation (Campbell et al., 2009; Goleman, 2019), and vulnerability (B. Brown, 2018).

Moreover, integrity is not a stable trait, which means a leader can be honest and stick to the rules but change in the future (DeSteno, 2014).

Unrecognized biases also connect to individuals' negative feelings and inner thoughts (David & Congleton, 2013). According to David and Congleton (2013), negative thoughts include criticism, doubt, and fear. They become a problem when leaders transform negative beliefs into assumptions (Adams, 2022; David & Congleton, 2013). Those beliefs trigger reactions such as excessive anxiety, low self-confidence, distress, and disregard for others' success (David & Congleton, 2013). Such reactions destroy a leader's credibility and trustworthiness (Adams, 2022; David & Congleton, 2013).

Employees' Biases. The same principle of internal biases applies to employees (Brockner, 2006; Hurley, 2006). Risk tolerance is a personal characteristic that influences employees' disposition to trust their leaders (Hurley, 2006; Stickel, 2022). Past and present experiences, beliefs, and feelings determine their tolerance (Stickel, 2022). For example, most people tend to fear feedback (Jackman & Strober, 2003) and giving the boss bad news (Barnes, 1981), as they might believe that leaders will retaliate or humiliate them (Barnes, 1981; Jackman & Strober, 2003). This reaction can be a consequence of actual and past experiences. However, they affect employees' confidence in their leadership. According to Covey et al. (2022), other personal fears, such as not being good enough, losing control, or failing, contribute to a state of distrust.

Lastly, employees' personal bias to trust or distrust somebody else starts early in their development, with childhood experiences (Barnes, 1981). The first social interactions with parents, religious leaders, or other community leaders shape how they perceive authority and their propensity to trust leaders (Rotter, 1967).

Stereotypes of Trust. The guidelines most people use to decide whether to trust another person are unclear and sometimes flawed. These people who trust the wrong people will accumulate bad experiences, and such wrong judgment might impact future evaluations of trustworthiness (DeSteno, 2014). For example, individuals believe they can predict individual trustworthiness by their appearance. However, studies suggest this belief is unfounded, and reducing stereotypes' impact on inferred trustworthiness may enhance trust-based relationships (Dzhelyova et al., 2012; Wilson & Eckel, 2023).

Inexperience. Young people ascend to leadership positions because they have excellent hard skills but fail to build relationships or collaborate (Bunker et al., 2002). However, they had never encountered challenging situations in their professional lives. Sometimes, these people do not recognize the effect of their inexperience (Bunker et al., 2002), but employees will start to doubt their readiness for leadership. Therefore, they fail to apply the competencies of EI, resilience (Coutu, 2002), and building positive relationships with their employees (Bunker et al., 2002). The challenge will rely mainly on EI (Goleman, 2019).

Summary of the Challenges to Build Trust

Table 4 summarizes the themes representing building trust.

Table 4

Thematic Analysis of the Challenges to Trust

Outside Organizations	Inside Organizations	Personal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● External Uncertainties ● Past Public Scandals ● Corruption Perception ● Technology Advances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stakeholders Interests ● Cultural Distortion ● Misleading Communication ● Poor Performance ● Leadership Approach Dilemma ● Power Paradox ● Distance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leader's Biases ● Employee's Biases ● Stereotype of Trust ● Inexperience

Note. This table summarizes the main compounded challenges in the literature on trust.

Measures of Trust

Measuring trust is a laborious task because it is a complex and multidimensional variable (Kee & Knox, 1970). The same happens when measuring effective leadership because it is a concept that is constantly evolving (Stickel, 2022). Nevertheless, academic and non-academic efforts have sought to measure leadership success and confidence levels. This subsection explains three ways to measure trust and effective leadership. The first is the academic instruments of research to measure interpersonal trust. The second refers to a global index of trust. The third is a proposal approach to measure leadership success in trust-building based on the current literature.

Instruments to Measure Trust

At the time of this study, the appraised literature showed two comprehensive instruments to measure interpersonal trust that were broadly recognized and validated by the scientific community (Chun & Campbell, 1974; Kee & Knox, 1970; Mayer & Davis, 1999; Rotter, 1967; Schoorman et al., 2007). The first and most known instrument is Rotter's (1967), which proposes a new scale to measure interpersonal trust. This scale was applied to the academic community. Later, other studies showed that the trust scale is multidimensional and proposed new dimensions to be considered in that instrument (Chun & Campbell, 1974; Kee & Knox, 1970). Critiques of this instrument's application stem from its dimensionalities and the fact that it was not based on the trust between leader and employee (Chun & Campbell, 1974; Kee & Knox, 1970; Schoorman et al., 2007).

The second instrument was proposed by Mayer and Davis in 1999 (Schoorman et al., 2007). This instrument effectively measures trust between employees and supervisors, considering variables about trust, ability, benevolence, integrity, accuracy, propensity, and

outcomes (Mayer & Davis, 1999). However, there are also critiques of this model about missing variables, such as the vulnerability effect on trust and its one-dimensionality (Schoorman et al., 2007).

Global Trust Index

In use since 2000, the Edelman Trust Barometer is a world-recognized report that measures trust in people, businesses, non-governmental organizations, government, and media (Edelman, 2023). In 2023, it assessed 28 countries, surveying over 32,000 respondents, and was launched in the World's Economic Forum. This report is very informative, spotlighting the gaps in trust and recommending strategic actions for leaders to recover trust (Edelman, 2023).

However, this dissertation author's critique of this report relies on the absence of a direct leader-follower evaluation and the fact that its variables differ from the organizational and leadership models of trust (Covey et al., 2022; Mayer & Davis, 1999; Stickel, 2022).

Leadership Measure of Success

Determining a leader's success is difficult because it depends on the willingness of others to follow the leader (Starks, 2022). Additionally, success has different meanings for business leaders (Forbes Business Council, 2021). Some leaders might count more on their feelings (Mauboussin, 2012), while others might lean on quantitative metrics (Forbes Business Council, 2021; Mauboussin, 2012) or results and employee satisfaction (Covey & Merrill, 2018). It is even more challenging to measure the success of a leader than to measure their ability to build trust.

According to Mauboussin (2012), leaders usually fail to measure success for three main reasons. First, they are overconfident in their abilities and judgments. Second, they want to make use of all information and data available. Third, they are attached to the organizational status

quo. Those tendencies direct leaders to flawed intuitions and cognitive biases (Mauboussin, 2012).

Instead, leaders should adopt an open mindset. They should assess their leadership style (Starks, 2022), define what success means to them (Covey et al., 2022; Forbes Business Council, 2021), and determine what qualitative and quantitative metrics should be considered (Covey et al., 2022; Mauboussin, 2012; Starks, 2022). When evaluating the success of leadership practices and trust-building, leaders should discuss the metrics with the employees, clarify why those metrics matter, and debate expectations (Covey et al., 2022; Starks, 2022). Additionally, leaders must analyze the cause and effect to identify what must be measured to achieve the expected outcome (Mauboussin, 2012). For example, a strategy leaders use to build trust is getting consistent results; thus, it makes sense to measure organizational performance.

The business literature proposes several metrics for effective leadership. This author pulled from the literature the ones that correlate to the strategies on trust-building previously identified. Eight initial metrics emerged. They are organizational performance (Covey et al., 2022; Hill & Lineback, 2012c), organizational growth (Covey et al., 2022; Forbes Business Council, 2021), organizational values (Covey et al., 2022; Forbes Business Council, 2021), (d) team growth (Covey et al., 2022; Forbes Business Council, 2021; Soderberg & Romney, 2022), employees' well-being (Forbes Business Council, 2021), confidence level (Edelman, 2023; Forbes Business Council, 2021), transparency (Transparency International, 2023) and other cause-effect metrics (Mauboussin, 2012).

Critiques of Topic

While analyzing the literature on trust-building, this author encountered critiques of people's propensity to trust (Kramer, 2002, 2009; Sánchez et al., 2011) and the correlation of

diversity with trust (Kokkonen et al., 2014; Rajput & Talan, 2017). Kramer (2002, 2009) called attention to the perils of people's propensity to trust. Over history, several business and financial scandals have decreased people's trust in business. However, after a few years, people seemed to have forgotten those events (Kramer, 2002). Kramer (2009) proposed that people should not easily trust leaders and businesses. Instead, they should verify the facts and data, be suspicious, and trust their gut feelings. Corroborating this position, another study about lies in the workplace shows that people's propensity to trust is not affected by mild lies (Sánchez et al., 2011). Sánchez et al. (2011) found that lies that do not cause harm to others, meaning those lies are not selfish, deteriorate trust in workplace relationships. This study also found that some people still choose to trust, even in a workplace where lies are common (Sánchez et al., 2011).

The literature noted that welcoming, understanding, and supporting diversity improves leadership relationships and propensity to trust (Bird, 2018; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Crabtree, 2018). However, a quantitative study evaluating interpersonal trust as a mediator of diversity did not confirm a positive correlation between attributes of trust, such as benevolence, integrity, and predicted trust, with diversity. The only attribute that was positively correlated was competence. Another study, a European social survey with over 30,000 respondents in 22 countries, showed that diversity has a negative effect on trust when intergroup contact can be avoided (Kokkonen et al., 2014). Those studies cast doubts on the practice's accuracy and effectiveness in building trust involving diversity. There is a need for further research to understand if and when diversity influences the propensity to trust.

Gaps in the Literature

The literature on trust-building is extensive, as this author demonstrated throughout this chapter. However, two areas might present gaps in the appraised literature and opportunities for further research.

The first area regards practices that build trust in cross-cultural teams. This author researched scholarly databases such as EBSCO Complete several times, using terms related to trust in cross-cultural groups, and few scholarly peer-reviewed articles were found. For example, on January 19, 2024, this author searched keywords such as “trust,” “trusting,” “trustworthiness,” and “trustworthy” combined with “cross-culture,” “cross-cultural,” “multinational,” and terms related to leadership. The maximum number of articles found was 107, but very few of them could be utilized as parallel studies. Two of them, although unrelated to leadership practices or the organizational setting, proposed interesting dynamics used to increase trust in groups from distinct nationalities (Latif et al., 2021; Pornpitakpan, 2003). Therefore, this author believes there are opportunities to build on the scholarly literature about leadership practices to build trust in cross-cultural organizational settings.

The second area is the scarcity of instruments and consensus to measure trust-building between leaders and employees. Schoorman et al. (2007) pointed out that there are only two comprehensive models to measure interpersonal trust that are reliable and tested among the scientific community. They are Rotter (1967) and Mayer and Davis (1999) scales. However, even those instruments present concerns about their constructs and dimensionality (Schoorman et al., 2007). Moreover, trust is a complex variable (Kee & Knox, 1970), and considering a good, effective leadership approach to building trust can be contradictory (Stickel, 2022).

Chapter Summary

This author reviewed literature on trust, EI, and cultural intelligence, aiming to collect strategies, challenges, and measures of success for effectively building trust between leaders and employees in a multinational context. The following subsections summarize the main findings.

Strategies to Build Trust

The literature review on trust, EI, and cultural intelligence culminates in a selection of more than 70 competencies that leaders use to build trust. While the literature on EI displayed a direct connection between EI practices and trust-building (Goleman, 2019), the literature on cultural intelligence displayed trust as an attribute of other competencies to manage cross-cultural relationships effectively (Bird, 2018). Therefore, this dissertation assumed that practices to manage cross-cultural teams effectively can be applied to build trust.

The competencies were grouped into 15 themes as follows: (a) results, (b) knowledge, (c) benevolence, (d) integrity, (e) authenticity, (f) humility, (g) emotional readiness, (h) social intelligence, (i) effective communication, (j) influence power, (k) people development, (l) team development, (m) cultural sensitivity, (n) inclusive culture, and (o) plasticity.

Challenges to Build Trust

The literature appraisal demonstrated several challenges to trust-building, grouped into 15 themes, as follows: (a) external uncertainties, (b) past public scandals, (c) corruption perception, (d) technology advances, (e) stakeholders interests, (f) cultural distortion, (g) misleading communication, (h) poor performance, (i) leadership approach dilemma, (j) power paradox, (k) distance, (l) leader's biases, (m) employee's biases, (n) stereotype of trust, and (o) inexperience.

Measure of Success

This dissertation focused on self-proclaimed leadership efficacy in trust-building. The literature discussed several ways to measure leadership success. This dissertation proposes eight initial thematic metrics for measuring the leadership efficacy in trust-building, restated as follows: organizational performance (Covey et al., 2022; Hill & Lineback, 2012c), organizational growth (Covey et al., 2022; Forbes Business Council, 2021), organizational values (Covey et al., 2022; Forbes Business Council, 2021), team growth (Covey et al., 2022; Forbes Business Council, 2021; Soderberg & Romney, 2022), employees' well-being (Forbes Business Council, 2021), confidence level (Edelman, 2023; Forbes Business Council, 2021), transparency (Transparency International, 2023) and other cause-effect metrics (Mauboussin, 2012).

Unexpected Findings

The literature shows that several new competencies could be added to the models of trust proposed by Stickel (2022) and Covey et al. (2022). From the initial themes related to trust-building strategies, plasticity was the one that stood out the most. The preconception of trust relates to integrity (Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022), which relates to honesty and compliance with the rules and norms (Covey & Merrill, 2018), and tends to be relatively static in general knowledge. Nevertheless, plasticity is dynamic, requiring leaders to constantly model and adapt their leadership approach (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019) to distinct contexts (Stickel, 2022),

Plasticity resonates with two other unexpected findings on the challenges to trust-building: technology advances and leadership approach dilemma. Technology advances and innovations are among the current causes of distrust (Edelman, 2023). That happens because

there is no consensus about ethical norms and implications around technology usage (Crabtree, 2018). Consequently, leaders are required to rely on their judgment to make decisions when there are no references. Additionally, there is the dilemma of leadership approach. While analyzing that several leadership styles in the current literature are effectively used to build trust (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019), one question arose: How would a leader know for sure what leadership style is the best fit for each situation they may encounter? Answering this question requires further research.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This qualitative study aimed to understand the social phenomenon of building trust between leaders and team members in multinational organizations. The study subjects are those institutions' leaders. This research sought to uncover their strategies, practices, challenges, and measures of trust-building. Ultimately, this research adds new findings to the theories of trust and proposes a new model to build trust that multinational organizations can use.

This chapter presents the research design and methodology of this doctoral dissertation. It consists of nine subsections: (a) re-statement of the RQs, (b) nature of the study, (c) methodology, (d) research design, (e) protection of human rights, (f) data collection, (g) interview protocol, (h) acknowledgment of personal biases, and (i) data analysis procedure.

Re-statement of Research Questions

This chapter describes the research methods applied to achieve this study's objectives and answer the four RQs:

- RQ1: What are the strategies and practices employed by leaders to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?
- RQ2: What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?
- RQ3: How do the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations?
- RQ4: Based on their experiences, what recommendations would participants make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?

Nature of the Study

Assumptions

In social research, the acknowledgment of ontological and epistemological assumptions is paramount to comprehend the interaction of the key elements of research, including methodology and method, to prevent misunderstandings about the approach taken to the phenomenon studied and to defend the researcher's positions (Grix, 2002). Ontology refers to how the researcher perceives the social reality under examination. Epistemology relates to the researcher's belief in the best way to explore the world or the social reality in place (Bhattacharjee, 2019; Grix, 2002; McGregor, 2019).

This study assumed constructivism as its ontological position because the social phenomenon analyzed is defined and accomplished by the social actors and is constantly evolving (Grix, 2002). The reality of that social phenomenon is assumed to be in leader's minds (McGregor, 2019). Epistemologically, this study adopted interpretivism because it considers the knowledge in people's minds, and there are multiple interpretations and meanings of reality. Therefore, the differences must be interpreted and reconciled (Bhattacharjee, 2019; Grix, 2002; McGregor, 2019). The logic of the arguments and claims is inductive, based on multiple interpretations, meanings, and patterns (Bhattacharjee, 2019; McGregor, 2019).

Because of these ontological and epistemological assumptions, a qualitative methodology was the best approach to address this study's RQs. Creswell and Creswell (2018) defined qualitative research as an approach to research that seeks to understand a social problem by creating a complex and holistic picture based on an inquiry process in participants' detailed reports in their natural settings. Qualitative research happens around a central phenomenon that the researcher wishes to explore. The nature of this exploration was sensitive and complex, and it

allowed the researcher to report multiple voices in a small group, have direct contact with the participants, unfold the process to understand it better, and reflect on biases (Creswell, 2016). This research applied a qualitative approach because the phenomenon is complex and requires exploration through the subjects' unique experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Creswell and Poth (2017) identified the characteristics of qualitative research as follows: (a) data is collected in a natural setting, (b) it is dependent on the context in which participants are immersed, (c) participants provide multiple perspectives and meanings regarding the topic being studied, (d) it allows various types of data and methods of research, (e) the research design is emergent, (f) the researcher plays a fundamental role collecting and analyzing the data, (g) the reasoning of collected data is inductive and deductive, (h) it offers a holistic view of the phenomenon, and (i) it is reflexive, as the researcher recognizes their own biases and world views.

There is a polarization among the scientific community regarding the best research paradigm: qualitative or quantitative (Rahman, 2017). The reality is that both paradigms offer advantages and disadvantages. In the same way that it is important to recognize the researcher's assumptions and worldviews (Grix, 2002), it is also important to acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of the chosen paradigm.

Strengths of Qualitative Research

On the one hand, a qualitative study has several advantages (Creswell, 2016; Rahman, 2017). A strength of qualitative research that resonated with this dissertation is that it allows researchers to ask open-ended questions, which enables a deep exploration of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2016). Secondly, it offers deeper insights and diverse meanings from participants' feelings, opinions, and experiences (Bhattacharjee, 2019; Rahman, 2017). In the case of

interpretivism, which is the epistemology chosen in this dissertation, it permits a holistic understanding of the participants' inner experiences in their settings (Creswell, 2016; Rahman, 2017). Qualitative research also admits various methods to collect the data, analyze them, and report the findings, providing researchers flexibility (Creswell, 2016; Rahman, 2017). Lastly, it contributes to managerial practices (Nuttall et al., 2011).

Weaknesses of Qualitative Research

On the other hand, limitations also need to be acknowledged (Rahman, 2017). Five weaknesses apply to this research. First, the data collection and analysis were complex and time-consuming. Second, a smaller sample does not allow for generalizing the findings. Third, part of the scientific community and policymakers usually do not welcome this type of research because it does not rely on statistics. Fourth, it sometimes focuses on the meanings of participants' lived experiences and leaves out critical context-specific interpretations. Lastly, as mentioned, the findings cannot be generalized (Rahman, 2017).

Methodology

According to Creswell and Poth (2017), a methodological approach is decided based on the nature of the research and the problem type the researcher wants to address. Phenomenology, which this study employed, systematically examines and reflects on problems, including human experiences, judgments, perceptions, and actions (Bhattacharjee, 2019; Conklin, 2007). This approach aimed to appreciate and describe social reality from several participants' subjective perspectives and understand the meanings, also called deep structure, underlying those perspectives and experiences (Bhattacharjee, 2019). In sum, this approach analyzes and describes a lived experience and creates knowledge from the perspective of the subjects involved in that social reality (Conklin, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Structured Process of Phenomenology

A starting point of a phenomenological approach is understanding the phenomenon and whether this approach suits the study (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Once that point is clarified, the phenomenological inquiry can take place. To properly conduct a phenomenological inquiry, the researcher must acknowledge assumptions and biases about the phenomenon to empathize with the participants during the data collection (Bhattacharjee, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2017). That is necessary to achieve the state of epoche (or bracketing), in which the phenomenon is analyzed as it is, in its uniqueness and singularity (Conklin, 2007).

Bhattacharjee (2019) explained that phenomenological inquiry is a deep-structured process that occurs in two stages: data collection and data analysis. The first stage of data collection consists of interviewing participants about the phenomenon in their natural setting and transcribing the interviews (Bhattacharjee, 2019). The second stage, data analysis, is more complex, involving (a) reading through the transcripts to get a first big picture of the phenomenon, (b) locating units of significance, (c) assigning meanings for those units that are representative of participant's lived experiences, (d) establishing themes to link the units of significance to layered meanings, and (e) reconciling the meanings (Bhattacharjee, 2019). Once the data is collected and analyzed, the researcher narrates the phenomenon, using the emerging themes and the multiple layers of meanings, paying attention to preserving the subject's voices (Bhattacharjee, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2017). The narrative about the phenomenon uses the structural description of three lenses: individuals, composite across participants, and imaginative, in addition to the research interpretation and free association of meanings for the individual and composite experience. Finally, all lenses are synthesized in a unique narrative of the phenomenon (Conklin, 2007).

Appropriateness of Phenomenology

Phenomenology was appropriate to this study because the researcher sought to systematically analyze the experiences, strategies, challenges, and recommendations of leaders in multinational organizations to build trust with their team members. Conklin (2007) explained that phenomenologists seek personal, individual, and theme-specific insights from the participants to develop an informative narrative and create unique knowledge (Conklin, 2007). This study's research examined the unique and personal perspectives of 15 leaders in multinational organizations to understand better the process of building trust with their team members and, finally, to create new knowledge on trust-building strategies and challenges.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Phenomenology

A unique strength of phenomenology that adds to the list of strengths already posted about qualitative methodology is the opportunity to give a voice to each participant (Conklin, 2007). The individuals present details, perspectives, and feelings of their lived experiences, and the research transforms that knowledge into theory (Conklin, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2017). Furthermore, this research approach is appropriate for idiosyncratic events or processes and discovers hidden reasons behind social processes (Bhattacharjee, 2019).

Conversely, phenomenology offers some additional challenges: (a) researchers must pinpoint the philosophical assumptions in their studies (Creswell & Poth, 2017), (b) difficulty bracketing the researcher's personal experience because the interpretation of the data always incorporates researcher biases (Conklin, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2017), (c) the selection of participants needs to be carefully done to represent the phenomenon in question (Creswell & Poth, 2017), and (d) too little data may lead the research to false interpretation and too much data

is a challenging and time-consuming process that might become ineffective (Bhattacharjee, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Research Design

This research design follows a qualitative, phenomenological inquiry utilizing open-ended interviews to collect the lived experiences of building trust between leaders and team members in multinational organizations. It relies on the leader's unique perspective of the phenomenon.

Participants and Sampling

Unit of Analysis. The unit of analysis is the individual, group, or object that is the inquiry focus (Bhattacharjee, 2019). In phenomenology, it is paramount that participants have experienced the phenomenon under examination to articulate their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2017). This study's unit of analysis is a leader with a minimum position of middle management who works in a multinational organization based in the United States.

Population. This study's population consists of all leaders who work in multinational organizations in the United States and meet the selection criteria. Those professionals are experienced leaders from different industries, which brings distinct perspectives of trust-building strategies and challenges to this study. Additionally, they all have experience with teams of multiple individuals and building trust with their team members. They have at least 5 years of experience working in any leadership position for multinational organizations. By the time of selection, they must be at least at the middle-management level.

Sample Size. Creswell and Poth (2017) explained that in qualitative research, what matters is the extensive details collected from each individual. These authors also mentioned that they had witnessed samples from one to 325 participants in phenomenology. However, the usual

recommendation is five to 25 participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2017). This range resonates with the minimum of six participants recommended by Morse (1994). In this study, the sample target was 15 participants. This number guaranteed the minimal diversity of individual experiences, deep analysis of the lived experience (Creswell & Poth, 2017), and saturation (Sargeant, 2012; Saunders et al., 2018). Saturation is a technique largely accepted in several approaches to qualitative research, indicating that based on the data, no further information needs to be collected (Saunders et al., 2018).

Purposive Sampling. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique utilized in qualitative studies in which the participants can contribute to addressing the central research problem (Creswell, 2016). In phenomenology, all participants must have experienced the phenomenon under review (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In this study, participants were purposefully selected from a public online professional database such as LinkedIn, considering their professional experiences and inclusion, exclusion, and maximum variation criteria.

Participant Selection

According to Sargeant (2012), participant selection is the most important task in qualitative research. It must be intentional, based on the RQ and theoretical viewpoint, and capable of providing evidence about the study's issue (Sargeant, 2012). The participants must have the lived experience required for the study (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Sargeant, 2012). Creswell (2016) explained that an efficient way to recruit participants is via email or a web service platform.

In this study, the researcher created a sampling frame, a list of possible participants and their contact information, in an online, public, professional database. The researcher also applied the criteria for inclusion and exclusion before contacting the possible participants. The

participants who met the criteria were invited via InMail on professional social media or personal email and had a choice to participate within the acceptance timeframe. If more than 20 participants agreed to participate in this study, the criteria for maximum variation were applied.

In case this researcher did not receive at least 15 confirmations by the end of the acceptance timeframe, a call for participation would be posted online. This message described the study, the criteria for inclusion, and guidelines for people interested in participating in this study. The researcher evaluated the participants' curriculum before accepting them. The message is detailed in Appendix A.

Sampling Frame. A sampling frame is an accessible list of subjects of the target population with contact information from which the sample may be selected (Bhattacharjee, 2019). This study used a sampling frame collected from a public professional database. The researcher initially used LinkedIn as the primary social media to create a list of professionals who met the criteria for this study. The researcher used a premium LinkedIn account to apply filters for the criteria of inclusion and analyze the profiles to apply criteria for exclusion. First, the researcher applied filters such as professional position, which had to be middle management or higher; organizational type, which had to be multinational; and location, which had to be the United States. Then, with the results, the researcher accessed the profile to determine whether the leader was still working in a multinational organization and confirmed they had the minimum years of experience in leadership and multinational organizations. The researcher also verified that they spoke English and met the remaining inclusion and exclusion criteria. A list of participants who met the criteria was created in a separate Excel document, including participants' contact information. The researcher used this list to contact possible participants. If

fewer than 15 participants agreed to participate in this study, the researcher posted an announcement on LinkedIn, according to Appendix A.

Criteria for Inclusion. The inclusion criteria were that (a) individuals had to work or have worked in any multinational organization that was (b) located in the United States, (c) currently occupy a middle-management position or higher, (d) lead teams of more than one member, (e) have at least 5 years of experience in any rank of leadership position, (f) have at least 5 years of experience working in a multinational, (g) be at least 18 years old, and (h) agree to participate in an online interview.

Criteria for Exclusion. This study's criteria for exclusion were (a) inability to speak English, (b) not working for a multinational organization or having done so more than 5 years ago, and (c) not being available for the interview during the required time frame.

Criteria for Maximum Variation. These criteria would be applied if the number of subjects who agreed to participate in the study was more than 20. The criteria for maximum variation would be applied in the following order: (a) years of leadership experience, (b) years of experience in multinational organizations, and (c) a self-proclaimed number of employees in their teams. In all three criteria, the higher the number, the better. However, these criteria were not necessary.

Protection of Human Subjects

Before conducting a qualitative study, approval from the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) is required (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Creswell and Poth (2017) pointed out that this step is necessary to raise ethical awareness and address possible ethical problems regarding respect for the participants, concern for their well-being, and justice. Pepperdine's IRB seeks protection for participants and researchers, guided by the principles of the Belmont Report

and the US Code of Federal Regulations, both seeking to guarantee the protection of humans (Pepperdine Community, n.d.).

This study imposed a minimal risk for participants. Thus, the researcher submitted an exempt application. After approval, the notice from Pepperdine's IRB became Appendix B. The researcher contacted participants only after IRB approval and utilized the recruitment script in Appendix C. Once the participants responded that they were interested in participating, they received the informed consent in Appendix D, which contains the interview protocol. These documents provided clarity about the research intent and purpose, the option to withdraw at any time, a clear security framework regarding how the data would be manipulated and stored, and confidentiality.

Additionally, the researcher participated in training about principles, regulations, and procedures to guarantee human subjects' protection in social research. The researcher's valid CITI certificate is Appendix E. After conducting the interviews, the researcher transcribed and de-identified them, using pseudonyms, to guarantee confidentiality. The transcripts, audio recordings, and spreadsheet used to code the interviews were stored in Pepperdine University's Google Drive account, which is firewall-protected. The recordings were destroyed upon completion and approval of this dissertation.

Data Collection and Interview Techniques

The researcher contacted the prospective participants using in-mails from LinkedIn, personal email, or professional email. In this first communication with potential participants, the researcher used the recruitment script in Appendix C. If the participant was interested in the study, the researcher sent the informed consent and the interview protocol. This informed

consent was signed and returned to the researcher, who stored it in a secure Pepperdine Google Drive account, protected by a password.

Then, the researcher scheduled the interview. The interviews took up to 60 minutes and were conducted online via Zoom. The researcher opened the Zoom room 10 minutes before each interview to check the technical functionality and the recording device. The interviews started by reviewing the informed consent, checking if the participant had any questions, and asking ice-breaker questions. The researcher used semi-structured interview questions. The session was conducted via Zoom, and only audio was recorded using Otter AI. The researcher also used Otter AI transcripts. The researcher asked the participants not to use identifiers during the interview. When the transcripts were ready, the researcher read, de-identified, and prepared the transcripts for data analysis. The researcher stored the audio, transcripts, and de-identified data in a Pepperdine folder, protected by a password. The research deleted the audio as soon as the transcripts were ready. The transcripts were removed upon this study's completion and deleted within 3 years.

Interviews are a common data collection method in qualitative research (Creswell, 2016). Creswell and Poth (2017) stated that interviews are conversational social interactions aiming to create knowledge between the researcher and the participant. This study utilized a semi-structured interview technique to collect data, and the type of interview was one-on-one via Zoom. According to A. Brown and Danaher (2019), the semi-structured interview technique is located between structured interviews, in which the researcher follows the protocol without deviation, and unstructured interviews, in which the researcher uses free-flowing questions suitable for general topics. This interview technique utilizes a list of questions as the foundation for the conversation with the participant, but they allow openness through asking feedback and

clarifying questions during the interview (A. Brown & Danaher, 2019). This approach is appropriate for this study because its topic is specific and requires a minimum level of structure between research and interview questions. However, it also requires the possibility of asking clarifying, understanding, or feedback questions to better assess the lived experience of the participants.

Interview Protocol

The interview protocol is usually formed by questions to invite the participant to open up, followed by the interview questions, and ends with final comments and thanking the participant (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The interview protocol in this study followed these steps: (a) introduction and brief re-explanation of the purpose of the study, (b) ask an ice-breaker question to stimulate participants to open up, (c) ask the interview question, (d) ask clarifying and feedback questions when necessary, and € final comments thanking the participant. The interview protocol is in Appendix F, and the interview and RQ are listed below.

Interview Questions

Think of your simple, most successful experience in building trust among your team members:

- IQ1: What practices did you engage in or what techniques did you use that led to that success?
- IQ2: What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques?
- IQ3: Think of another successful experience in building trust among your team members: what practices did you engage in or what techniques did you use that led to that success?

- IQ4: What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques?
- IQ5: Are you aware of other practices and techniques for building trust among team members recommended or practiced by others in the field?
- IQ6: Are you aware of any challenges or difficulties faced by others who have successfully built trust among team members?
- IQ7: How do you define and measure your success in building trust with your team?
- IQ8: How do you maintain that trust over time?
- IQ9: What mistakes have you made in the trust-building process that you would warn leaders to avoid?
- IQ10: Is there any other recommendation you would like to offer?

Relationship Between Research and Interview Questions

Creswell and Poth (2017) explained that interview questions are defined to help the researcher answer the RQ and allow a deep conversation between the researcher and participants. These authors classify the RQ as the central question and interview questions as subquestions. This study has four RQ and 12 interview questions. The researcher formulated these by taking into consideration the prima facie and peer-review validations. The expert panel review will take place at the preliminary defense and may change these questions to improve this study's overall quality.

Validity of the Study

The study validity refers to the degree to which the instruments relate to the underlying concept being studied (Bhattacharjee, 2019). The validity of a qualitative study aims to elevate the quality of the study, and a rigorous process of validation includes one or more procedures

(Creswell & Poth, 2017). This study followed a thorough process of validation in three steps: (a) prima facie, (b) peer review, and (c) expert review.

Prima Facie and Content Validity. Prima facie, meaning “on its face,” indicates if an instrument is adequate to the studied concept (Bhattacharjee, 2019). In this study, the researcher created a table relating RQ with interview questions. Then, they were analyzed based on literature that had already been appraised and professional experience, ensuring the interview questions suited each RQ and the problem presented in this study. When formulating the questions, the researcher considered appreciative and humble inquiry lenses (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Schein & Schein, 2021) to acquire best practices and meaningful experiences from the participants. Table 5 illustrates the RQ and the researcher’s first set of interview questions.

Table 5

Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions After Prima Facie

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
<p>RQ1: What are the strategies and practices employed by leaders to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?</p>	<p>IQ1: How do you build trust with your team members? IQ2: How do you increase trust among your team members? IQ3: What competencies and behaviors do you cultivate to be considered a trustworthy leader? IQ4: Are there competencies that you apply specifically to multinational teams? IQ5: Can you share some examples?</p>
<p>RQ2: What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?</p>	<p>IQ6: What obstacle do you encounter in building trust with your team members in multinational companies? IQ7: How do you overcome those obstacles? IQ8: How do you maintain or expand your and your team’s trustworthiness?</p>

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
RQ3: How do the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations?	IQ9: How do you measure your success in building trust with your team? IQ10: How do you know your team members trust you as a leader?
RQ4: Based on their experiences, what recommendations would participants make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	IQ11: What mistakes have you made in the trust-building process that you would warn leaders to avoid? IQ12: Is there any other recommendation you would like to offer?

Note. The table identifies four RQs and the corresponding interview questions after prima facie.

Peer-Review Validity. Peer reviewing is a validation technique that consists of another person familiar with the topic of the study analyzing and validating the instruments and data (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In this study, the researcher invited three Pepperdine doctoral students experienced in leadership and as knowledgeable as the researcher to review the interview questions. Appendix G illustrates the recruitment script and a table with the three evaluations received. The criteria the researcher utilized to change the questions were (a) if two or more evaluations indicated the same action (keep, change, or delete), the researcher followed their recommendation; and (b) if the three evaluations were different from one another, the researcher decided for the one that fits the study purpose better. Table 6 displays the RQs and interview questions after peer-review evaluations.

Table 6

Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions Revised by Peers

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
RQ1: What are the strategies and practices employed by leaders to build trust among their team	IQ1: How do you build trust with your team members? IQ2: How do you increase trust among your team members?

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
members in multinational organizations?	IQ3: What competencies and behaviors do you cultivate to be considered a trustworthy leader? IQ4: Are there competencies that you apply specifically to multinational teams? If so, can you share some examples?
<i>RQ2</i> : What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	IQ6: What obstacle do you encounter in building trust with your team members in multinational companies? IQ7: How do you overcome those obstacles? IQ5: How do you maintain or expand your trustworthiness? IQ 8: How do you maintain or expand your team's trustworthiness?
<i>RQ3</i> : How do the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations?	IQ9: How do you measure your success in building trust with your team? IQ10: How do you know your team members trust you as a leader?
<i>RQ4</i> : Based on their experiences, what recommendations would participants make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	IQ11: What mistakes have you made in the trust-building process that you would warn leaders to avoid? IQ12: Is there any other recommendation you would like to offer?

Note. The table identifies four research questions and corresponding interview questions with revisions based on feedback from peer reviewers. Subsequent changes were made to the order and phrasing of questions within the interview protocol.

Expert Review Validity. The third stage of the validity process consists of an evaluation by experts on the topic under study. Table 7 displays this study's panel of experts, which consisted of the dissertation committee members, and their feedback. The expert review is also displayed in Appendix H.

Table 7

Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions revised by the Panel of Experts

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
RQ1: What are the strategies and practices employed by leaders to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	Think of your simple most successful experience in building trust among your team members: IQ1: What practices did you engage in or what techniques did you use that lead to that success? IQ3: Think of another successful experience in building trust among your team members: What practices did you engage in or what techniques did you use that led to that success? IQ5: Are you aware of other practices and techniques for building trust among team members recommended or practiced by others in the field?
RQ2: What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	IQ2: What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques? IQ4: What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques? IQ6: Are you aware of any challenges or difficulties faced by others who have successfully built trust among team members?
RQ3: How do the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations?	IQ7: How do you define and measure your success in building trust with your team? IQ8: How do you maintain that trust over time?
RQ4: Based on their experiences, what recommendations would participants make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	IQ9: What mistakes have you made in the trust-building process that you would warn leaders to avoid? IQ10: Is there any other recommendation you would like to offer?

Note. The table identifies four RQ and corresponding interview questions with revisions based on feedback from the expert reviewers (committee). Subsequent changes were made to the order and phrasing of questions within the interview protocol.

Reliability of the Study

Reliability relates to the research process and the instrument’s ability to provide consistent responses (Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2017). A reliability process aims to

guarantee a research instrument's rigor, quality, and dependability (Bhattacharjee, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2017). The reliability of this study's research instrument of data collection, the interview protocol, was reached through a pilot study with male and female leaders in multinational organizations located in the United States. The pilot was conducted twice to ensure alignment with this study's purpose, RQ, and dependability of the data collection process. According to Smith (2019), pilot studies offer several methodological and theoretical benefits and can be applied in several situations, including the reliability of the interview questions in qualitative research.

Statement of Personal Bias

This research focused on the lived experience of building trust between leaders and team members in multinational organizations. The researcher has worked in several leadership positions for 12 years in a Brazilian multinational company. In those positions, she led teams of multiple members, from three to 232 members. Additionally, the researcher worked with professionals from several country-based locations: the United States, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Netherlands, China, Japan, United Arab Emirates, South Africa, South Korea, and Singapore. These experiences allowed the researcher to experience trust-building with different team compositions, nationalities, and various organizational ranks. The data were interpreted through the researcher's lenses, influenced by professional experiences.

In phenomenology, the researcher has to put aside personal experience and focus on the interviewees' lived experiences. However, personal bias is inherent in qualitative methodology (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Therefore, the researcher tries, as much as possible, to put aside or hold personal experiences to focus on the participant's lived experience (Bhattacharjee, 2019; Conklin, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2017). Epoche, or bracketing, is when the researcher abstains

from including their own perspective or experience and focuses on capturing the participant's purely lived experiences (Conklin, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2017). Putting aside personal experiences is a difficult task for phenomenologists as it contradicts the principle of reflexivity, which says that the interpretation and narrative of data incorporate the researcher's assumptions (Conklin, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2017). As the study's researcher and principal investigator, I recognize that my lived experience influenced how I saw the data. To minimize the risks imposed by my personal bias, I bracketed personal assumptions and prioritized the lived experience of the subjects, supporting them with the literature appraised. As recommended by Creswell and Poth (2017), I utilized bracketing as "the first step in the phenomenological reduction" or data analysis (p. 314). I set aside my personal experiences by taking notes when reading through the transcripts and relying on the appraised literature. Moreover, the data codes and thematic analysis went through a process of validity that included three peer reviewers.

Data Analysis

The process of analyzing data must be diligent and rigorous because it involves analyzing text into code and themes and making sense of the data to report the findings (Creswell, 2016). This study utilized Creswell and Poth's (2017) phenomenology approach to data analysis as follows:

- Managing and organizing the data collected in the interviews by creating separate files with de-identified text transcripts, organizing them per interviewer pseudonym, and storing them in a secure folder.
- Reading through the text, making reflexive notes, and summarizing emergent ideas that might serve for coding.

- Bracketing personal experiences and assumptions concerning the phenomenon being studied.
- Labeling and assembling a compilation of significant statements extracted from the interview files.
- Grouping those statements into meaning units, also known as themes, to remove repetition and provide the foundation for interpretation.
- Creating a textural description of what the participant experienced, including examples.
- Creating structural descriptions indicating how the participants lived the phenomenon.
- Finally, developing a composite description that shows the phenomenon's essence and incorporates textural and structural descriptions.

Coding

Creswell (2016) explained that coding is a qualitative data analysis technique in which researchers study data by disassembling it to see what it offers before reassembling it meaningfully. Coding allows the researcher to generate a large amount of evidence for themes. This study uses the eight steps for coding proposed by Creswell (2016): (a) prepare the individual transcript for analysis in a way the researcher can highlight statements, make notes, observations, and codes; (b) read the texts to get a sense of what participants are saying; (c) assign codes, which is a label in a bracket, connected to passages or paragraphs for each text; (d) create a list of codes; (e) combine codes to eliminate redundancies and create themes; (f) describe each theme; (g) develop a conceptual map displaying interconnection among theme that

helps describing the phenomenon and draw relevant findings; and (h) construct a narrative using the themes, that support the conclusions or findings section of a qualitative study.

Inter-rater Reliability

Implementing a validation procedure is critical to ensure the consistency of the results. The constancy of the replies to numerous coders of the data set is referred to as its reliability (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Qualitative studies employ intercoder or inter-rater reliability to establish credibility and stability. In addition to enhancing the coding process's transparency, communicability, and methodical nature, inter-rater reliability fosters debate and reflexivity (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020).

Four steps were taken to ensure the validity and reliability of this research. The researcher first coded the initial three interviews independently. Second, three PhD candidates with coding expertise conducted a peer review and provided input on the first coded interviews. Acquiring a consensus is the intended outcome. Third, the researcher will code the remaining interviews and send them back to the reviewers for verification, similar to the second phase. When a consensus cannot be reached, the dissertation committee will provide input.

Data Presentation

Creswell and Poth (2017) recommended a structured approach to data presentation and writing in phenomenology. An effective presentation of the data should consider significant statements, themes, textural and structural descriptions, and their composite description. Together, these support the research to explain the phenomenon's essence (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In addition to the text elements, the researcher might use graphics, quotes, and other elements to present the data better and describe the phenomenon.

Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the nature of the study, methodology, research design, data collection, and data analysis, aiming to conduct a credible and dependable qualitative study. This dissertation examines trust-building between leaders and team members in multinational organizations. To address the RQ related to this phenomenon, the researcher adopted qualitative methodology with a phenomenological assumption (Conklin, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2017), following an ontological position of constructivism (Grix, 2002) and an epistemological assumption of interpretivism (McGregor, 2019). This approach suits the study's purpose because it focuses on the participant's lived experiences (Bhattacharjee, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2017).

This study utilized semi-structured interviews to collect the data (A. Brown & Danaheer, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2017), and the target sample was 15 participants selected through purposive sampling (Creswell & Poth). Data analysis and presentation follow Creswell and Poth's (2017) recommendation of a structured process that includes analysis of significant statements, themes, textural and structural descriptions, and their composite description. The coding process follows the eight steps from Creswell (2016). The researcher engaged in the practice of bracketing personal assumptions to prioritize the lived experience of the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Ethical considerations and human protection followed the guidelines from Creswell and Poth (2017) and Pepperdine's Institution Review Board (Pepperdine Community, n.d.).

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

Establishing trust is crucial for fostering safe environments that support significant relationships, motivation, innovation, and outcomes (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Francis-Winters, 2017). This study builds on prior research on trust by integrating perspectives from cultural intelligence (Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014) and EI (Goleman et al., 2017). This dissertation aimed to analyze the lived experience of leaders in multinational companies, understanding their applied best practices, challenges, and measures of success for building trust with their teams. The results underpin a new model for leadership and trust.

This chapter addresses the analysis and results from analyzing data from 15 experienced leaders who work in multinational organizations. The researcher asked 10 questions to uncover the participants' lived experiences in building trust with their team members and to address the following RQs:

- RQ1: What are the strategies and practices employed by leaders to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?
- RQ2: What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?
- RQ3: How do the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations?
- RQ4: Based on their experiences, what recommendations would participants make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?

The 10 interview questions were used, along with follow-up questions. Follow-up questions were used only to clarify an answer or concept or ask for an example. The 10 interview questions are below:

1. Think of your simple, most successful experience in building trust among your team members: What practices did you engage in, or what techniques did you use that led to that success?
2. What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques?
3. Think of another successful experience in building trust among your team members: what practices did you engage in or what techniques did you use that led to that success?
4. What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques?
5. Are you aware of other practices and techniques for building trust among team members recommended or practiced by others in the field?
6. Are you aware of any challenges or difficulties faced by others who have successfully built trust among team members?
7. How do you define and measure your success in building trust with your team?
8. How do you maintain that trust over time?
9. What mistakes have you made in the trust-building process that you would warn leaders to avoid?
10. Is there any other recommendation you would like to offer?

This chapter consists of the following subsections: (a) participants, (b) data collection, (c) data analysis, (d) inter-rater review process, (e) data display, and (f) chapter summary.

Participants

The researcher selected participants purposefully using a professional social media platform, LinkedIn. A sampling frame was created using the criteria of inclusion and exclusion. First, the researcher used LinkedIn automatic filters to select participants based on organizational type, employment position, age, language, and location. With that, the researcher obtained a list of possible participants who were located in the United States, working in a multinational organization, employed in a leadership position of middle manager or higher, and who were aged 18 years or older. Then, the researcher assessed each profile individually to check the remaining criteria of inclusion, which were having at least 5 years of experience in a multinational organization and leadership positions with multiple members. Additionally, the researcher checked if the subjects were still working in multinational organizations. The subjects who had no longer worked for a multinational organization for at least 5 years were also excluded.

As a result of this in-depth analysis, the researcher obtained a master list in Excel containing participants' positions, years of experience in multinationals and leadership positions, and the link to their LinkedIn profile, which was the primary way of contacting and inviting them. The master list showed 114 possible participants who meet the criteria of inclusion and exclusion. Table 8 illustrates the profile of participants in the master list.

Table 8*Participants Profiles in the Master List*

Items	%	Count
Leadership Position	100%	114
Director	62%	71
Senior Manager	30%	34
C-level	3%	3
Middle Manager	3%	3
Vice President	3%	3
Years in Multinational Companies	100%	114
5 to 10 years	36%	41
11 to 15 years	22%	25
16 to 20 years	29%	33
20+ years	13%	15
Years in Leadership Position	100%	114
5 to 10 years	36%	41
11 to 15 years	24%	27
16 to 20 years	25%	29
20+ years	15%	17

Note. The table was created based on the researcher’s master list of possible participants. It displays the position and years of experience required for this study.

Most of the leaders were in senior positions, such as director (62%), senior manager (30%), c-level (3%), and vice president (3%). Only 3% of participants were in middle-management positions, which was an expected outcome, given the minimum time of experience in leadership positions required in this study. Their strong leadership experience is emphasized by their years of experience in leadership roles, also displayed in Table 8. Finally, they have demonstrated a long career in multinational organizations. Thirty-six percent have worked for multinational companies for 5 to 10 years, 22% between 11 and 15 years, 29% between 16 and 20 years, and 13% for over 20 years.

Upon approval of the Pepperdine IRB on March 12, 2024, the researcher invited all participants in the master list via LinkedIn direct message and InMail, using the recruitment script in Appendix C. Meanwhile, the researcher also announced the study via LinkedIn publication using the recruitment script in Appendix A. Nineteen individuals manifested their interest in participating in the study. Eighteen came from the master list and had the criteria verified before the contact. In the case of a person who manifested a willingness to participate in the study via LinkedIn announcement, the researcher evaluated the professional profile before accepting the participant.

The due date to collect the data was March 30, 2024. Four individuals willing to participate in the study were available only after April 1, 2024. Therefore, they were excluded following the last exclusion criteria regarding the study timeframe. As fewer than 20 subjects manifested interest in participating, the criteria of maximum variation were not necessary. In the end, 15 subjects were selected and interviewed.

Data Collection

The first contact with the possible participants was made via direct message and email on LinkedIn using the recruitment scripts in Appendix A or C. After they had accepted the invitation to participate in the study, communication took place via personal email provided by the participants. The informed consent form, displayed in Appendix D, and the interview protocol, in Appendix F, were emailed to each participant who agreed to participate in the study. Then, they signed and sent back their consent forms before their interviews. Additionally, the researcher sent an Outlook invite with a Zoom link to save the date and time for the individual interviews. The 15 subjects were interviewed from March 17 to March 29, 2024. Table 9

illustrates the list of interviewees per date, including information about their positions and experience length in multinational companies and leadership roles.

Table 9

Dates of the Participant Interviews

Participants	Leadership Position	Experience in Leadership	Experience in Multinationals	Interview Date
P1	Middle Manager	16 to 20 years	5 to 10 years	March 17, 2024
P2	Middle Manager	5 to 10 years	5 to 10 years	March 19, 2024
P3	Director	16 to 20 years	11 to 15 years	March 19, 2024
P4	Director	11 to 15 years	11 to 15 years	March 19, 2024
P5	Senior Manager	5 to 10 years	5 to 10 years	March 21, 2024
P6	Director	5 to 10 years	5 to 10 years	March 22, 2024
P7	Senior Manager	11 to 15 years	11 to 15 years	March 22, 2024
P8	C-level	11 to 15 years	5 to 10 years	March 22, 2024
P9	Middle Manager	5 to 10 years	5 to 10 years	March 23, 2024
P10	Vice President	20+ years	20+ years	March 25, 2024
P11	Director	16 to 20 years	11 to 15 years	March 26, 2024
P12	Vice President	20+ years	20+ years	March 26, 2024
P13	C-level	16 to 20 years	16 to 20 years	March 26, 2024
P14	Vice President	20+ years	5 to 10 years	March 27, 2024
P15	Director	16 to 20 years	5 to 10 years	March 29, 2024

Note. This table displays the 15 interviewees with their respective leadership positions, years of experience, and the date that the interview occurred.

On the day of each interview, the researcher opened the Zoom room 15 minutes before the scheduled time to prepare to receive the interviewees. The researcher started by greeting the participants and asking if they had any questions about the informed consent and interview protocol before beginning the interview. Only after making sure there were no questions from the participants did the researcher interview them following the interview protocol in Appendix F, along with follow-up questions. Follow-up questions were posited in case there was a need for clarification of the response or term or to ask for examples. The researcher closed the session by thanking the participants for their contribution and time.

The interviews lasted, on average, 40 minutes. The shortest was 22 minutes, and the longest was 59 minutes. All sessions were conducted online, using the researcher's personal Zoom room, and audio-recorded using Otter.AI, separated from Zoom. Otter.AI automatically provides transcripts for each audio clip using artificial intelligence. After the sessions, the researcher went through each transcript and audio to validate the transcript's accuracy and de-identify it. Afterward, the researcher saved the transcripts in a Word document, separated by the interviewee, before preparing the data for analysis. The audio recordings were deleted right after that process. The researcher took all IRB safeguard measures discussed in Chapter 3 to protect the data and subjects.

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized Word and Excel as tools for analyzing the data. The researcher first read the interview transcripts, which were saved in separate Word documents. The first reading was to get a sense of the whole lived experience of the participant and bracketing personal experiences and biases. Then, the researcher prepared the interview transcripts for coding by reading the transcripts a second time and organizing the participants' responses by interview questions in a consolidated Word document. During this analysis stage, the researcher highlighted the essential passages with distinct colors. Then, the researcher read the participants' responses a third time and labeled the passages with codes using the comments boxes in the Word document.

In this process, the passages were assigned two codes: structure and descriptive. The structure codes utilized were strategies, challenges, measurement, maintaining trust, mistakes, and recommendations. Those labels aim to connect the essence and purpose of the answers to each interview question. For example, while answering questions about challenges, the

researcher found answers on the strategies to build trust. Then, the researcher labeled that passage as a strategy. The second code is the descriptive one, which defines and summarizes the highlighted quotes into units of significance. They are a word or a combination of a few words representing the meaning of that strategy, challenges, measure of success, mistake, or recommendation the participants described. Descriptive codes are the ones used centrally in this research, and they underpin the themes.

The researcher used a hybrid coding type, combining deductive and inductive coding. It was deductive because the researcher had a list of possible codes and themes from the literature appraised in Chapter 2. It was also inductive because the researcher allowed new codes and themes to emerge from the transcripts to represent lived experiences to be analyzed in depth.

Once all passages were labeled, the researcher exported all comments containing their respective RQ numbers, interview question numbers, participants, quotes, structure codes, and descriptive code to an Excel and converted it from text to data. Using the Excel document with the organized data, the researcher read through the passages and codes to verify the accuracy of the terms, combine similar codes, and put aside, once again, personal experiences and biases. Then, the researcher grouped the codes into themes per interview questions.

Finally, the researcher created pivot tables per interview questions to analyze the themes and their frequencies among participants and create the charts in the present chapter. The Excel document also included a summary of themes per RQ to support the analysis. In the end, 486 quotes were highlighted from the interviews, labeled into 190 descriptive codes, and summarized into 37 themes. Upon completion of data analysis, 25 themes emerged as the most frequent to address the interview questions and the four RQs. The themes, both the most frequent and some

of the least frequent, are central to depicting the lived experiences for building trust presented in Chapters Four and Five.

Inter-Rater Review Process

During the data analysis, the researcher followed a rigorous inter-rater review process to guarantee the reliability of the codes, as described in Chapter Three. First, the researcher conducted the data analysis described in the previous section for the first three interviews, containing all answers from P1, P2, and P3 in Word and Excel documents. On March 26, 2024, the researcher shared the first round of coding in an Excel document with the three reviewers via Google Drive. All three reviewers were doctoral candidates and leadership experts. On March 29, 2024, the researcher received the reviewers' rates and incorporated the received recommendations.

Then, between March 30 and 31, the researcher coded the remaining interviews and shared a new Excel document with the same reviewers via Google Drive. All reviewers provided final comments on April 1, which were incorporated on the same day. Additionally, the researcher had an extra reviewer, the chair of this dissertation, Dr. Gabriella Miramontes, who worked with the researcher via Zoom meeting to analyze and further enhance the themes. Table 10 illustrates the adjustments executed in each round of revisions.

Table 10*Inter-rater Reviewers' Recommendations*

Round	Data	Revisions Applied
1st Round	March 26 – March 29	Changing descriptive code “interpersonal skills” to “building relationships” in IQ1 and IQ3. Changing the code ‘lean in’ to ‘engagement with people’ in IQ1.
2nd Round	March 31 – April 01	Changing the theme “Misleading Communication” to “Communication Challenge” in IQ2, IQ4, IQ6, and IQ9. Change the theme “Plasticity” to “Leadership plasticity” to provide more clarity about the term, which is new in the field of leadership.
Extra Revision	April 01	Incorporating the theme “Influence” under “Effective Communication” for IQ1, IQ3, IQ5, and IQ10, as the influence techniques among participants related to communication strategies. Incorporating the theme “Humility” under “Authenticity” in all questions. Incorporating “People development” under “Meaning/Purpose” in all questions. Combining the themes “Results” and “knowledge” and changing the name to “Ability” in accordance with the models of trust proposed by Mayer et al. (1995) and Stickel (2022). Combining the themes “Expectations” and “Setting Limits” as the codes and quotes under those themes pertained to how the leaders expected themselves and others to behave. Incorporating the theme “Power Paradox” under “Poor leadership” in IQ3, IQ5, and IQ9. Incorporating the theme ‘Inexperience’ under “Personal Weaknesses” in IQ3, IQ5 and IQ9. Incorporating the theme “Structural Problems” under “Organizational Problems” in IQ3 and IQ5.

Note. This table summarizes the changes incorporated in the codes and themes during each round of revisions.

Data Display

The data is displayed according to the RQs and corresponding interview questions. A frequency graph is presented for each interview question, showing the most frequent themes among the participants. The author uses codes and direct quotations from the interviewees to explain the most prominent themes.

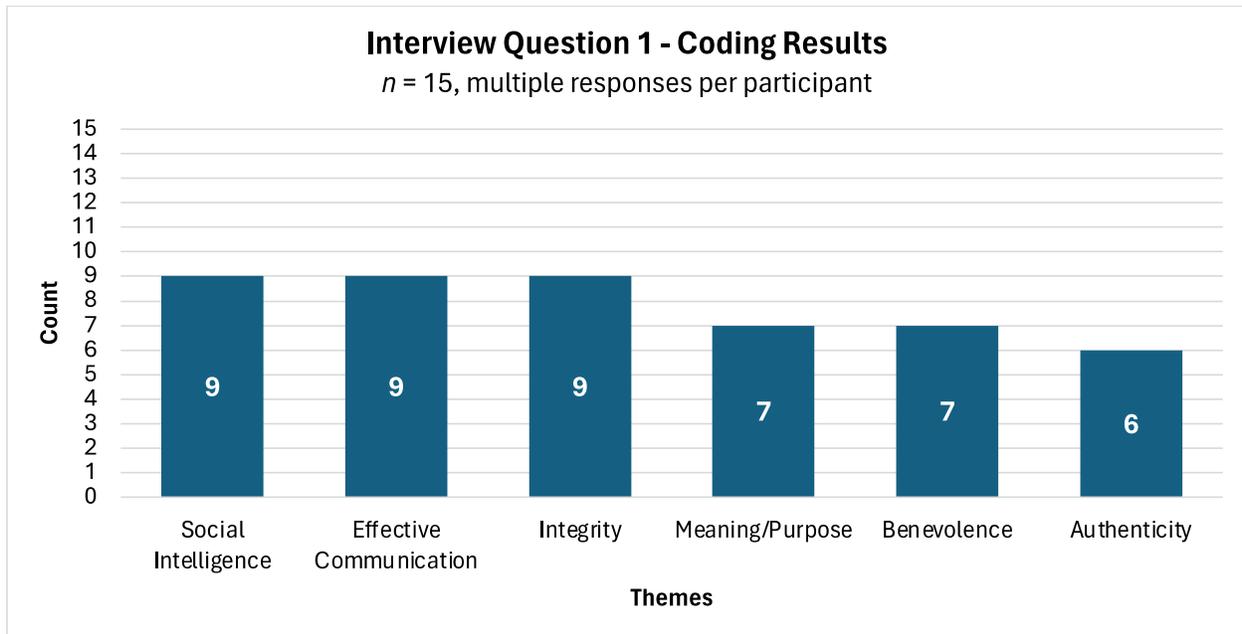
Research Question 1

The first research question (RQ1) asked about the strategies and practices employed to build trust among team members in multinational organizations. Interview Questions 1, 3, and 5 addressed this RQ. The interview questions about the participants' strategies to build trust with their team members had the highest number of inputs, with 224 coded passages, 83 codes, and 15 themes, from which nine themes were more frequent and were discussed through each interview question.

Interview Question 1. The first interview question (IQ1) asked, "Think of your simple most successful experience in building trust among your team members: what practices did you engage in, or what techniques did you use that led to that success?" Six themes emerged as the most prominent practices and techniques applied by leaders to build trust among their team members. They are (a) social intelligence, (b) effective communication, (c) integrity, (d) meaning/purpose, (e) benevolence, and (f) authenticity. Figure 6 illustrates the overarching themes answering IQ1.

Figure 6

Coding Results for Interview Question 1



Note. This figure displays the most frequent themes from the participants’ answers to IQ1. Each bar represents one theme and the number of participants who mentioned that theme.

Social Intelligence. Nine participants (60%) used social intelligence practices and techniques to build trust with their teams. Social intelligence is one of the three top themes in IQ1. It encompasses elements for cultivating relationships and connections with others (Goleman, 2007). It is mostly about being present and understanding others rather than talking about oneself (King, 2017). The descriptive codes under the theme of social intelligence in IQ1 evidenced the idea of fostering a connection with the other person. They include empathy, availability, human bonds, human orientation, building relationships, listening, social awareness, and engaging with people.

Participants’ statements present examples of those practices. For example, P9 said, “You have to have empathy to understand what the other person and what the team is going through.”

P14, whose company has trust as one of its core values, also emphasized the role of an empathic approach to building trust by stating, “We approach the person that we’re dealing with, the group we’re dealing with, with a tremendous amount of empathy.”

Furthermore, P3 emphasized the importance of intentionally engaging with others by saying, “I asked to be involved with conversations, meetings, and so on so that I could understand more about what the issue was about. So, it was not transactional.” The same participant also emphasized the need to be available to support other people. Aligned with that idea, P4 said, “They feel that they can trust you because you’re going to listen to their ideas as well, and you’re going to try to accommodate their needs.”

Finally, P10 illustrated the idea of human bonds, orientation, and social awareness to foster trust: “Human connection. Getting to know people at a human level regardless of what they’re doing in that particular moment, to approach people from their humanity.” P11 stated, “Put people first and let people know we are not just tools to execute a job. We are people with families, people with life, and we come here to work, to make money.”

Effective Communication. The theme of effective communication was among the three top themes in IQ1 and emerged from nine participants’ (60%) statements. Leaders apply effective communication strategies to make information flow openly among team members in a way that makes them feel included and increases trust (G. Brown, 2021; Zak, 2017). These strategies help leaders connect with people and achieve mutual understanding in different situations (Rice et al., 2021) or when a message needs to be shared (Jolaoso & Main, 2023). Effective communication in IQ1 included descriptive codes such as open communication, common ground, charisma, and influence. For example, P9 suggested “open communication, providing regular updates on progress or addressing inputs when people tell you something and

actually doing something with it.” P2 mentioned an experience finding common ground during conversations with other people, “having worked in transportation along with our car people. So, it’s very easy. You just start talking about cars. And then you suddenly have, like, a connection.” Additionally, P12 expressed the relationship between influence and trust, “I can identify their motivations soon enough to go and influence them because that also builds trust.” As a last example, P7 brought up charisma: “It’s very much charisma. You know, I try as much as I can to solve the charisma formula to connect with people.” P7 remarked on the importance of communication by stating, “Also, to make sure the communication works well, sharing it at our level.”

Integrity. Integrity is also among the top themes in IQ1, with a frequency of 60%. Integrity relates to an individual’s character, ethical behaviors, truthfulness, honesty, congruence, and transparency (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). It is also related to following rules and principles that are common to a group or an organization (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018). The emerging codes in IQ1 are integrity, honesty, transparency, and reliability. For example, P1 suggested that “honesty has always been the most important for trust-building.” P15 said, “I think being very honest with people is important.” The P3 strategy was based on “Establishing myself as something that they could rely on.” Lastly, P12 mentioned the importance of “honesty and transparency in the decisions you make.”

Meaning/Purpose. The theme of meaning/purpose emerged in responses from seven participants (47%). According to Covey et al. (2022), one of the three stewardships of a trusting and inspiring leader is connecting the organization and team purpose to individual purposes and meaning. The personal meaning relates to why people do what they do (Sinek, 2017) and is crucial to their motivation to persist under challenging situations (Frankl, 2006). People might

find meaning and purpose in different areas, from personal development to contributions to other individuals, groups, or even organizations (Covey et al., 2022; Frankl, 2006). Therefore, leaders might use different strategies to provide meaning and purpose to their followers. The descriptive codes from the participants' responses in IQ1 include explaining why, providing purpose, sharing perspectives and visions, people development, mentoring, recognition, and value congruence. For example, P6 elaborated on how trust was built and motivated a new team the participant had taken over in the past:

I pointed people to the purpose of what we were doing, how it impacted not only the leaders that were in training but also how their effectiveness, meaning the leader's effectiveness, would impact how we delivered on our corporate-wide goals.

Furthermore, P8 stated, "For example, Generation Z, I feel that they need to be connected to a purpose." P5 shared their practice of "Sharing the vision with the team and making them believe in that." The same participant said, "Empower the people to do their jobs. You need to give them tools to take control of their domain and run with it."

Benevolence. The theme of benevolence appeared in seven participants' (47%) responses. Benevolence is a core construct in other models of trust (Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). Therefore, it was an expected outcome in this study. A benevolent individual is genuinely concerned about others' well-being, has their best interest in mind, and is willing to support them in several capacities (Mayer et al., 1995; Schneider Demaría, 2022; Stickel, 2022).

The codes underpinning this theme are benevolence, serving others, and reciprocity. Examples of genuine benevolence are expressed when P4 stated, "I want my folks to trust me because I have their best interest in mind, business interest in mind, and client's interest in mind." In addition, P11 mentioned, "I have their interests at heart." Moreover, reciprocity means

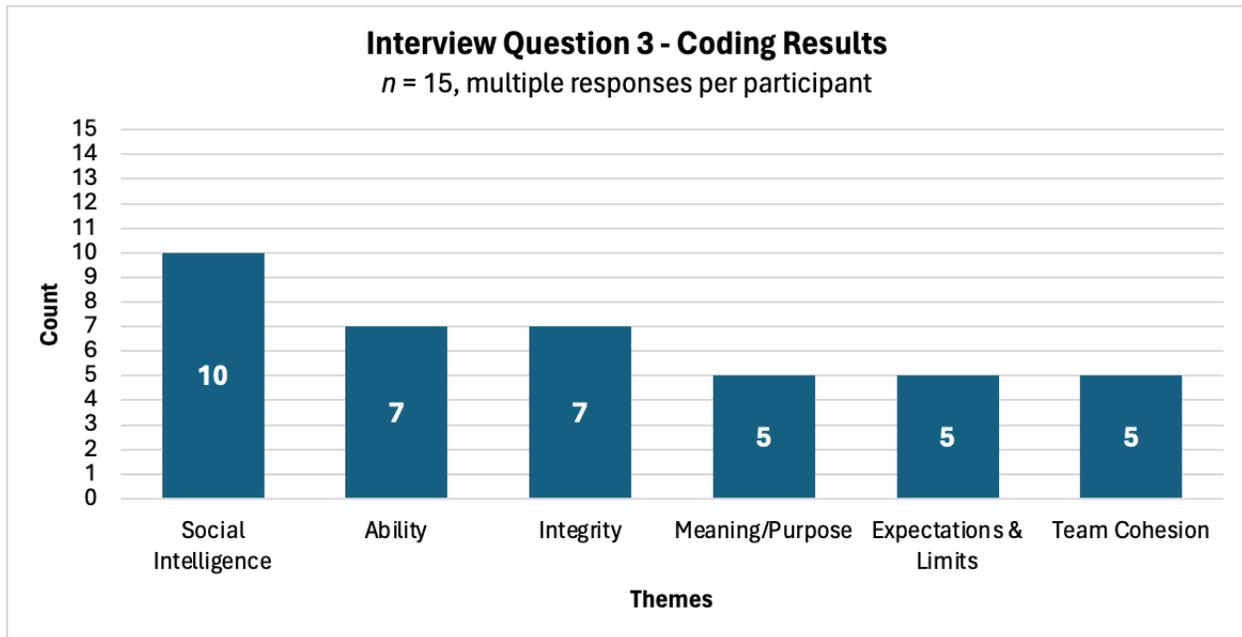
that the leader gives trust first to the employee, based on the belief and good intention that the employee will reciprocate that trust. For example, P5 said, “The only way you can build trust is by believing in the people that are with you.” P14 expressed a belief that “The fastest way to get trust is to give trust.”

Authenticity. The theme of authenticity emerged in six participants’ responses to IQ1 (40%). Covey et al. (2022) emphasized authenticity as a core element of a trustworthy and inspiring leader. Authentic individuals live under their beliefs and values (Covey et al., 2022; George et al., 2018), and they are an outcome of their life story, so they are willing to be vulnerable and humble to improve themselves (George et al., 2018; Seppala, 2018). Codes raised from the responses in IQ1 include authenticity, being genuine, vulnerability, being humble, and asking for help. For example, P5 expressed, “I feel like the only way you can build trust is if you’re genuine.” P10 said, “When people recognize that the other party is being honest, transparent, and authentic. That is the foundation that you need for a trusting relationship.” Also, P8 stated, “I am the CEO of the company, but you know, being a leader doesn’t mean that you know everything.” P15 said, “I’m not above asking for help.”

Interview Question 3. The third interview question (IQ3) asked was, think of another successful experience in building trust among your team members: what practices did you engage in or what techniques did you use that led to that success? Six themes emerged as the most prominent practices and techniques applied by leaders to build trust among their team members. They are (a) social intelligence, (b) competence, (c) integrity, (d) meaning/purpose, (e) expectations and limits, and (f) team cohesion. Figure 7 displays the overarching themes in IQ3.

Figure 7

Coding Results for Interview Question 3



Note. This figure displays the most frequent themes from the participants' answers to IQ3. Each bar represents one theme and the number of participants who mentioned that theme.

Social Intelligence. The theme of social intelligence was shown as a solid strategy to build trust also in IQ3. Ten participants (67%) mentioned techniques and practices related to social intelligence. The descriptive codes under social intelligence for IQ3 include empathy, human bonds, listening, positive relationships, and social awareness. For example, P8 stated, "You need to be very close to your team. Listen to them. Have direct communication and always be open to hearing." Also, P5 said, "I would say I listened a lot." And P1 mentioned, "Empathy has helped me quite a bit in the past year or so, I would say. I'm trying to put myself in her shoes and helping out in any way possible." The codes and quotes keep in alignment with the social intelligence idea of building relationships by being curious and interested in others, as proposed by King (2017).

Ability. The theme of ability appeared in seven participants' responses (47%). Ability is a primary construct of the model of organizational trust proposed by Mayer et al. (1995) and Stickel's (2022) model of trust. According to those authors, ability is the capacity, knowledge, and skills necessary to generate results, meet expectations, and resolve problems. The codes that emerged from the responses to IQ3 are experience, knowledge, delivering results, accountability, assessment to learn, self-development, solving problems, and general laborer. Participants' direct quotations illustrate some of those codes. P4 shared, "It's just problem-solving, or like helping them actually walk through the steps in solving a problem." P12 expressed,

That's one thing that I felt like, over time, in my career, I've built enough knowledge, both from the business from finance and from markets, where I can understand and have a view of things. That's one of the things that is important; you need to know your stuff.

P3 said,

I was a little bit more familiar with what the team was trying to do, the processes that they were looking at, and I had experience with something similar and just kind of the challenges and barriers that I faced.

P1 stated, "There's some extra value that I can add to the business and help out and make a difference for this person to accomplish her targets and, you know, transform a failed organization into a successful business."

Integrity. The theme of integrity appeared in seven participants' (47%) responses to IQ3. This term is strongly supported by current models of trust (Covey et al., 2022; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). The codes representing leaders' practices under integrity include congruence, honesty, transparency, and reliability. For example, P7 stated, "It's to be the professional example. You know, to do the things that you expected the people to do."

Additionally, P10 stated, “I think that’s very key for building trust, just be honest with the people.” The same participant also elaborated on reliability by saying, “The people who, whom I’ve had these conversations, they trust me because they know I’m not gonna go behind their backs.”

Meaning/Purpose. The theme of meaning/purpose emerged in five participants’ (33%) responses. As previously mentioned, providing meaning and purpose relates to why people do what they do and what motivates them to pursue something in life (Covey et al., 2022; Frankl, 2006; Sinek, 2017). Those codes from their responses are empowering people, explaining why, individual purpose, people development, mentoring, and providing purpose. P3 expressed, “If you can explain to them why you’re asking them to do something, then you realize: Oh, so there is value, and that’s why you’re asking me to do this thing for you.” P11 shared another example:

For all my team, everyone has a development plan of where you want to go. And there are some of them that what is important for them is “I want to get ready for my next role. Can you help me?” So, with this associate, what I did was I reviewed the development plan, gave them recommendations to help them find mentors, and started helping them look for roles that will get them to the next role.

Expectations and Limits. Five leaders (33%) mentioned practices related to the theme of expectations and limits. The codes under this theme include providing guidance, setting a contract, limits of collaboration, boundaries, and constant feedback. Setting expectations is about clarifying what is expected from the employees and offering advice, support, and norms (Covey et al., 2022; Okello & Gilson, 2015). Equally important is setting boundaries and revealing personal intentions (Hill & Lineback, 2012b). For example, leader P10 explained,

Then you can agree on the ways of working, so how often does this team come together and talk about what and who leads the team meetings and what roles there are for others that are not leading the team. Also, to take agenda preparation or note taking and so you kind of organize the work and that becomes a contract for the team.

Additionally, P9 expressed, “I’ve also found that having clear goals and expectations along with regular feedback and check-ins kind of set some regular cadence whether it’s weekly or monthly or quarterly, also fosters trust and a culture of accountability.” And P8 stated, “I believe more in constant follow-up if you are a real leader who works close to your team.”

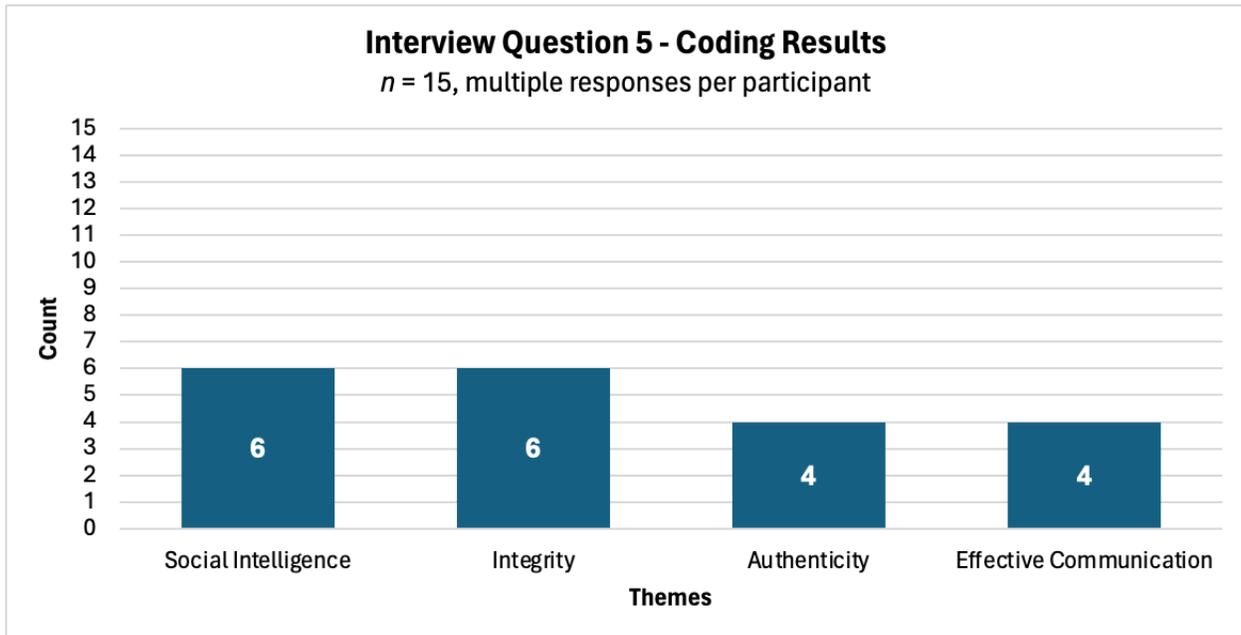
Team Cohesion. Five leaders (33%) mentioned practices related to the theme of team cohesion. A team is considered cohesive when its members work well together. Team cohesion and individual trust affect each other (Paul et al., 2016). The codes under this theme are group awareness, collaboration, team building, and group common goals. For example, P3 said, “Recognize the different ways that the team could do better.” P9 said, “Assemble people around like a common goal, then that, in and of itself, is a way that you can drive success with everyone working together.” The same participant expressed a way to foster collaboration: “I think that collaboration, and then celebrating some of those achievements kind of along the way, creates like this positive and cohesive team dynamic.” The last example is from P12, who stated, “Do activities outside of work time. That is something that creates better engagement between the members.”

Interview Question 5. The fifth interview question (IQ5) asked, “Are you aware of other practices and techniques for building trust among team members recommended or practiced by others in the field?” Four themes emerged as the most prominent practices and techniques

recommended to build trust among their team members. They are (a) social intelligence, (b) integrity, (c) authenticity, and (d) effective communication (Figure 8).

Figure 8

Coding Results for Interview Question 5



Note. This figure displays the most frequent themes from the participants' answers to IQ5. Each bar represents one theme and the number of participants who mentioned that theme.

Social Intelligence. Once more, the theme of social intelligence came out as a strong strategy recommended by leaders to build trust with their teams. This theme is prominent in IQ1, IQ3, and IQ5. Six participants (40%) recommended practices and techniques to build trust under that theme in IQ5. The descriptive codes under social intelligence for IQ5 include human orientation, inner circle, listening, and social awareness (King, 2017). For example, P3 spotlighted how having an inner circle relationship supported the trust-building process by saying, "I do try to build like an inner circle, as a leader, or even in a non-leadership position, I need a circle of people that I can trust and rely on." P14 provided another example that shows the importance of listening to increase awareness: "Taking the time to be an active listener, right,

just be present, understand what's going on, and be situationally aware it can be very powerful.” Finally, human orientation is illustrated in P7's and P2's comments. P7 said, “You have to like people.” P2 said, “We talked about our dogs, you know, how was your dog doing or your kids doing. You know, it's very, very easy to talk, very human.” This last quotation is an example of everyday conversation that displays a human orientation and pure interest in building relationships with others.

Integrity. The theme of integrity came up as an overarching theme in IQ1, IQ3, and IQ5. It emerged in six participants' (40%) responses to IQ5. The literature and several models of trust present integrity as a traditional construct of trust (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022), making its high frequency expected. The codes under this theme for IQ5 include integrity, honesty, transparency, acknowledging mistakes, work ethics, and reliability. For example, P2 said, “Somebody who was successful in creating a little bit of extra trust with this new manager has been a junior manager from the finance department because of being honest, transparent, and demonstrating good working ethics.” An additional example is illustrated in the P14 experience,

I had the chance to engage with the person and say I'm sorry [and] that I understand why what I did was not in line with the values that I espouse and that congruence is important. And if you would give me the honor of a chance, I'll fix that.

Authenticity. Once more, authenticity showed up as an overarching theme. This theme was among the most frequently used strategies to build trust in IQ1 and IQ5. It refers to how individuals' characters and behaviors are linked to their beliefs, values, and life stories (Covey et al., 2022; George et al., 2018; Seppala, 2018). Four participants (27%) mentioned this strategy in their responses to IQ5. The codes that emerged from their responses are authenticity, humility,

courage, and vulnerability. P2 expressed, “I think the good leaders are just very, very down-to-earth.” P14 self-recommended, “Just staying humble and staying curious are the words that I keep saying to myself anytime I engage in a new culture.” Additionally, P5 said, “I think everybody has their own unique way of managing people, right, connecting with people and when you were in a leadership position. You really need to be authentic.”

Effective Communication. Four participants (27%) recommended effective communication strategies in IQ5. This theme repeats as an overarching theme in IQ1 and IQ5. It consists of leaders’ strategies to convey information and connect with people (G. Brown, 2021; Jolaoso & Main, 2023). The codes that emerged from their answers to IQ5 are communication, common ground, and constant check-ins. For example, P6 expressed how they kept communication alive among team members: “Sometimes, they call it pop-up; sometimes, they call it standard meetings. It’s really about when you have each team member talk about what they’re working on and where they need help from the team.” P11 highlighted the importance of communication by saying, “Communicate as much as possible: communicate down, communicate upwards, communicate across.”

Summary of RQ1. The first RQ analyzed the strategies and practices for building trust among team members in multinational organizations. When combining the most frequent practices and techniques applied and recommended by the participants, nine overarching strategies emerged. They are represented by the themes: (a) social intelligence, (b) integrity, (c) ability, (d) meaning/purpose, (e) effective communication, (f) authenticity, (g) benevolence, (h) expectations and limits, and (i) team cohesion.

In contrast, some themes were expected from the literature review but were not prominent among this group of participants. Such themes relate to the leader’s emotional

readiness (Eddinger, 2024; Goleman, 2019), cultural sensitivity (Bird, 2018; Borum, 2010), and the creation of a safe environment and belongingness (Francis-Winters, 2017). Even though a few participants mentioned them, they were not frequent enough among team members in the IQs to be considered an overarching theme. Therefore, they were not considered in the frequency charts or the list of leadership strategies and best practices to build trust among team members in multinational companies.

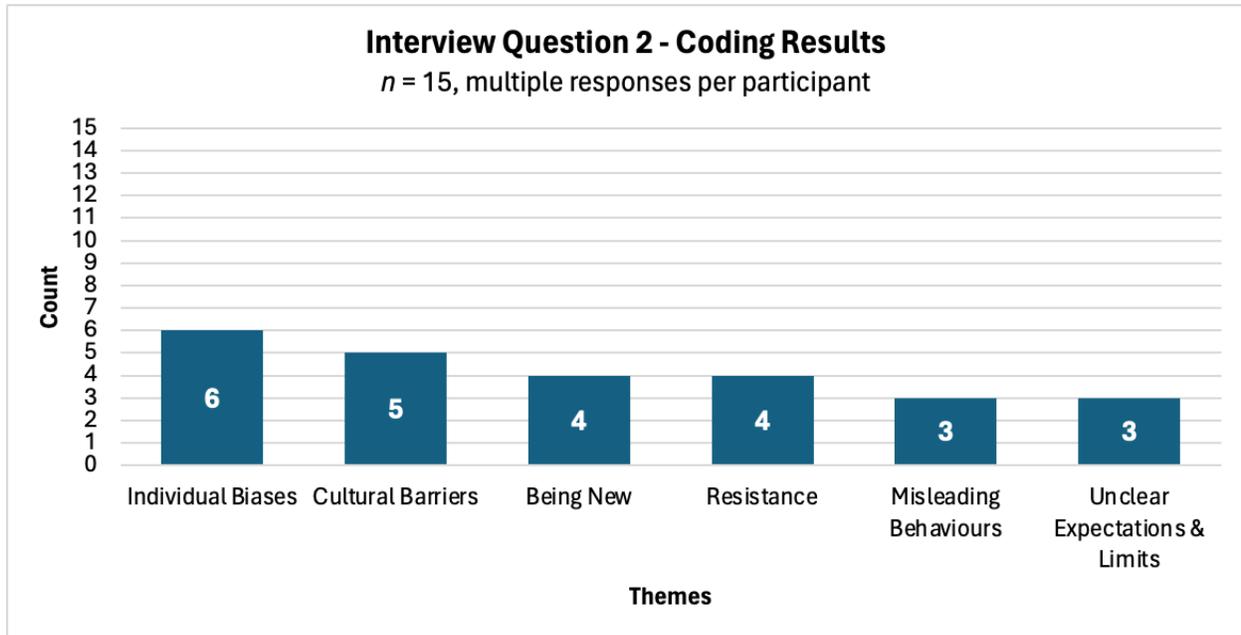
Research Question 2

The second research question (RQ2), What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations? is addressed with Interview Questions 2, 4, and 6. The three IQs about the participants' challenges and difficulties in building trust with their team members generated fewer inputs than the three IQs about leaders' strategies to build trust. The responses from all IQs in RQ2 provided 105 coded passages, 61 codes, and 15 themes, from which 11 themes were more frequent and were discussed within each IQ. Also, the frequency charts for the IQs inside RQ2 illustrate a lower frequency on each theme because the participants shared fewer examples of challenges than strategies.

Interview Question 2. The second interview question (IQ2) asked, "What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques?" Six themes emerged as the most frequent challenges leaders encounter when implementing strategies to build trust among their team members. They are (a) individual biases, (b) cultural barriers, (c) being new, (d) resistance, (e) misleading behaviors, and (f) unclear expectations and limits (Figure 9).

Figure 9

Coding Results for Interview Question 2



Note. This figure displays the most frequent themes from the participants' answers to IQ2. Each bar represents one theme and the number of participants who mentioned that theme.

Individual Biases. Six participants (40%) reported challenges related to individual biases. The theme includes leaders' and employees' biases. They are manifested in distinct dispositions to give trust, different personalities, and experiences (Brockner, 2006; Hurley, 2006; Stickel, 2022). Also, people's bad experiences giving or trying to earn trust affect their willingness to trust others (DeSteno, 2014). The codes in the participants' responses are individual biases, individual differences, stereotypes of trust, and different generations. For example, P5 said, "I learned a lot with that right with having those setbacks and understanding that people are not the same." P10 expressed, "The difficulty can be on the other side of the equation. Some people are very suspicious or may have been hurt in the past and, therefore, have very, very low trust thresholds."

Cultural Barriers. Five leaders (33%) illustrated difficulties connected to cultural barriers. Cultural distortions within the organization impact employees' willingness to trust their leadership (Crabtree, 2018). Additionally, cultural barriers transcend organizational boundaries, including different languages and national norms (Bird, 2018). The codes under this theme are cultural barriers, cultural distortion, and language barriers. For example, P10 expressed, "Especially when you talk about working in a multinational company where we interact with people from all over the world, cultural norms can be slightly different." P2 said, "Often, language is a barrier."

Additionally, P11 said, "I have associates across California and Bentonville and China. Each of them has unique things that are important to them. What you have to be careful of is to be cognizant of the magnitude of the actions." Finally, P9 expressed, "The cultural differences, I think people often receive information in different ways or want to be engaged in different ways."

Being New. Four leaders (27%) mentioned the challenge of being new to an organization, position, or team. Being new did not appear in the appraised literature on building trust, EI, and cultural intelligence as a challenge. People tend to be suspicious of others when they do not know them yet (Deutsch, 1960). The codes shown in the responses to IQ3 include being new, new to the group, and proving oneself. For example, P6 expressed,

This was me stepping into a new job, where I had more or less of a team of where someone had done the job like 9 years in the past, and I was stepping in with more of a consultant team. And they were used to doing things a certain way. The person before me had a different level of credentials.

P3 stated, “They didn’t know who I was, what value I would bring. So, it was important to find my way into the circle. So, identifying people that I could work with, and then just kind of work upwards.”

Resistance. The theme of resistance appeared in five participants’ (27%) responses. This theme encompasses codes such as individual resistance, resistance to change, and negativity (David & Congleton, 2013; Kirkman et al., 1999). For instance, P6 shared, “I also had to overcome resistance, which was resistance to change. Because the direction that the organization wanted this group to go in was different from where they came from.” P15 said, “On top of having some negative people on the team just generally. Then you add the changes, they become more negative.” Finally, P12 expressed, “Sometimes you’re not met with an open door.”

Misleading Behaviors. Three participants (20%) reported challenges related to misleading behaviors. This theme includes codes such as hidden agendas, taking advantage of others, not keeping promises, and unequal treatment. These behaviors are opposite to ones of integrity and honesty included in the models of trust from Covey et al. (2022), Stickel (2022), and Mayer et al. (1995). Some examples of those behaviors are expressed by the direct quotations of P11 and P14. P11 said, “You have to be very careful. People may sometimes take advantage of the situation.” P14 explained, “If there’s a chink in the armor, there’s a fracture in the leadership, structure, and behavior. It immediately creates skepticism and trust breakdown.”

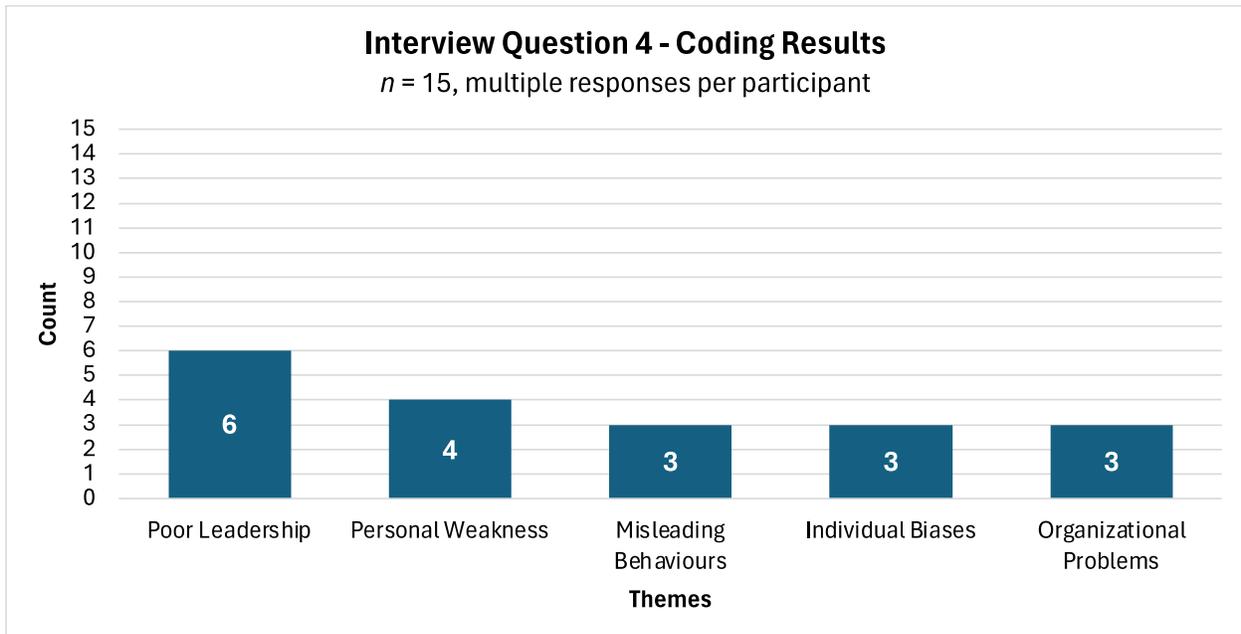
Unclear Expectations and Limits. Three participants (20%) mentioned the theme of unclear expectations and limits. It is the opposite of clarifying goals and explaining the purpose (Covey et al., 2022; Sinek, 2017), and it impacts the perception of fairness (Brockner, 2006). The codes under this theme include different expectations, personal boundaries, and losing perspective. For example, P1 mentioned, “Sometimes you can even lose control of the business

because, down the line, you no longer know what’s going on.” P6 said, “The other thing that I had to deal with was that the team had an expectation as to what my qualifications should have been for this job as a leader, and I was compared to the other leader.” Finally, P8 expressed, “Family is different than the people who work with you.”

Interview Question 4. The fourth IQ asked what challenges or difficulties the interviewee faced in implementing those practices and techniques. Five themes emerged as the most frequent challenges leaders encounter when implementing strategies to build trust among their team members. They are (a) poor leadership, (b) personal weaknesses, (c) misleading behaviors, (d) personal biases, and (e) organizational problems (Figure 10).

Figure 10

Coding Results for Interview Question 4



Note. This figure displays the most frequent themes from the participants’ answers to IQ4. Each bar represents one theme and the number of participants who mentioned that theme.

Poor Leadership. Six leaders (40%) reported challenges related to poor leadership. This theme combines codes such as lack of leadership skills, maturity, and power paradox. Power

paradox relates to the fact that some leaders, when granted power, start to behave in a way that is egocentric and not respectful to others, and, thus, the trust in that leader is destroyed (Keltner, 2017; Porath & Pearson, 2013). For example, P6 shared, “I had a boss that was not good at all, had a boss that was also credential. But how can I say, not too hands-on, nonstrategic, didn’t really know what the person was doing, and very self-centered.”

Moreover, P11 expressed, “If you look at it from the human side, from the individual side, authorities have weight. Sometimes, that barrier is not broken by just sitting and talking.” The last example is from P08, who said, “I saw many meetings, for example, where the director was a person who spoke or spoke louder than everybody, and nobody had the courage to speak their minds, to be honest, and say I don’t agree with that.”

Personal Weaknesses. The theme of personal weaknesses emerged in four leaders’ (27%) responses. Personal weaknesses are a combination of codes about personal inexperience, insecurities, and lack of preparedness. Inexperience in dealing with specific situations or leading a team negatively affects the leaders’ trustworthiness (Bunker et al., 2002; Covey et al., 2022). For example, P6 said, “I think the challenges in both scenarios are my own insecurities, right? We can call it impostor syndrome.” Additionally, P4 expressed, “It’s not knowing the challenges. You know, I don’t know where that report is. I don’t know, maybe, what those numbers are saying. I don’t know where to find that. I don’t know how to do that.” The same participant complemented, “Sometimes, it’s just the learning curve. And it’s don’t apologize for yourself, just move forward.”

Misleading Behaviors. The theme of misleading behaviors came up in three participants’ (27%) responses. This theme was also prominent in IQ2 and IQ6. It refers to an individual lack of integrity, honesty, and transparency (Covey et al., 2022; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022).

The descriptive codes that emerged in responses to IQ4 for this theme are hidden agenda, selfishness, and unequal treatment. For example, P1 expressed, “Greed and selfishness might be the biggest challenges right now.” And P12 said, “If there is, there is just a fake front page, and then, you know, behind the scenes, it’s really not like that, then I think that destroys trust.”

Individual Biases. Six participants (33%) reported challenges related to individual biases. This theme repeats as one of the most frequent challenges in IQ2 and IQ4. The codes that emerged from the responses in IQ4 are individual biases and stereotypes of trust. This theme relates to one’s predisposition to give trust (Brockner, 2006; Hurley, 2006; Stickel, 2022). For example, P9 expressed, “I think people have a lot of opinions sometimes. And so, it’s hard to always align diverse perspectives.” P11 said, “I would say the challenge related to the human nature.” P4 mentioned,

Sometimes, they will show you who they are if you let them. I mean, I do believe that they have just a past and a trauma there that you will never penetrate in the human relationship in the work environment.

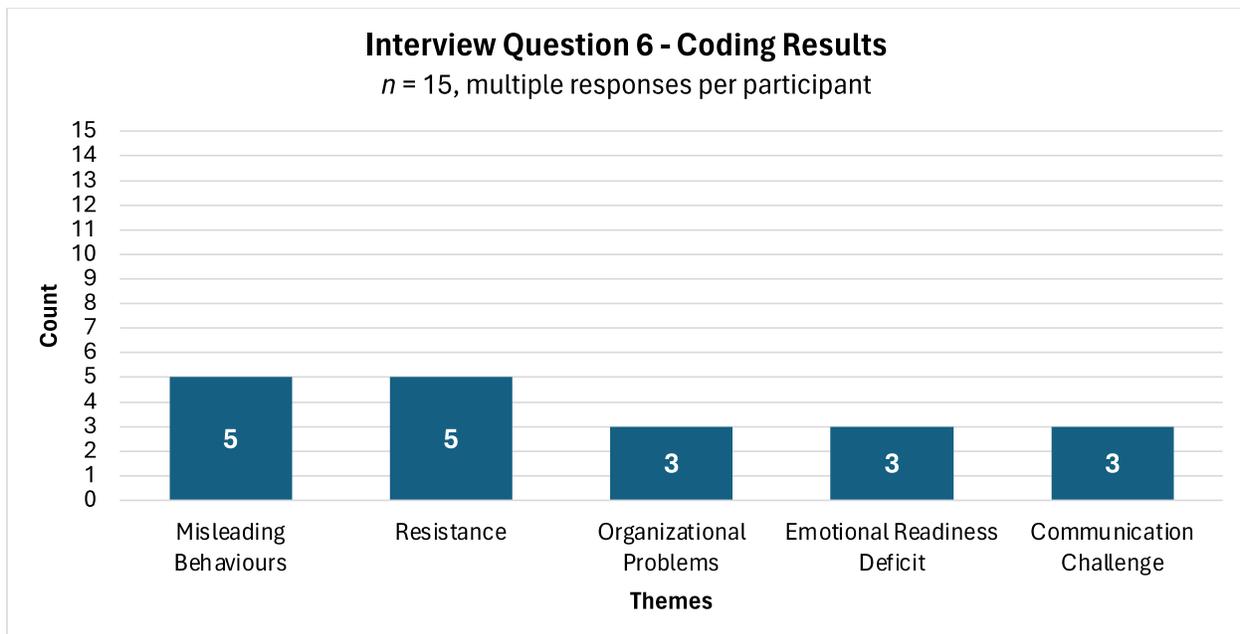
Organizational Problems. The last overarching theme in IQ4 is organizational problems. It appeared in three interviewees’ (20%) responses. According to Galford and Drapeau (2003), organizational pitfalls decrease the employees’ willingness to trust their leaders. The codes in participants’ responses are poor organizational performance and change, excess of meetings, and distance among team members. For example, P8 said, “Too many meetings, I believe, cannot be so productive and also can be kind of frustrating.” P11 shared, “I have somebody that wants to work from home all the time. That will make him really, really happy. But we expect people to be in the office a certain amount of the time.” A last example came from P15, who expressed,

“It’s also just the organization itself. So, we’ve been going through significant changes. And because right now, the team doesn’t trust the company. It’s really hard to trust me.”

Interview Question 6. The sixth IQ posed to the participants was, are you aware of other practices and techniques for building trust among team members recommended or practiced by others in the field? Five themes emerged as the most frequent challenges leaders faced when implementing strategies to build trust among their team members. They are (a) misleading behaviors, (b) resistance, (c) organizational problems, (d) emotional readiness deficit, and (e) communication challenges (Figure 11).

Figure 11

Coding Results for Interview Question 6



Note. This figure displays the most frequent themes from the participants’ answers to IQ6. Each bar represents one theme and the number of participants who mentioned that theme.

Misleading Behaviors. Five leaders (33%) mentioned misleading behaviors. This theme is also repeated in IQ2 and IQ4. The codes raised in IQ6 responses include misleading behavior, unequal treatment, value violation, not acknowledging mistakes, hidden agendas, and hidden

intentions (Covey et al., 2022). For example, P4 stated, “Treating everyone fairly and realizing that fair as equal isn’t fair, like those are two different things.” P14 mentioned, “You can identify a moment where you had the opportunity to say I’m sorry, to say, I missed it.” Additionally, P5 said,

I feel sometimes leaders get pushed to make decisions that they don’t like, and then sometimes they are not following their values, and that’s when the problem of trust with the team starts, and then once you lose trust, things are complicated.

Resistance. Five leaders (33%) mentioned challenges and difficulties related to people’s resistance. This theme came out in IQ2 and IQ6 as an overarching theme. It happens when an individual or group opposes others or changes the way they are working (David & Congleton, 2013; Kirkman et al., 1999). In the responses to IQ6, the codes that emerged are resistance, being reactive, and skepticism. For example, P3 mentioned an occasion marked by someone being reactive by saying, “Always saying ‘No, I don’t.’ I mean, I think if you if you’re looking to build trust with anybody, there is something that you want to do.” Moreover, P14 shared, “What I’ve seen the trust break down in others [is that] they become defensive. They’re ... not willing to hear the feedback.”

Organizational Problems. Five participants (33%) described challenges around them of organizational problems in IQ6. This theme previously emerged in IQ4, and it relates to organizational pitfalls that might impact the leaders’ trustworthiness (Galford & Drapeau, 2003). The codes in the interviewees’ responses are organizational complexity, balancing organizational interests, daily stress, and having a big team. For example, P4 expressed difficulties in “trying to balance being between HQ and your team,” while P13 mentioned, “It’s hard always to have time to recognize. Sometimes, it’s just stress with the day-to-day activities.” Additionally, leader 15

said, “I focus on the work first. I probably should focus on getting to know them [team members] first.”

Emotional Readiness Deficit. Three leaders (20%) mentioned the theme of emotional readiness deficit. Emotional readiness includes characteristics of EI related to the self, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-motivation (Goleman, 2020) and the individual ability to use EI and resilience to deal with challenging situations that appear in all walks of life (Coutu, 2002; Kopans, 2017). The codes that emerged from participants’ responses include lack of self-awareness, fear of dealing with conflicts, and issues with self-regulation. For example, P5 stated, “The other challenge is when we need to help the team members deal with conflict amongst themselves.” P15 mentioned, “Lack of self-awareness is a big one that I’ve seen.” P12 also shared, “Overcoming the emotional part of the individual is always very challenging.”

Communication Challenges. The last prominent challenge in IQ6 is about communication. The theme of communication challenges showed up in three interviewees’ (20%) responses. One of the leaders’ most significant challenges is to communicate their messages, intent, and vision clearly and consistently (McLain & Pendell, 2023). Some codes under communication challenges are inadequate communication, communication barriers, the weight of leaders’ voices in the communication process, and lack of transparency or clarity in the message being conveyed. For example, P9 stated, “Communication barriers, I think some people prefer to receive information like verbally, and some people prefer to read and like process the information that way.” P4 expressed,

I think one of the challenges in building trust is in leadership, the weight of your voice. You could not even realize that you said something in passing very casually, which can make someone doubt your intention, your integrity, and your devotion.

P8 also shared, “The challenge is keeping confidentiality and anonymity because then you are probably afraid to tell the truth or be honest, sometimes.”

Summary of RQ2. The second RQ analyzed the challenges leaders face in implementing strategies to build trust among team members in multinational organizations. When combining the most frequent practices and techniques the participants applied and recommended, 11 challenges were spotlighted. They are represented by the themes: (a) misleading behaviors, (b) individual biases, (c) resistance, (d) poor leadership, (e) organizational problems, (f) being new, (g) cultural barriers, (h) unclear expectations and limits, (i) personal weaknesses, (j) emotional readiness deficit, and (k) communication challenge.

As stated in the beginning, the amount of input on challenges and difficulties (105 coded text quotations) was inferior to the number of strategies and practices (224 coded text quotations). Also, several leaders suggested voluntary practices to build trust in questions related to challenges and difficulties. Lastly, the theme of contextual problems, including external uncertainties (Stickel, 2022), corruption perception (Transparency International, 2023), public scandals (Kramer, 2009), and technology advances (Crabtree, 2018) were stated in the literature as possible challenges to trust-building. However, they did not raise challenges to trust-building in the responses. The participants focused on individual and organizational challenges as the most prominent ones.

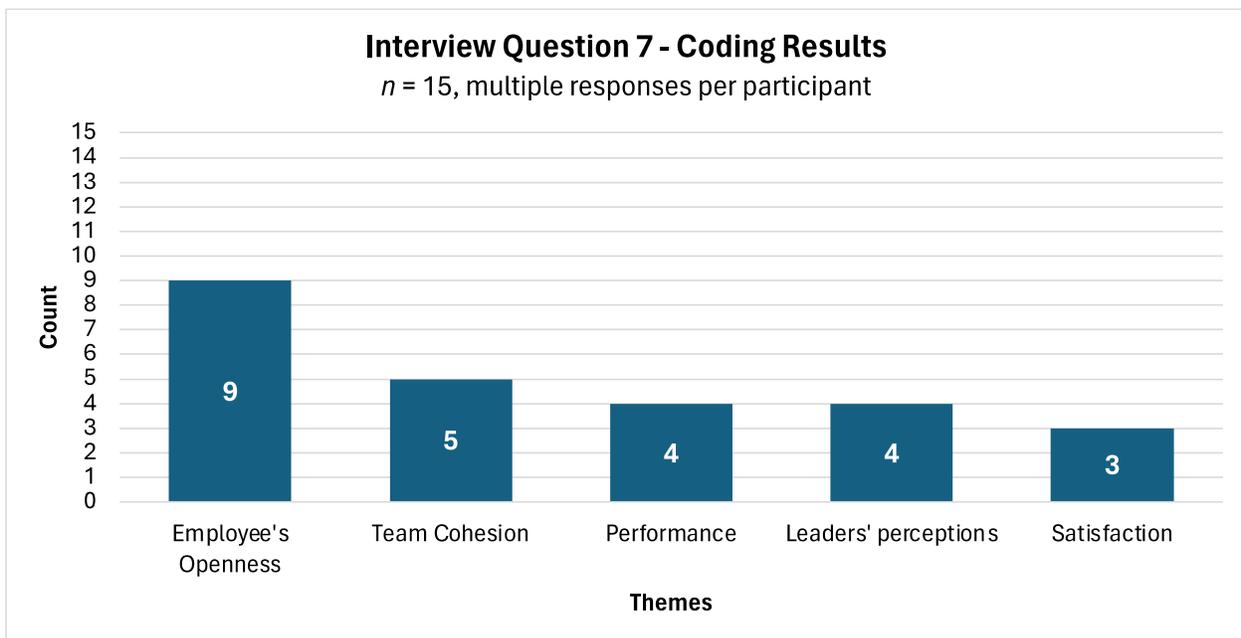
Research Question 3

Interview Questions 7 and 8 addressed the third research question (RQ3) on how the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations.

Interview Question 7. The seventh interview question (IQ7) asked, “How do you define and measure your success in building trust with your team?” Five themes emerged as the most frequent ways leaders assess their success in building trust with their teams. They are (a) employees’ openness, (b) team cohesion, (c) performance, (d) leaders’ perception, and (e) satisfaction (Figure 12).

Figure 12

Coding Results for Interview Question 7



Note. This figure displays the most frequent themes from the participants’ answers to IQ7. Each bar represents one theme and the number of participants who mentioned that theme.

Employee’s Openness. The theme of employee openness is the most common measure of success among the interviewees. Nine leaders (60%) mentioned assessing their success by their employees’ openness level. Even though the literature appraised did not point out this technique to measure leaders’ success and trustworthiness, this measurement relates to the level of confidence or faith (Covey et al., 2022; Edelman, 2023; Forbes Business Council, 2021) the employees have in their leaders, and it is also related to the transparency offered by employees to

their leaders. The descriptive codes that emerged from participants' responses include the employee's openness and absence of fear, how comfortable they feel about bringing problems and solutions, and their engagement and freedom to try. For example, P1 said, "I think you earn your people's trust when they're open with you in good and bad."

Additionally, P4 stated, "From that human perspective, how much they are willing to share. If you know how open and vulnerable, they're willing to be with you." P10 expressed, "When they come to me with questions that actually challenged my point of view and when they say things like, I don't think that's the best path." The last example is from P11, who said,

I have a policy on my team that says I'm not expecting you to be perfect. But I'm expecting you to try. If you try, you don't fail; you either learn or succeed. So, if my team could try something without coming to ask permission, I know they trust me, and they trust themselves.

Team Cohesion. Five leaders (33%) said they observe their team cohesion as a measure of success in trust-building. The codes from the responses are collaboration, mutual respect, peer recognition, and team reliability. For instance, P6 expressed, "That's a big way for me to be able to measure, right? When people actively acknowledge other team members for the help that they gave them to be successful." P8 mentioned, "Well, when I see people get along with each other when we don't have problems with behaviors." P12 expressed knowing their success through "the engagement between the team members when there are hard times." The last example is when P13 mentioned, "if you have a really mutual respect among team members."

Performance. Four interviewees (27%) mentioned they measure their success through performance. That theme includes delivering results and meeting expectations. Delivering results is a critical component that elevates people's morale and confidence in leaders' abilities (Covey

et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2023). For example, P2 said, “One [measurement] is just work output, like quality of work output.” Additionally, P8 expressed, “I know there is trust when we exceed the goals.”

Leaders’ Perceptions. The theme of leaders’ perception as a form to measure success in trust-building came up in four of the interviewees’ responses (27%). Measuring leaders’ success is subjective; thus, several leaders prefer to rely on their feelings about others (Mauboussin, 2012). The codes that emerged under this theme include personal perception about their team members and everyday conversations that include check-ins, feedback, and others. For example, P2 mentioned, “This was through everyday chatting.” P7 said, “I also have my own feelings and perceptions about people.” Additionally, P10 shared,

Actually, I heard this once in a course I attended. And the coach said in every interaction, there’s always a trust meter, and we should always be cognizant of and ask the question, is trust going up, is trust going down, or is trust staying the same?

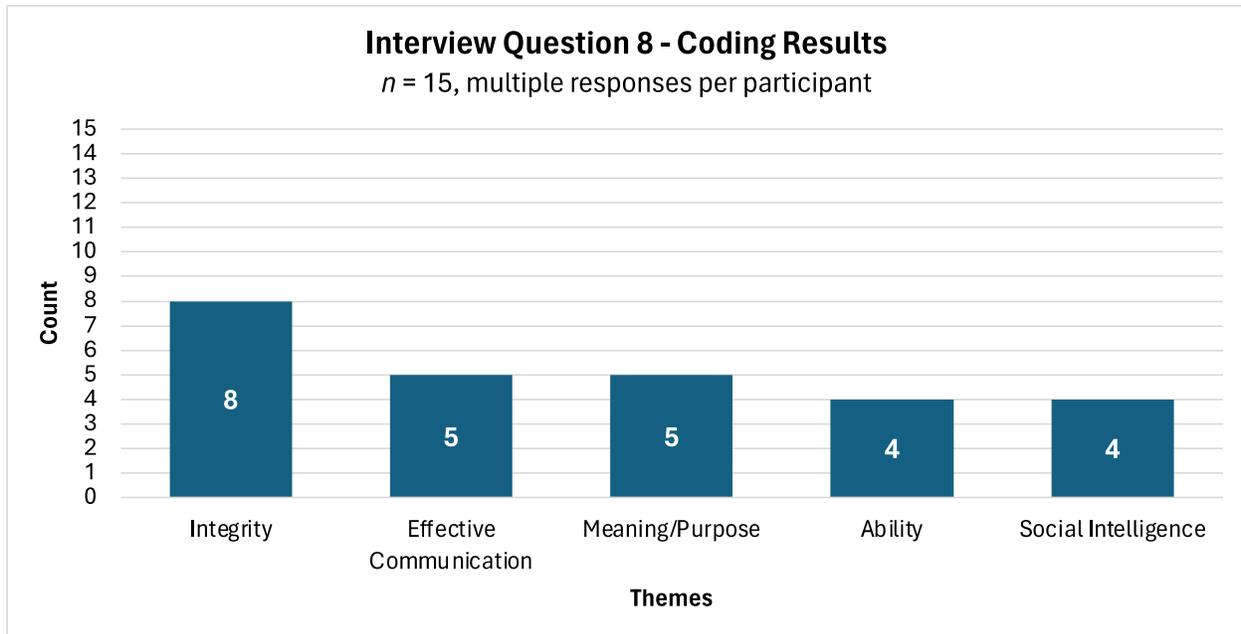
Satisfaction. Four leaders (27%) mentioned measurement related to employee satisfaction. Individuals concerned with others’ well-being tend to be more trustworthy and accepted (Deutsch, 1960). The codes raised from the interviews include satisfaction, individual well-being, and leader’s acceptance rate. For example, P8 mentioned, “Surveys to check employee’s overall well-being and satisfaction.” P9 said, “I think you measure success on trust through people wanting to work with you.”

Interview Question 8. The eighth interview question (IQ8) was, how do you maintain that trust over time? Five themes emerged as the most frequent ways leaders assess their success in building trust with their teams. They are (a) integrity, (b) effective communication, (c) meaning/purpose, (d) ability, and (e) social intelligence. The participants previously expressed

them as prominent strategies to build trust in IQ1, IQ3, and IQ5, suggesting that leaders use the same best practices to build trust and maintain it over time. Figure 13 illustrates the most frequent theme among participants for IQ8.

Figure 13

Coding Results for Interview Question 8



Note. This figure displays the most frequent themes from the participants' answers to IQ8. Each bar represents one theme and the number of participants who mentioned that theme.

Integrity. Integrity is the most frequent theme related to how leaders maintain trust with their teams. Eighth leaders (53%) mentioned the of integrity. It was also an overarching strategy to build trust, showed in IQ1, IQ3, and IQ5. As previously mentioned, it is strongly supported by the models of trust appraised in this study (Covey et al., 2022; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). The codes that emerged from the interviews are being honest, congruent, transparent, consistent, reliable, and acknowledging mistakes. For example, P1 talked about being “the first one that acknowledged that I was wrong about something.” P3 mentioned, “I need to ensure that I provide honest feedback. I am reliable and transparent.” Moreover, P14 expressed, “Be the

person, either leader, and you would want for yourself. Be the leader that you say you're going to be for your people. Don't ask them to do anything; you would be willing to do it yourself."

Effective Communication. The theme of effective communication emerged from the responses of five interviewees (33%). The codes under this theme encompass communication, achieving common ground, and constant check-ins. The interviewees used all those strategies to better connect and share information with people in their teams (G. Brown, 2021; Jolaoso & Main, 2023). For example, P9 mentioned, "You have to engage in check-ins or regular one-on-one meetings." P12 said, "Constant communications with the individuals." P15 expressed, "I'm always baking in ways where we can find our similarities and differences so we can get to know each other better."

Meaning/Purpose. Five leaders (33%) appeal to the theme of meaning/purpose to maintain trust with their teams. Some codes under this theme explain why, empower people, and congruence of values between individuals and the organization (Covey et al., 2022; Sinek, 2017). For example, while P11 explained how to maintain trust by "continuously empowering our associates," P6 illustrated how to provide meaning:

Then, I need to clearly explain why and the outcome of what I asked to be delivered.

When I don't do that, people don't trust in me because they're like, Well, I don't trust the deadline date. I don't know what everybody's going to do with it.

Ability. Four interviewees (27%) mentioned using the theme of ability. The codes showed in their answers are ability, delivering results, accountability, and self-development. Ability encompasses competencies leaders use to deliver the expected results (Covey et al., 2022; Stickel, 2022). For example, P4 expressed, "I talked about accountability as holding myself accountable first, right? I need to do that for them, and they need to see that. I think so, showing

up, being consistent, and being accountable.” P7 mentioned, “I always recycle myself, looking to expand my knowledge.” And P10 said it is about “how you’re going to deliver what you’re set to deliver together.”

Social Intelligence. Also, four leaders (27%) expressed the theme of social intelligence for maintaining trust with their teams. The codes that emerged in their responses are positive relationships, being friendly, and listening to others. Such strategies are used to nurture relationships and understand others (Goleman, 2007; King, 2017). As an illustration of that, P2 shared, “We talk about family stuff all the time in the office. Personal stuff, in our opinion, we’re very friendly with each other.” Also, P9 mentioned, “Getting to know people kind of on an individual level also really helps in building and maintaining the trust.”

Summary of RQ3. The third RQ analyzed how leaders measure their success in building trust and how they maintain it. Combining the answers from IQ7 and IQ9, 10 themes emerged. They are: (a) employees’ openness, (b) team cohesion, (c) performance, (d) leaders’ perception, (e) satisfaction, (f) integrity, (g) effective communication, (h) meaning/purpose, (i) social intelligence, and (j) ability.

Research Question 4

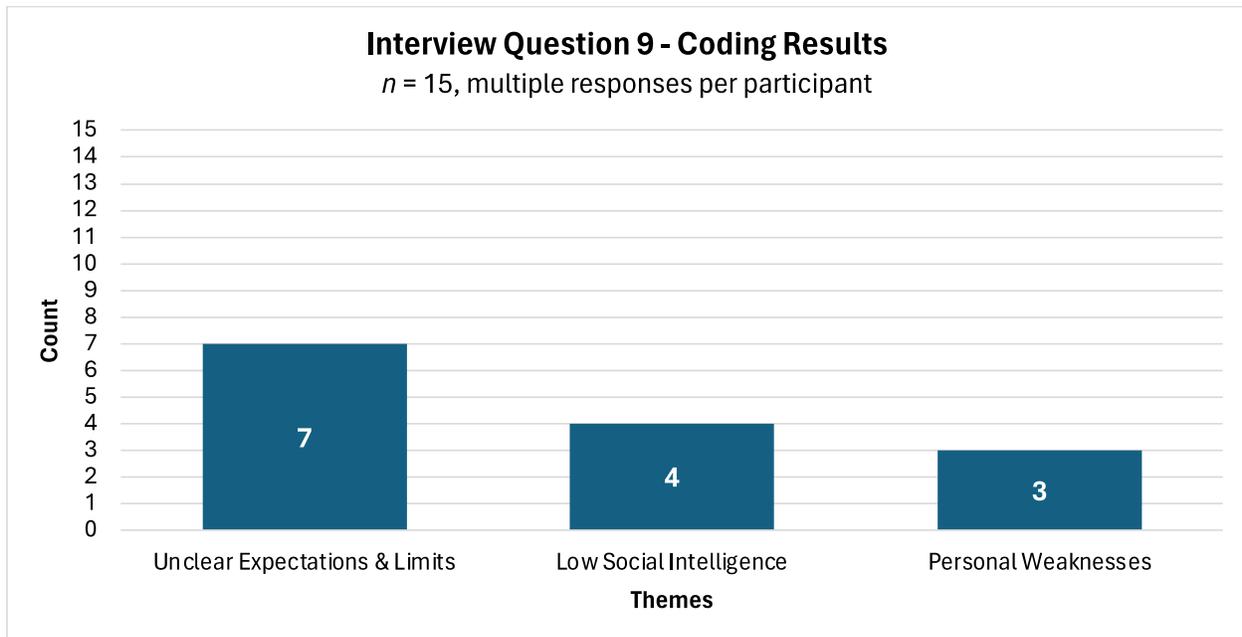
The fourth research question (RQ4) asked what recommendations participants would make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations. Interview Questions 9 and 10 captured their answers.

Interview Question 9. The ninth interview question (IQ9) was, what mistakes have you made in the trust-building process that you would warn leaders to avoid? Three themes showed the leaders’ most frequent mistakes while trying to build trust with their teams. They are (a)

unclear expectations and limits, (b) personal weaknesses, and (c) low social intelligence. Figure 14 shows the most frequent responses for IQ9.

Figure 14

Coding Results for Interview Question 9



Note. This figure displays the most frequent themes from the participants' answers to IQ9. Each bar represents one theme and the number of participants who mentioned that theme.

Unclear Expectations and Limits. The theme of unclear expectations and limits refers to the most frequent mistake leaders warn others to avoid. Seven leaders (47%) mentioned mistakes triggered by not properly clarifying expectations and limits. The codes under this theme include different expectations, making others uncomfortable, personal boundaries, and not setting limits. As previously explained, those mistakes impact the employees' overall perception of fairness (Brockner, 2006). For instance, P1 said, "I used to think that I was assumed to do everything, and that's virtually impossible, of course, and we try and accumulate responsibilities, and you try and do what's best for everybody." P2 explained, "Some people don't want you asking about their

personal lives. Some people were introverts.” Also, P10 shared a mistake of “going too fast and going too deep with people that weren’t ready.”

Low Social Intelligence. Four leaders (27%) mentioned mistakes related to low social intelligence. This theme is the opposite of social intelligence, where people build relationships with others (King, 2017). The codes raised from the IQ9 responses include lack of awareness, lack of human connection, struggles to engage with people, and prioritizing work instead of people. For instance, P5 shared, “That was a failure on my part of not really talking and listening in depth who they were and why they were there, what their story was, how their career progressed.” Also, P15 explained, “I need to actively listen more. Because I do have a lot to say. And I am formulating my opinion while other people are talking.” The same participant also mentioned “putting work first.”

Personal Weaknesses. Finally, three leaders (20%) mentioned the theme of personal weaknesses. This theme includes being naïve regarding trust-building, not having a voice, and being too soft and not authentic to self. An example is expressed by P6 declaring,

I was trying to be so nice to this team. And I was so empathetic that I was probably coming off a little bit softer than I wanted to. And it was killing me inside because it was counterintuitive to me.

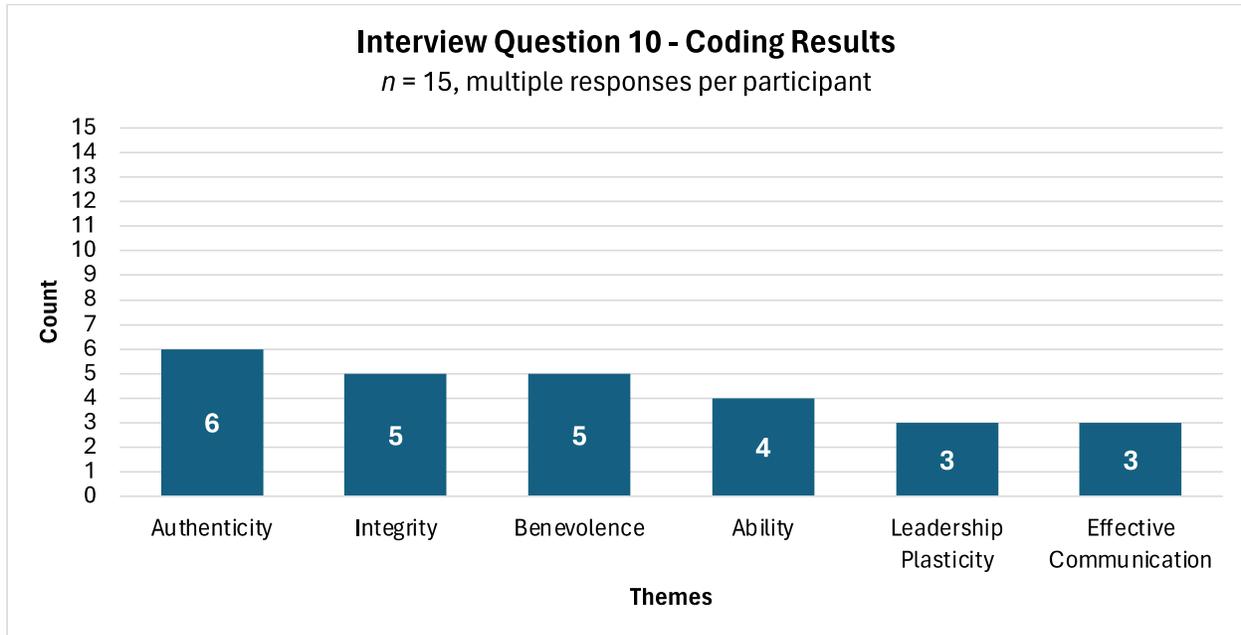
P10 shared another example: “I have assumed that there was trust there. And I didn’t actively invest time and effort into the relationship building and communication part.”

Interview Question 10. The 10th interview question (IQ10) asked, “Is there any other recommendation you would like to offer?” Six themes were raised as the most prominent recommendations for future leaders. They are (a) authenticity, (b) integrity, (c) benevolence, (d) ability, (e) leadership plasticity, and (f) effective communication. Except for leadership

plasticity, the leaders previously mentioned all other themes in their answers to the IQs pertaining to RQ1 or RQ3. Figure 15 displays the most frequent responses for IQ10.

Figure 15

Coding Results for Interview Question 10



Note. This figure displays the most frequent themes from the participants’ answers to IQ2. Each bar represents one theme and the number of participants who mentioned that theme.

Authenticity. Six leaders (47%) recommended the theme of authenticity. The codes that showed in their responses are authenticity, vulnerability, humility, and being genuine. These characteristics align with the concept of authenticity proposed by Covey et al. (2022) and George et al. (2018). For instance, P5 offered, “I think the best thing I can say is be yourself. Right? You have to find your own identity as a leader.” P15 recommended, “Be willing to be vulnerable. Yeah, be okay with being uncomfortable.” P3 explained what worked out in their case of success: “My biggest growth was just kind of recognizing and trusting my own voice and perspective. You should be genuine in what you offer up.”

Integrity. The theme of integrity appeared in five interviewees' (33%) responses. Integrity consists of being congruent, honest, transparent, and work ethic. This theme aligns with the major models of trust appraised in the literature (Covey et al., 2022; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). For example, P3 suggested "honesty, transparency, recognizing your skill set and new capabilities." Moreover, P8 expressed a personal belief by recommending, "I believe one of the things that we need to have in mind as leaders is that we need to guide by example."

Benevolence. Five leaders (33%) mentioned the theme of benevolence in their recommendations. The codes that emerged from leaders' responses are respect, reciprocity, warmth, and offering help. All these strategies are supported by the models of trust from Mayer et al. (1995) and Stickel (2022). For example, P2 advised, "Respect people, respect their time, right? And respect that they're going through something." P10 said leaders would build trust by "demonstrating trust and letting people operate in their space." Lastly, P15 suggested, "Be kind, be personable, and be relatable."

Ability. Four leaders' (27%) responses raised the theme of ability. The codes in leaders' responses include accountability, problem-solving, and self-development. Covey et al. (2022) state that trustworthy leaders are committed with the results, and they constantly develop themselves and others so that they meet expectations. For example, P1 offered, "I would say be mindful about what it is that you have to do first, and then what it is that is under your scope. Make sure that's under control." Moreover, P7 suggested, "Make a commitment to yourself to grow every day."

Leadership Plasticity. The leadership plasticity theme emerged in three leaders' responses (20%). This theme was coined based on the literature appraised. In all three theoretical lenses, trust, EI, and cultural intelligence, several authors show evidence that leaders can be

sensitive to the situation and people around them, learn from that, and adapt their approach (Bird, 2018; Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2020). The theme of leadership plasticity includes codes about context adaptation and leadership modeling in IQ10. For example, P4 advised future leaders to be “adaptive, human, and credible.” P6 explained,

I think it'd be important to understand. So, I'm really into context. And what does trust look like contextually in the organization? I think each organization has its spoken or unspoken use of trust, and views of trust, and what that looks like in the organization. Finally, P10 suggested, “This whole idea of flexing your style is quite, it's quite critical.”

Effective Communication. Lastly, the theme of effective communication was raised again in three leaders' (20%) responses, which relate to strategies leaders use to convey and share information with others (G. Brown, 2021; Jolaoso & Main, 2023). For example, P9 recommended that leaders foster “transparency, communication, mutual respect.” And P13 suggested, “Try to communicate with your team. You depend on holding them, right? Always. You cannot do everything by yourself.”

Summary of RQ4. The last RQ assessed the recommendations around trust-building for future leaders. The outcome was composed of nine themes. Three recommendations to avoid: (a) unclear expectations and limits, (b) personal weaknesses, and (c) low social intelligence. Six recommendations future leaders should invest themselves in (a) authenticity, (b) integrity, (c) benevolence, (d) ability, (e) leadership plasticity, and (e) effective communication.

Chapter 4 Summary

This study analyzed the lived experience of leaders in multinational organizations to uncover their strategies, challenges, and measures of success in the trust-building process with their teams. The ultimate purpose of the results obtained through the data analysis offered in

Chapter 4 is to underpin a new model of leadership and trust. The data analyzed in the present chapter was collected using a semi-structured interview with 10 open-ended questions. Those questions were designed to respond to the following four RQs:

- RQ1: What are the strategies and practices employed by leaders to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?
- RQ2: What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?
- RQ3: How do the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations?
- RQ4: Based on their experiences, what recommendations would participants make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?

The researcher interviewed 15 leaders with solid experience in multinational organizations and leadership positions. The interview data resulted in 25 themes that provide insights into strategies, challenges, and measures of success offered by those leaders. Some themes repeat across the different IQs and RQs. Table 11 displays the themes per RQ. The results presented in the present chapter underpin the discussion, findings, and model proposed in Chapter 5.

Table 11

Summary of Themes for Four Research Questions

RQ1. What are the strategies and practices employed by leaders to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	RQ2. What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	RQ3. How do the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations?	RQ4. Based on their experiences, what recommendations would participants make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?
Social Intelligence	Misleading Behaviors	Employee's Openness	Unclear Expectations and limits
Integrity	Individual Biases	Team Cohesion	Personal Weaknesses
Ability	Resistance	Performance	Low Social Intelligence
Meaning/Purpose	Poor Leadership	Leaders' perceptions	Authenticity
Effective Communication	Organizational Problems	Satisfaction	Integrity
Authenticity	Being New	Integrity	Benevolence
Benevolence	Cultural Barriers	Effective Communication	Ability
Expectations and limits	Unclear Expectations and limits	Meaning/Purpose	Leadership Plasticity
Team Cohesion	Personal Weaknesses	Social Intelligence	Effective Communication
	Emotional Readiness	Expectations and limits	
	Deficit		
	Communication Challenge	Ability	

Note. This table re-states the four research questions, and under each question presents the most frequent themes that emerged in the interview questions respective to the research questions.

Chapter 5: Findings

Trust is an essential component in effective relationships (Sucher & Gupta, 2021;). The decision to trust someone goes beyond simply relying on them; it requires a person to be genuinely vulnerable (Covey et al., 2022; Sucher & Gupta, 2021). The literature provides models and practices that support leaders in building trustworthy relationships (Covey et al., 2022; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). However, there are aspects from other theoretical lenses that should be considered as practices to build trust in multinational organizations. The researcher initially suggested incorporating cultural intelligence (Bird, 2018; Livermore, 2015) and EI (Goleman, 2020). The researcher also found it necessary to incorporate more literature on social intelligence (Goleman, 2007; King, 2017) and purpose-driven strategy (Durand & Ioannou, 2023).

Chapter 5 illustrates and explains the findings from the interviews and literature review. It is divided into seven subsections: (a) a summary of the study, (b) a discussion of the findings, (c) implications of this study, (d) its application, (e) conclusions, (f) recommendations for future studies, and (g) final thoughts.

Summary of the Study

This dissertation examined how leaders in multinational companies in the United States build trust. The RQs assessed four aspects of that experience: (a) the strategies applied to build trust with their teams, (b) the challenges faced in the trust-building process, (c) the measure and maintenance of that trust, and (d) recommendations for building trust for future leaders. The researcher applied a qualitative methodology with a phenomenological approach (Creswell & Poth, 2017) to uncover the main aspects of the leaders' lived experience in building trust with their teams.

The interview protocol contained 10 semi-structured IQs to address the RQs. This instrument was validated with a three-step process that included prima facie, peer reviewer, and expert reviewer. Fifteen leaders with solid experience leading teams in multinational organizations were purposively selected via LinkedIn. Table 12 shows the interviewee’s position and experience in leadership positions and multinational companies.

Table 12

Summary of the Interviewed Leaders

Participants	Leadership Position	Experience in Leadership	Experience in Multinationals
P1	Middle Manager	16 to 20 years	5 to 10 years
P2	Middle Manager	5 to 10 years	5 to 10 years
P3	Director	16 to 20 years	11 to 15 years
P4	Director	11 to 15 years	11 to 15 years
P5	Senior Manager	5 to 10 years	5 to 10 years
P6	Director	5 to 10 years	5 to 10 years
P7	Senior Manager	11 to 15 years	11 to 15 years
P8	C-level	11 to 15 years	5 to 10 years
P9	Middle Manager	5 to 10 years	5 to 10 years
P10	Vice President	20+ years	20+ years
P11	Director	16 to 20 years	11 to 15 years
P12	Vice president	20+ years	20+ years
P13	C-level	16 to 20 years	16 to 20 years
P14	Vice President	20+ years	5 to 10 years
P15	Director	16 to 20 years	5 to 10 years

Note. Table 12 illustrates the 15 interviewees by position and years of experience in leadership positions and working in multinational companies.

The researcher used deductive and inductive coding to analyze the data, which allowed for the emergence of new themes beyond those proposed in Chapter 2. The researcher followed a rigorous process for analyzing the data. First, the researcher read and coded the transcript using Word and Excel, following Creswell’s eight steps for coding. Then, to guarantee the inter-reliability of the codes, three doctoral candidates with expertise in leadership evaluated the codes

and themes in two rounds of revisions. Lastly, the codes received an extra round of revisions from this dissertation's chair, who is an expert in qualitative studies and leadership.

Initially, this study expected the findings to be supported mainly by three theoretical lenses: trust theories, EI, and cultural intelligence. However, new theoretical lenses became important in supporting a trust-building model with multinational organizations' teams. One was social intelligence (Goleman, 2007; King, 2017), which is considered a part of EI. The second was purpose-driven strategies (Durand & Ioannou, 2023). The results of this research aimed to build upon the current literature on trust and offer a new model for leadership and trust.

Discussion of Findings

The findings are discussed according to the four RQs. Its objective is to interpret the themes from the interviews and contrast them with the literature. Throughout the discussion of the findings, new aspects of the trust-building practices and challenges were uncovered to contribute to the literature.

Results for Research Question 1

The first RQ was, what are the strategies and practices employed by leaders to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations? Leaders in the field who build trust effectively usually utilize a combination of two groups of strategies. On the one hand, they work toward the self and build a credible identity. Those credible leaders display integrity, authenticity, and benevolence. They also show they have skin in the game by investing in their self-development and improving their abilities to create positive outcomes and meaningful relationships. Those leaders' identity and ability to create results inspire employees to trust and follow them.

On the other hand, they apply strategies toward others. Investing in themselves is only one side of the process of building trust. Having a human orientation and building connections is paramount in that process. Leaders who build trust effectively also foster synergistic connections with the team and guide them toward the organizational purpose and positive results. Those leaders use strategies that include providing meaning and purpose, aligning expectations, setting limits, building relationships, communicating effectively and transparently with the team, and fostering cohesion among team members. Limits are as important as expectations in building trust because they set boundaries that must be respected to guarantee process fairness and to cultivate a positive environment where people feel respected.

The combination of all those strategies offers a sense of meaning, guidance to employees, safety, and trust. Those practices can be found in theories of trust, EI, and cultural intelligence, although the last is less emphasized than the others. In this study, social intelligence gained strength, along with the leadership practices that provide purpose and guidance.

Discussion of Research Question 1

The findings in RQ1 confirm several practices from the appraised literature in Chapter 2. It also incorporated more literature on social intelligence and purpose-driven strategies. In contrast, there are themes expected but not found in the data analysis that also need to be discussed. The discussion of RQ1 is divided into (a) credible identity, (b) synergistic connections strategies, and (c) expected but not found.

Credible Identity. Leaders use five personality traits and competencies to earn trust from team members: authenticity, integrity, benevolence, ability, and social intelligence. These five characteristics add to the trust model from Mayer et al. (1995) and Stickel (2022) by including characteristics such as authenticity and social intelligence. Covey et al.'s (2022) model of trust

and inspiring leaders already incorporates authenticity as one of the leaders' stewardships. However, it missed essential aspects of social intelligence. In the present research, these five components of a leader's identity complement each other in the trust-building process.

Authenticity. Authenticity consists of being genuine to oneself. Leaders can become better versions of themselves by being vulnerable, humble, and asking for help when necessary. They also value their past because they know exactly where they came from, who they are, and how much they evolved over time. Lastly, authentic leaders are courageous in fighting for their beliefs and values. The literature supports this idea of authenticity. Authentic leaders are true to their beliefs and values and cultivate their authentic selves (Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2023; George et al., 2018). Therefore, being authentic is about having a good relationship with oneself. Those leaders accept who they are. Thus, they are willing to be vulnerable, open up, and lead in a humane and loving way (B. Brown, 2018; George et al., 2018). Being authentic is not static. It is a product of one's vulnerability and life story (George et al., 2018). That is why authentic leaders are adaptable. They know they can model their behavior, abilities, and style without corrupting their values and essence. Due to their authenticity, those leaders tend to be perceived as trustworthy (Covey et al., 2022; Frei & Morriss, 2023).

Integrity. Integrity is not the same as authenticity. While authenticity is about having a fair and trustworthy relationship with oneself, integrity is about having a fair and honest relationship with others. A person who cultivates integrity complies with the rules and standard norms of a group, organization, and society (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). They are congruent, keeping their promises to others and promoting fairness in processes and relationships with others (Brockner, 2006; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Rolfe, 2022; Soderberg & Romney, 2022). Leaders who have integrity follow promises and rules (Covey & Merrill, 2018).

Living by the principle of integrity does not mean a person will not commit mistakes, but when that happens, the mistakes will be recognized, and the person will try to correct them (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Therefore, the surprises and uncertainties about that person will be minimized (Stickel, 2022). All these aspects of integrity resonate with the vision of integrity that emerged from the interviewees' stories. According to those experiences, leaders with integrity are honest and transparent and promote fairness in their processes and relationships. They are also congruent and consistent by walking the walk and talking the talk. They might commit mistakes but are willing to acknowledge and correct them. Therefore, they are reliable and ethical. Integrity was an expected outcome from leaders' experiences as it is central to all three trust models assessed in the literature (Covey & Merrill, 20218; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022).

Benevolence. Benevolence is about prioritizing others' well-being and interests (Mayer et al., 1995; Schneider Demaría, 2022; Stickel, 2022). The aspects of benevolence that emerged from the data analysis refer to the leader's helpfulness, meaning the leader is willing to help others without expecting anything in exchange (Covey et al., 2022; Lewis, 1999). It's also about respecting, valuing, and being kind to other human beings. Benevolent leaders are compassionate (Seppala, 2018; Soderberg & Romney, 2022) and respectful (Porath & Pearson, 2013). An interesting aspect that emerged from the leaders' benevolent characteristics refers to giving trust first. Leaders give trust first just because they believe in people. They believe in their good intentions and competencies. This is related to the principle of reciprocity or mutual trust (Rotter, 1967). When a person sees the leaders' good intentions and willingness to be vulnerable, that creates a positive perception of the leaders and increases the propensity to trust (Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). Benevolence underpins good and humane-oriented relationships. Frei and

Morriss (2020) explained that when leaders have an empathetic relationship with employees, they trust that the leader cares about their success.

Ability. Ability is the third component that determines an individual perceived uncertainty in Stickel's (2022) and Mayer et al. (1995) models of trust. Ability encompasses the capacity to deliver results (Covey & Merrill, 2018). A capable leader has the knowledge and skills to deliver positive outcomes, solve problems, and meet expectations (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022). Employees trust capable leaders because they will fulfill promises and make good decisions (Frei & Morriss, 2023). That resonates with this study's findings. The interviewees applied their competence, knowledge, and experience to deliver results and solve problems.

Additionally, this study's findings evidenced that, to earn and maintain trust, leaders must be accountable and assume responsibilities (Covey et al., 2022). Their accountability goes beyond their position or status. For example, some interviewees stepped down from other positions and took over whatever activity was necessary to support the team in solving a problem or delivering results. Lastly, ability goes hand in hand with the other traits. For example, those leaders showed authenticity and benevolence when they stepped out of their comfort zones to help the team.

Social Intelligence. While ability displays leaders' competencies to deliver positive outcomes, social intelligence relates to leaders' competencies to have the team with them. Social intelligence refers to one's willingness and disposition to understand others, build connections, and manage interpersonal relationships effectively (Goleman, 2007; King, 2017). This finding is a significant contribution to existing models of trust and literature. For example, the trust and inspire leader model (Covey et al., 2022) and the triangle of trust (Frei & Morriss, 2023) include

empathy as a characteristic of trustworthy leaders. The models of organizational trust and the TU model of trust (Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022) included benevolence and a human orientation. However, social intelligence goes beyond empathy and human orientation. It includes conversational skills, the ability to attract people, make an impression on people, and create healthy connections (Goleman, 2007; King, 2017). The interviewees practiced social intelligence by being available to their employees, actively listening to them, being empathetic, and being socially aware of what was happening with the team. They constantly engaged with their team members, got to know them better, recognized differences and similarities, and created connections. Some of them also created inner circles of trust and influence. Lastly, social intelligence skills are critical to working with multicultural or multinational team members (Bird, 2018; House et al., 2004).

Synergistic Connections. Leaders use strategies to foster relationships and connections with their team members. Synergistic is a term used to describe the combined efforts of multiple individuals working together. Through synergistic connections, leaders influence their teams to achieve greater outcomes. Employees will be willing to engage in a relationship of trust with their leader if they perceive that the meaning, purpose, and benefits of being in that relationship are greater than not being there. Due to that, leaders must engage in strategies that include providing meaning and purpose, clarifying expectations and limits, communicating effectively, and strengthening team cohesion. Those strategies foster synergistic connections and lead the team to obtain greater outcomes.

Providing Meaning and Purpose. The purpose relates to the contribution or meaning that guides a person, group, or organization's actions (Covey et al., 2022). Purpose relates to why people do what they do (Sinek, 2017). The concept of providing purpose in the trust and inspire

leader model is three-fold: the individual purpose, the relationship among individuals, and the purpose of the team and organization (Covey et al., 2022). The interviewees provide purpose and meaning in similar manners. For example, they explain why they are doing a specific task, share their perspectives and visions, and leverage the connection between the organizations' and employees' purposes. Those leaders stimulate employees' meaning by believing, empowering, sponsoring, mentoring, guiding, and developing them. Even when the individuals are unclear about their purpose, the leaders help them find meaning and see value in their job.

This study expands on the levels of purpose—individual, team, and organization—by Covey et al. (2022). Some interviewees talked about meaning in a way that goes beyond the organizational boundaries (e.g., Gen Z, environmental, and social concerns). That resonates with the idea of creating a purpose-driven culture in which leaders embody a more significant purpose that goes beyond profitability but is still tangible and connected to the organization's long-term objectives (Durand & Ioannou, 2023). People who see leaders sacrificing short-term profitability for a broader and sustainable impact on society have an increased propensity to trust their organizations and leaders.

Clarifying Expectations and Limits. Expectations and limits complement the meaning and purpose. While providing meaning and purpose relates to the *why*, expectations and limits refer to *what* and *how*. Clarifying expectations consists of setting and communicating the expected tasks, goals, or results expected from the team members (Covey et al., 2022). It includes the definition of norms and guidelines (Covey et al., 2022; Okello & Gilson, 2015). The leaders should also clarify boundaries that are important to the relationship and collaboration with the team (Hill & Lineback, 2012b). Once the expectations and limits are set, leaders measure the results, follow the process, and hold themselves and every team member

accountable for good and bad outcomes (Bartolomé, 1989; Covey et al., 2022; O'Hara, 2014). Those practices increase process fairness and trust between leaders and employees (Brockner, 2006; Covey & Merrill, 2018).

The findings about clarifying expectations resonate with the literature. Examples of leadership practices to clarify expectations include aligning what is expected from each individual and, sometimes, making a contract with them. Once that is established, the leader provides guidance, resources, and support. They check in with the team to see their progress and provide feedback when necessary. The interviewees also contributed with practices to set limits. For instance, they set limits that respect personal and relational boundaries, define the accepted behavior between team members, and establish the boundaries for collaboration. Some leaders also mentioned the importance of keeping the team within their collaboration limits to keep them focused on the objectives and contribute to the process fairness.

Communicating Effectively. Communication is critical for building trust (Rice et al., 2021). The participants used their communication skills to engage in conversations and check-ins with their teams, align expectations and limits, understand others, find common ground and influence people, establish their voices as leaders, and convey information transparently and effectively. People do not appreciate being left in the dark or not receiving proper information because that increases suspicion toward leaders' and organizations' intentions. Leaders should never forge information or disclose ambiguous or deceiving news (Covey & Merrill, 2018). Effective communication includes disclosing relevant, appropriate, and timely information that might be helpful to the employees (Zand, 1972). Communicating effectively in multinational organizations also includes being cognizant of other cultural communication norms and languages (Bird, 2018).

Strengthening Team Cohesion. Team cohesion relates to how team members operate, collaborate, and rely on each other. The participants influence team cohesion by stimulating group awareness, team-building activities, collaboration, mutual respect, and peer recognition. Those leaders carefully set common goals so the team will move in the same direction as a unit. In a cohesive team, the team players are humble, work hard and diligently, operate under the group's common sense, engage in productive discussions, are committed, and are accountable for the results (Lencioni, 2016). The concept of team cohesion is supported by the group's EI, awareness, and self-regulation (Druskat & Wolff, 2015). Leaders can proactively influence a team's EI and cohesion by engaging in practices such as the ones proposed by the participants.

Expected but Not Found. The literature presented two strategies not found in this study. The first is cultural sensitivity, which consists of a leader's awareness of national cultural differences, such as norms, language, and other artifacts (Bird, 2018; Fukuyama, 1995; Kwantes & Kuo, 2021; Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). Even though several of the interviewees work with people from different nationalities, only a minority mentioned using cultural sensitivity to build trust. The second was cultural inclusiveness, which relates to embracing differences, creating a safe environment, and supporting a culture of belongingness (Covey et al., 2022; Francis-Winters, 2017). That was an interesting finding, considering that the feelings of safety and belongingness oppose the feelings of being vulnerable and at risk toward others' actions.

Results for Research Question 2

The second RQ asked about the challenges the leaders face in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations. Leaders in the field face challenges from everywhere. First, they have to deal with their own pitfalls as leaders and human beings. At the beginning of their careers or when assuming new

roles, the challenges might be due to their inexperience in leadership, lack of knowledge in the field, or not being known yet. Later, other leadership challenges and temptations emerge due to the power they assume. As humans, they commit judgmental mistakes from a variety of levels that might be perceived as misleading behaviors. Such misleading behaviors deteriorate trust, especially in an era when information—both true and false—flows freely and rapidly.

However, the most important of all the pitfalls happens when leaders do not properly read the people with whom they work and the environment surrounding them. That includes the individuals' perceived resistance against a leader or organizational changes, other organizational problems, and cultural biases. Without properly understanding people and the context inside and outside the organizations, leaders fail to adapt to situations, prevent pitfalls, and build relationships based on trust. Some leaders also fail to unite their teams toward the organizational vision because they do not communicate properly or clarify what is expected from each team member and the rules under which they should be operating. Such a poor leadership approach deteriorates team morale, results, team credibility, and trust in their leaders.

Discussion of Research Question 2

The challenges presented by the leaders can be categorized into three levels supported by the literature on trust, EI, and culture. The first group consists of leaders' own pitfalls and inner focus (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019). The second group is team and individual barriers and is situated as challenges about relational trust and awareness (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019). The third group of challenges encompasses contextual problems and is situated as issues regarding organizational and societal trust and awareness (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2017; Schein & Schein, 2017). This analysis offers a systemic approach in which individuals are part of a broader environment and context. The combination of those challenges relates to what

Goleman and Senge (2014) call the triple-focus approach to awareness—self, other, and broader system. Leaders must cultivate systemic awareness to understand themselves, others, and the wilder world.

Leadership Pitfalls. Leaders' pitfalls that emerged in this study include their misleading behaviors, poor leadership, personal weaknesses, lack of emotional readiness, personal communication challenges, and failure to clarify expectations and limits.

Misleading Behaviors. Leaders' misleading behaviors are the opposite of leaders' integrity. Inappropriate behaviors witnessed by employees at work include unethical and illegal conduct, cheating, lack of transparency, and unfair and unequal treatment (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Edelman, 2023; Transparency International, 2023). Although the participants did not mention illegal behaviors, they brought problems such as leaders' hidden agendas, selfishness, unequal treatment, violation of personal values, and not recognizing mistakes. Those behaviors raise suspicions about leaders' intentions (Covey & Merrill, 2018) and make employees feel unvalued or unsafe (Francis-Winters, 2017), eroding trust in leadership.

Poor Leadership and Personal Weaknesses. The challenges of poor leadership and personal weaknesses can be analyzed together because they refer to leaders' lack of readiness for some leadership tasks. Those leadership pitfalls oppose three core characteristics of the credible identity previously discussed in RQ1: authenticity (George et al., 2018), social intelligence (Goleman, 2007; King, 2017), and ability (Covey et al., 2022; Stickel, 2022). For example, the interviewees shared their stories about the negative impact of their insecurities, lack of preparedness in a specific situation, lack of social skills, and inability to adapt their leadership approach. Those situations oppose the characteristics of an authentic leader (Frei & Morriss, 2023; George et al., 2018), a trustworthy and inspiring leader (Covey et al., 2022), and a socially

intelligent leader (Goleman, 2007; King, 2017). Another example of a poor leadership approach displayed in this study is the power paradox, which refers to the fact that power might corrupt leaders, increasing their propensity to engage in uncivil, disrespectful, and dishonest practices (Keltner, 2017). Lastly, the literature also supports that leaders' inexperience affects their performance and relationship with team members (Bunker et al., 2002). When leaders show they are not prepared to lead confidently, the team members will doubt their abilities, and trust will be affected negatively.

Emotional Readiness Deficit. This study's challenge of emotional readiness refers to leaders' low self-awareness, self-regulation, and fear or inability to deal with conflict. Although not previously foreseen in Chapter 2, those challenges are supported by the lens of EI. The emotional deficit contrasts EI's positive characteristics, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation (Goleman, 2019). Additionally, the fear of conflict contrasts with the characteristics of a resilient leader who builds trust by showing they can overcome difficult situations (Coutu, 2002; David & Congleton, 2013; Goleman, 2017). Emotional intelligence and resilience are perceived in the literature as aspects that increase the perceived trustworthiness of an individual. Therefore, the absence of those characteristics affects the predisposition of employees to trust their leaders.

Communication Challenges. The communication challenges include a leader's non-transparent communication, inappropriate communication, or even telling lies. Sometimes, leaders fail to recognize the weight of their voice when communicating with employees, or they do not recognize barriers to communication. Those findings are supported by the literature when, for example, Galford and Drapeau (2003) explained that a common mistake that erodes trust is a leader's inconsistent messages. The literature also shows that not telling the truth, fake news, and

gossip negatively impact leadership trust (Covey et al., 2022; O'Hara, 2014). This challenge opposes the literature recommendation for effective communication practices and findings in RQ1. By not communicating effectively, leaders contribute to the general feeling of suspicion. Lastly, leaders' mistakes regarding communication might be influenced by leaders' inexperience, which commonly leads to failure in building relationships and collaborating with their team members (Bunker et al., 2002).

Unclear Expectations and Limits. Challenges of unclear expectations and limits consist of leaders failing to align expectations with employees or giving them contradictory directions. Those actions contradict the best practice of clarifying expectations in the literature (Covey et al., 2022) and in the findings for RQ1. Moreover, it impacts the perception of process fairness (Brockner, 2006) and the sense of respect and dignity of an individual (Covey et al., 2022). For example, some leaders shared stories in which they surpassed personal limits, making others feel uncomfortable and disrespected. Other leaders emphasized that without clarity of expectations, employees do not know what is expected from them. Both situations impact employees' morale, safety, and results and create an environment of uncertainties that destroys trust.

Team and Individual Barriers. This group of challenges encompasses the ones employees impose in their relationship with the leader and among themselves. They include individual biases, resistance, and the unique case that leaders who are new to a group face.

Individual Biases. The challenges of individual biases include personal differences, such as distinct perspectives, beliefs, values, and life stories, that make some people become suspicious of others. Also, the fact that people are from different generations sometimes increases suspicion within the group. Kramer (2009) explained that trust is a personal choice, and usually, people make the wrong decision because they rely on their gut feelings. Individual

biases connect to personal feelings and negative inner thoughts, which include doubt, fear, and criticism (David & Congleton, 2013). Such beliefs trigger high levels of anxiety and distress, which creates a barrier to trust-building.

Resistance. The challenge of resistance relates to some employees' negativity, reactivity, and skepticism. It also includes the employee's resistance to change. The problems of resistance related to negativity or skepticism might be correlated to individual biases previously explained. That means some individuals could develop negative thoughts and feelings due to past bad experiences (David & Congleton, 2013). However, the resistance to change goes beyond personal biases shaped by past experiences. Resistance to change might relate to the fear of an unknown future and low tolerance to uncertainties. Although this topic was not explored in the literature on trust, studies on team dynamics support that idea. For example, a study that analyzed over 1000 employees' comments has evidenced that issues of trust and low tolerance for change contribute to individuals' resistance (Kirkman et al., 1999).

Being New. The challenge of being new derives from the resistance of a group to a new member. It was set apart from resistance because several leaders highlighted their challenges when assuming a new role with a new team or a position in a new organization. Not knowing a person beforehand increases the perceived uncertainties. People might be suspicious of others when they have not met them or have had the opportunity to know their stories and credentials (Deutsch, 1960; Stickel, 2022). However, that feeling of suspicion can be overcome in three situations. The first is when they can communicate openly and get to know each other. The second is when that person has a level of power that enables them to deliver their promises. Third is when a familiar acquaintance sponsors the new person (Deutsch, 1960).

Contextual Challenges. The contextual challenges refer to the leader's relationship with a wider system (Goleman, 2016; Goleman & Senge, 2014). This group of challenges includes organizational problems and cultural barriers.

Organizational Problems. The organizational difficulties include a myriad of problems that leaders face. Those problems encompass daily stress due to organizational complexity or poor performance, difficulty balancing organizational values with the team's interests, and other conflicts. The organization's problems relate to a lack of empathy and failure to convey the logic behind the decision-making and performance (Frei & Morriss, 2023). Those problems affect a leader's credibility because, in the long run, employees become suspicious of the leader's capacity to solve those structural problems. One example shared by many leaders is when the organization implements changes without communicating properly and transparently with leaders and employees at all levels. That situation increases the feelings of uncertainties and suspicion within the organization, deteriorating results and trust.

Cultural Barriers. The challenges of cultural barriers include distortions of the organizational culture and other national cultural obstacles, including different languages and norms. Problems with organizational culture deteriorate morale and organizational performance (Schein & Schein, 2017). Some organizational cultures that stimulate hyper-competition among team members might cause ethical blindness and erode trust (Crabtree, 2018). Additionally, leaders who work with people from different nationalities must deal with distinct norms that affect the perception of trust (Livermore, 2015; Meyer, 2014). In contrast, some leaders shared that when they try to accommodate their behavior by speaking another language or getting to know that culture, the cultural barrier is broken because it demonstrates those leaders care about others and their culture.

Results for Research Question 3

The third RQ asked how the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations. Leaders in the field measure their success by assessing overall value creation. On the one hand, there are the traditional metrics of performance and results that are quantifiable and measured through organizational processes. They are critical because they reflect the team's engagement in creating results, which indicates the team believes and trusts their leaders' guidance. On the other hand, there are non-quantifiable metrics. These refer to how safe the employees feel to open up, share ideas and issues, collaborate, praise, and rely on each other. Those aspects reflect transparency and trust among team members and toward their leader. In contrast, the lack of those aspects leads to a culture of suspicion that destroys an organization's value.

In addition to measuring trust, leaders who successfully build trust with their team members and create value for their organizations maintain a high level of trust. They engage in practices similar to those explored in RQ1. That suggests that trust-building is an ongoing process in which leaders intentionally and consistently engage in practices to improve their credible identity and build synergistic connections with their teams.

Discussion of Research Question 3

The findings in RQ3 were grouped into trust-building measures of success and practices to maintain trust.

Measures of Success. The leaders of this study mentioned five ways they measure their success in building trust: (a) employees' openness, (b) team cohesion, (c) performance, (d) leaders' perception, and (e) satisfaction. Measuring trust-building success is difficult because success has different meanings for leaders and organizations (Forbes Business Council, 2021;

Starks, 2022). Leaders tend to rely on qualitative assessments—sometimes informal and based on personal feelings—to determine how the team is doing (Mauboussin, 2012; Starks, 2022). They use quantitative metrics related to the performance or results to complement their measure of success (Covey et al., 2022; Mauboussin, 2012).

Leaders' Perception. Leaders count on their gut feelings or perceptions to assess if they are successful (Mauboussin, 2012). The participants shared that they formed their perceptions about the team's level of trust through intentional observations and everyday conversations with their teams. Leaders' perceptions are not a measurement per se but a way to assess whether employees trust them and each other. Therefore, it is an instrument for all other qualitative measures of trust in this study: employees' openness, satisfaction, and team cohesion.

Employees' Openness. To assess employees' openness, the participants observe if their employees feel comfortable bringing bad news and solutions, if they are willing to discuss issues without fear of retaliation, and if they engage in trying new approaches to their jobs proactively. That is an interesting finding because this level of openness in which an employee is willing to discuss any subject usually requires that the employees feel safe and that they belong to that group (Francis-Winters, 2017). According to Covey et al. (2022), trust yields the feeling of belongingness. Thus, even though the participants did not emphasize a safe environment and inclusiveness practices, the major measurement of success requires safety and inclusivity.

Satisfaction. A study from an Australian company found a positive correlation between trust in leaders and employees' satisfaction (Matzler & Renzl, 2007). Employee satisfaction and trust increase their morale, engagement, and creativity, improving the overall performance of individuals and organizations (Matzler & Renzl, 2007; Robinson, 2021). This study's participants measure satisfaction by observing and assessing employees' well-being, level of

happiness, engagement with their work, and acceptance of the leader. Neuroscientific research shows that trust is a factor that influences employees' life satisfaction, fewer sick days, and less stress (Zak, 2017).

Team Cohesion. Team cohesion as an instrument to measure success in building trust was an unexpected finding. The literature previously appraised discussed leaders measuring their success through individual assessments of satisfaction and performance (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Zak, 2017). However, the interviewees said they know there is trust when the team collaborates and works well together, when they rely on each other, and when they mutually respect, praise, and recognize each other. A further investigation revealed two studies confirming the correlation between team cohesion and trust, suggesting that team cohesion can be used as another measure of trust. One study was conducted with 690 high-elite athletes in Spain (Mach et al., 2010), and another was conducted with global virtual teams with members from the US and India (Paul et al., 2016). They demonstrated through quantitative analysis that individual trust has a reciprocal impact on team cohesion.

Performance. The participants said they can confirm that trust exists when the team delivers results and achieves desired or outstanding performance levels. The meaning of results varies according to the field or area of those leaders, from financial results to improvements and innovations. The literature shows evidence of a positive relationship between trust and performance (Covey et al., 2022; Hurley, 2006; O'Hara, 2014). Results and performance are also part of other models of trust. One example is the four cores of credibility (Covey & Merrill, 2018), and another is the concept of logic of the triangle of trust (Frei & Morriss, 2023). Lastly, the literature shows that the absence of trust penalizes leaders and organizations, impacting their financial results and reputation (Covey & Merrill, 2018).

Maintaining Trust. The leaders of this study pointed out five strategies they use to maintain trust: (a) integrity, (b) effective communication, (c) meaning/purpose, (d) social intelligence, and (e) ability. Three strategies relate to the leaders' identity – integrity, social intelligence, and ability – and the other two relate to the leaders' synergistic connection strategies – effective communication and providing meaning and purpose. All five themes were presented and discussed in the RQ1, confirming the same concepts. Thus, there is a strong suggestion that leaders use similar techniques and practices to build and maintain trust with their team members in multinational organizations over time.

Results for Research Question 4

The fourth RQ asked about recommendations for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations. Leaders in the field who have successfully built trust with their team members warn future leaders about the common leadership pitfalls that deteriorate trust. Those pitfalls were already explored in RQ2 and relate to leaders' lack of preparedness and failure to connect with the team and set clear expectations and boundaries.

Those leaders also recommended that future leaders should invest in a credible identity that includes integrity, authenticity, and benevolence. Future leaders should also develop their social skills, communication, and ability to guide the team toward the results. Most importantly, leaders should be able to adapt their approach according to the individuals, context, and culture.

Discussion of Research Question 4

The findings in RQ4 can be grouped into mistakes to avoid and recommended strategies to build trust.

Mistakes to Avoid. There are three mistakes that future leaders should avoid: (a) unclear expectations and limits, (b) personal weaknesses, and (c) low social intelligence. Personal weaknesses and unclear expectations and limits were already discussed as the group of leaders' pitfalls in RQ2, and the concepts are the same. However, low social intelligence emerged as a distinct mistake to avoid. It refers to a leader's difficulties engaging and building relationships with team members. Some leaders mentioned their mistakes of putting work before people. Others shared that they failed to recognize individuals' agendas, preferences, and positions. Those examples relate to a leader's lack of empathy and social awareness, both explained by the literature on EI and social intelligence (Goleman, 2007; King, 2017). While caring for people increases the propensity to trust, the opposite makes people feel not valued, reducing their propensity to trust their leaders.

Recommended Strategies to Build Trust. Additionally, leaders recommended six practices for future leaders: (a) authenticity, (b) integrity, (c) benevolence, (d) ability, (e) leadership plasticity, and (f) effective communication. Authenticity, integrity, benevolence, and ability relate to the characteristics of a credible leader's identity. All of them were presented and discussed with support of literature in RQ1, and integrity and ability were also repeated in RQ3. Effective communication is one of the leaders' synergistic connections. strategies, also explained in the RQ1, and repeated in RQ3. All themes repeated throughout the interviews suggest that leaders strongly rely on them to build and maintain trust over time with their members. This leaves only the theme of leadership plasticity to be discussed in this subsection.

Leadership Plasticity. Leadership plasticity is a concept that started to be developed in the literature review in Chapter 2 and has evolved after the data analysis of RQ3. It refers to leaders' practices, such as understanding and learning from their environment and challenges.

They use their perceptions and learning for the context to model their behaviors and decide on the best approach to leadership. Leadership plasticity requires leaders to assess, learn, and change their mindsets according to individuals, social contexts, challenges, and other situations. It also suggests that leaders use practices from neuroscience to stimulate employees' behaviors and propensity to trust. Leadership plasticity is not a new leadership theory or approach; therefore, leaders may choose distinct leadership approaches or a combination of approaches in their adaptation process.

The three theoretical lenses, trust, EI, and cultural intelligence (Bird, 2018; Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2020), confirmed that different leadership styles are effective for elevating the perception of trust among team members (Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2019; House et al., 2004; Kwantes & Kuo, 2021; Short, 2014). Additionally, some interviewees recommended leadership approaches such as situational leadership (Blanchard et al., 2013) and adaptive leadership (Heifetz et al., 2009).

Plasticity is a term that comes from neuroscience and, in this study, refers to leaders' capacity to learn, adapt, and influence others. The literature in Chapter 2 already showed that leadership practices help promote oxytocin in employees' systems and rewire how they perceive social relations, increasing their propensity to trust (Zak, 2017). Tan (2023) explains that neuroplasticity is a process that responds to one's experiences, learning, and environment. The author emphasizes that neuroplasticity has a significant impact on leadership. On the one hand, certain brain areas respond better to certain situations – e.g., problem-solving, relationships, and others. On the other hand, leaders can intentionally rewire their brains and boost their leadership skills by engaging in new leadership roles and challenges. Another quantitative study analyzing the behavioral plasticity in the relationship between leader and follower confirmed the influence

of plasticity on leadership. The evidence in that study suggests people can adapt their roles to their social environments in the relationship of cooperation and coordination (Nakayama et al., 2017). All three studies confirm the influence of plasticity on employees' and leaders' behaviors and propensity to trust. Leaders' actions, such as challenging and motivating individuals, stimulate employees and their own brain plasticity (Zak, 2017). Leadership plasticity emerged as a new and unique finding in this study, which combines leaders' recommendations, literature on trust, EI, cultural intelligence, leadership, and neuroscience.

Implications of the Study

This study aimed to understand the trust-building process from the lenses of experienced leaders in multinational companies. Its findings provide contributions in four areas of the trust-building process: (a) a list of strategies and practices leaders can use to build trust with their teams in multinational companies, (b) a list of the main challenges those encounter to build trust, (c) a list of critical measures of trust, along with the practices to maintain that trust and, (d) recommendations of do's and don'ts for future leaders. The list of findings supported a model of leadership and trust that leaders in multinational organizations can use to sustainably elevate the level of trust with their teams.

Additionally, the findings contain practices that are common to leaders across industries. Therefore, the researcher foresees the opportunity to expand this study's application to other private and public organizations. The researcher previously analyzed and published the similarities and differences between trust-building practices in non-governmental and governmental institutions (Schneider Demaría, 2022). In that study, the author pointed out practices of building trust from governmental institutions that could benefit non-governmental institutions and vice-versa. The same happens with the findings of this dissertation. Even though

those practices were built upon leaders from multinational organizations, they might also leverage leadership credibility in governmental institutions.

This study also offers a significant contribution to the academic community. It adds to the current literature on trust-building and incorporates a multidisciplinary approach, including practices related to EI, social intelligence, and cultural intelligence. It also offers a model of trust that can be further analyzed, tested, and improved through applied research.

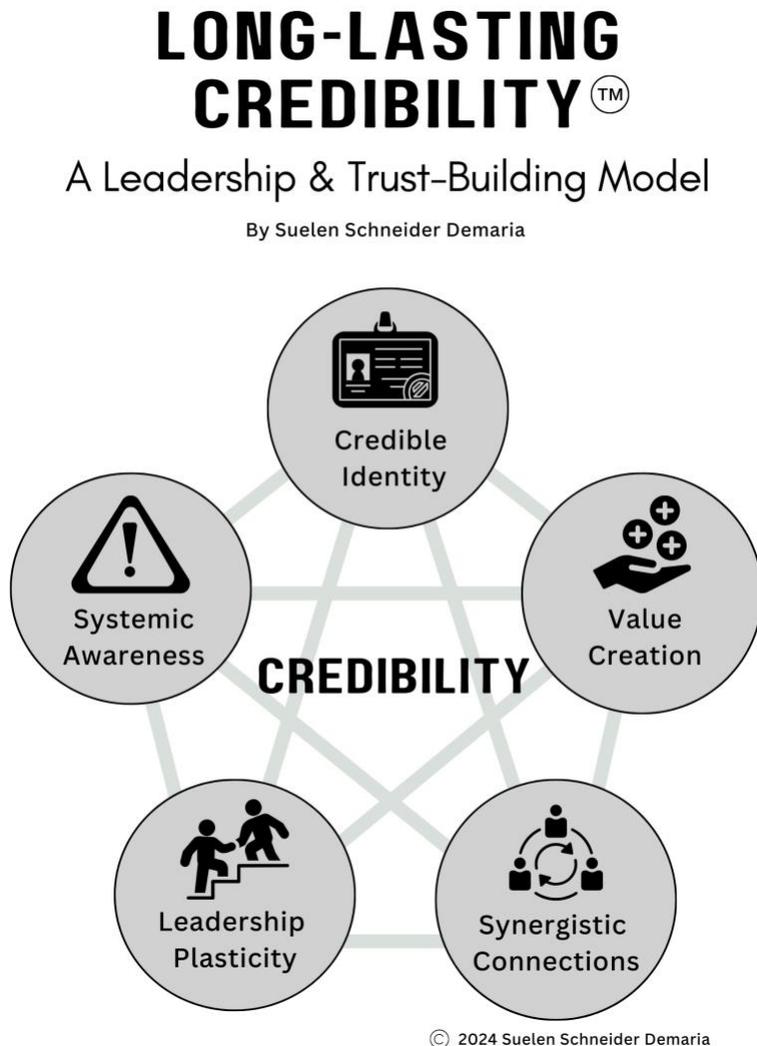
The ultimate goal of this study is to reduce the adverse effects of lack of trust in leadership. Such impacts include low business performance, reputation, morale, and employees' psychological safety (Covey & Merrill, 2018; Gallup, 2018). The model in this study offers a tool for leaders to overcome all those adverse effects.

Application: Long-Lasting Credibility Model

This study's findings and the literature review support the Long-Lasting Credibility Model, illustrated in Figure 16. The proposed leadership and trust-building model encompasses five domains that leaders should work on to increase and maintain trust sustainably. The five domains are (a) credible identity, (b) systemic awareness, (c) leadership plasticity, (d) synergistic connections, and (e) value creation.

Figure 16

Long-Lasting Credibility Model



Note. This model proposes five strategic domains for increasing leadership credibility and trustworthiness. The domains were developed based on this study’s findings and literature.

The five domains constitute strategic areas where leaders should invest time and effort to increase their credibility toward employees, reduce perceived risks, and expand their trustworthiness. As Figure 16 suggests, all five domains are interconnected and should be practiced harmoniously. Each strategic domain contains characteristics and actionable strategies

pulled from this study's findings and the literature to inform and orient leaders' approach to leadership and trust-building.

The first domain is the credible identity. It consists of five core characteristics that increase the individual perceived credibility: (a) authenticity, (b) integrity, (c) benevolence, (d) ability, and (e) social intelligence. Those are the attributes that leaders should develop and consistently assess and adapt because they reduce the perception of uncertainty, risks, or suspicion others might have regarding the leader.

The second domain refers to systemic awareness. The strategy in this domain is assessing the self, others, and the broader system to anticipate possible challenges and risks. Leaders should look for any chink in their identities, other's differences and barriers, and organizational and cultural barriers. The earlier leaders recognize potential challenges and risks, the better. That will allow them to learn, adapt, and influence the system to reduce the resistance to trust. Those actions reduce the level of uncertainty and the perception of risk.

The third domain is leadership plasticity. It orients leaders to learn, adapt, and influence behaviors that increase the propensity to trust. Leaders can unleash brain plasticity by challenging themselves, assuming new roles, learning, and adapting their approach to leadership. They can also influence employees' behaviors and propensity to trust by engaging in practices that release oxytocin, increasing the teams' empathy and trust.

The fourth domain is synergistic connections. This domain offers objective actions that expand the team's potential to create positive results. It includes four primary strategies: (a) providing purpose and meaning, (b) clarifying expectations and limits, (c) communicating effectively, and (d) strengthening team cohesion. Those four strategies increase visibility, orient employees, reduce information friction, and reduce perceived risk. Moreover, those strategies

also tend to increase results and performance, which leads to a sense of joy and fulfillment that contributes to employees' propensity to trust.

The fifth domain is value creation. This domain includes qualitative and quantitative success indicators: (a) employee openness and satisfaction, (b) team cohesion, and (c) performance. Those metrics indicate that trust was achieved. Therefore, leaders should keep an eye on those indicators and investigate every time the indicators have a negative variation because that might be related to the level of trust.

All five domains are equally important to creating long-lasting credibility. They are interconnected so that each domain is linked to all other four domains. That is intentional because a chink in one domain compromises the credibility of the entire system. For example, the leader can check all requirements of a credible identity. Still, if they fail to provide purpose and align expectations with their team members, that will affect the value creation, and consequently, the team's motivation and trust will decrease. Another example is when a leader checks all the domains except systemic awareness. When leaders fail to assess the system and identify possible risks, they might miss an individual or cultural barrier that can negatively influence others in the team, increasing resistance to trust.

Figure 17 summarizes the characteristics and strategies in each domain.

Figure 17

The Five Domains Explained



Note. This figure summarizes the characteristics and strategies within each domain of the Long-Lasting Credibility Model.

This study's model of leadership and trust-building expands on other models that were assessed in the literature (Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Frei & Morriss, 2023; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022) in three areas. The first is including social intelligence in the

leaders' credible identity. The second is the concept of leadership plasticity, which expands on the relationship between neuroscience, trust, and leadership ability to adapt (Tan, 2023; Zak, 2017). The third includes cultural aspects of systemic awareness. The fourth is the emphasis on setting limits within synergistic connections.

Research-Base and Literature Support to the Model

This model is based on the findings of the four RQs and the support of the literature appraised in this dissertation. Table 13 summarizes the relationship between the areas in the model, the RQs' findings, and the primary literary support.

Table 13

Relationship Between the Five Areas, the RQs, and Literature

The Five Domains	Research Questions	Primary Literature Support
Credible Identity	RQ1 findings about the credible identity	Covey et al., 2022; Covey & Merrill, 2018; Frei & Morriss, 2023; George et al., 2018; Goleman, 2007; King, 2017; Mayer et al., 1995; Stickel, 2022
Systemic Awareness	RQ2 findings about leadership pitfalls, individual and team barriers, and contextual challenges.	Covey et al., 2022; Goleman & Senge, 2014; Goleman, 2016; Schein & Schein, 2017.
Leadership Plasticity	RQ4 findings about leadership plasticity Also, it addresses RQ2 by adapting the leadership approach to prevent possible challenges regarding the self, others, and a wider system.	Bird, 2018; Covey et al., 2022; Goleman, 2020; Nakayama et al., 2017; Tan, 2023; Zak, 2017
Synergistic Connections	RQ1 and RQ4 findings about Synergistic Connections, which are the strategies leaders apply with others.	Covey et al., 2022; Durand & Ioannou, 2023; Goleman, 2019; Lencioni, 2016; Rice et al., 2021.
Value Creation	RQ3 findings about measures of success.	Covey et al., 2022; Francis-Winters, 2017; Hurley, 2006; Matzler & Renzl, 2007; O'Hara, 2014; Zak, 2017

Note. This table displays the five domains of the Long-Lasting Credibility Model in relation to the research questions' findings and the primary support from the literature. The literature column does not contain all references. It includes a selection of the references that the researcher understands to be the most relevant to the model.

How Will the Model Be Available to Leaders?

This is not a one-time application model. It is envisioned to become a leadership philosophy in organizations so that leaders will create and maintain long-lasting credibility that will create value for individuals and organizations. Therefore, the researcher wants to make the model available for leaders into three options: self-development, group development, and executive coaching.

The self-development option is based on a book publication. The researcher aims to publish a book about the model. In this book, the author will explain the long-lasting model of credibility in detail, guide them through a journey of self-implementation of the model, and provide recommendations to maintain that credibility and trust over time. The book will allow leaders to access and self-implement the proposed model easily.

The group-development option consists of an organizational training program. Along with the book publication, the researcher aims to develop a training program. That program will cover five areas of the model on the curriculum. The third option will be the Executive Coaching Program for Long-Lasting Credibility. The researcher will develop a train-the-trainer program to certify professional executive coaches to apply the method with leaders. This program will serve leaders of higher ranks and positions who need confidentiality and a personalized approach.

Next Steps to Launch the Long-Lasting Credibility Model

As for the next steps regarding the model, the researcher will

- Present the model in conferences and journals to share this new knowledge with academic community members and receive feedback.

- Expand the model by designing the implementation journey of the long-lasting credibility model and recommendations to maintain the model as a leadership philosophy.
- Write and publish a book to make the model accessible to more leaders.
- Create the organizational training and executive coaching programs.

Unexpected Findings

There were four unexpected findings in this study. The first was related to the amount of input leaders provided about strategies to build trust versus their challenges to build trust. The data showed that leaders in this study provided two times more input about strategies than challenges. It gives food for thought and speculation. One of the possibilities is that leaders are conditioned to focus on positive responses about strategy rather than on understanding the challenges. If that is the case, the leaders could have neglected some critical challenges that influence trust. More research is necessary to understand the root cause of that phenomenon.

The second unexpected finding is the theme of social intelligence as a significant characteristic of a leader's credible identity. Initially, the researcher expected social intelligence to be part of the EI set of characteristics. However, the other individual aspects of EI, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation, were not as frequent as the aspects related to how leaders' relationship skills. This finding also contributes significantly to the existing models of trust.

The third unexpected finding is leadership plasticity. The concept of plasticity was already a surprising finding in the literature review. After collecting and analyzing the data and further assessing the literature on leadership and plasticity, it became a unique finding that adds to the leadership practices of trust-building. Additionally, this finding could expand on the

existing leadership theories. More research would also be necessary, as the current body of knowledge about plasticity and leadership effectiveness is recent and narrowed.

The fourth is the emphasis leaders gave to providing purpose and setting boundaries. Both are included in the domain of synergistic connections. Providing purpose is a component of Covey et al. (2022) trust and inspire leader model, but it was not included in previous models (Mayer et al., 1995). When leaders provide the purpose, they focus on the why. In this study, several leaders reinforced the aspect of setting and clarifying limits. Such recommendations relate to what and how. That opposes the vision that the leader should focus primarily on the why. However, by setting boundaries, leaders clarify how the work or relationship should look. This reduces uncertainties, which is favorable for increasing the trust level.

Study Conclusion

This study offered a comprehensive analysis of leaders' strategies, challenges, measures of success, and recommendations for building trust with team members in multinational organizations. Through this analysis, the researcher confirmed the influence of the three theoretical lenses (trust, EI, and cultural intelligence) on a leader's practices to build trust with team members. However, the lens of cultural intelligence had a relatively small impact on leaders' practices compared to the other lenses. Moreover, social intelligence, which was included in this study as part of the EI lens, became a significant area of impact on trust-building practices.

The long-lasting credibility model offers a comprehensive tool that can be applied to develop leaders and increase the overall trust level in organizations. The five domains in this model include (a) the core characteristics of a credible leader identity, (b) a systemic awareness approach with a focus on the self, others, and the wider system, (c) leadership plasticity

strategies to influence behavior and trust, (d) strategic actions to boost synergistic connections, and (e) the three areas to value creation impacted by the level of trust. The model invites leaders to prepare their strategies in advance, increasing credibility and proactively influencing trust.

Recommendations for Future Research

The researcher recommends four areas for future research. The first area concerns the relationship between psychological safety, culture of inclusion, and trust. In this study, it was expected that leaders would bring a culture of belongingness and inclusivity as possible strategies for building trust. Therefore, the researcher suggests further analysis to better understand the relationship between those areas. The second is a comparative analysis of best practices to build across different countries following the culture map proposed by Meyer (2014). Although this research focused on multinational organizations, there is space to explore the different concepts and practices across nationalities. The third is the applied research of the long-lasting credibility model. The applied research is recommended to validate the model and receive feedback from the leaders in the field. The last area of research is about leadership plasticity. It's a new concept that can be improved through more empirical and applied research.

Author's Observations

This study was one of the most beautiful yet hard work I have done. It was beautiful because it was an intense journey of getting to know others' perspectives and stories about trust. I grew as a human and leader as I learned their stories. However, it required hundreds of hours of literature research, data analysis, and sleep deprivation. It also affected the lives of my daughter and husband, to whom I dedicate this dissertation. Most importantly, it required my own shift of paradigm. I had to deconstruct my mental models and question my deep beliefs to open space for new ideas and a new model. That was hard and, sometimes, painful.

As I navigated in this study, I came to several realizations. First, I thought this model would offer a step-by-step journey for leaders to build trust in multinational organizations, including the three lenses of trust, EI, and cultural intelligence. One of my most exciting moments of surprise was when I started to see that social intelligence, providing meaning, and clarifying expectations and limits emerged as a more critical construct of trust than cultural intelligence. This was one of those moments when I had to step back and deconstruct my deep beliefs. As a person who studied international relationships and had a long experience with people from different national cultures, I assumed that the influence of culture on trust would be my most prominent finding in this research. I was wrong, and I am glad for that. That realization took a blindfold off my eyes and allowed me to create a model that is much more inclusive.

Now, when I look at the long-lasting credibility model, I see much more potential. It is not limited to multinational organizations. Instead, it offers a paradigm shift that I believe can positively impact several organizations and individuals, not limited to the business context. For example, in an informal conversation with a female with whom I confided about my model, she mentioned that she could see all five domains applying in her family relationship. After listening to that, I thought about how this model could improve personal relationships. For that, more analysis would be necessary. Yet, it was a great realization.

Lastly, I believe this model can be combined with other models to potentialize positive organizational outcomes and guide leaders in different situations. For example, the resilient leadership and change agility model (Miramontes & Schneider Demaria, 2024) proposes a roadmap for leaders to navigate the complexities of today's ever-changing business environments by integrating resilience and agility. One of this model's objectives is to create more sustainable organizations. The long-lasting credibility model would contribute to that

model by increasing the system's overall credibility. When people trust their leaders, they are more engaged, willing to accept changes, and committed to the organization's future because they see a long relationship with their leaders and organizations. In the end, it will be a win-win for everyone.

Final Thoughts

Trust is one of the most important elements in social exchange (Sucher & Gupta, 2021). It fosters safety in the workplace and increases results and individual well-being (Covey & Merrill, 2018). This study analyzed the phenomenon of building trust, combining the findings from leaders' lived experiences with the support of the current literature. The multidisciplinary approach taken in this research allowed the author to perceive that the approach to building trust should be sustainable, systemic, interconnected, and proactive. That requires a change in the leadership mindset and philosophy. Leaders need to assess and anticipate their strategies, considering the system as a whole. They should be mindful of the five areas in the long-lasting credibility model and never dismiss any of them because a chink in the credibility might come from unexpected areas. In contrast, if leaders succeed in changing their mindset and consistently assess the five domains, they will boost credibility in the entire system.

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APPENDIX A

Professional Social Media Recruitment Script (LinkedIn)

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

In my capacity as a Ph.D. candidate enrolled in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University, I am conducting a research study that seeks to identify the best practices and strategies used by leaders in multinational companies.

If you identify as a leader in a multinational company, have a minimum of five years of experience in any multinational organization leading teams of multiple members, are in a middle management or higher position, over the age of 18, and are willing to participate in the study, please email me.

Your involvement in the research would entail an audio-recorded Zoom interview, with the entire process anticipated to be no longer than 60 minutes. Your identity will be concealed prior to, during, and subsequent to the collection of study data. In addition, your participation in this research is entirely optional. Strict protocols ensuring confidentiality will be implemented. Google Drive will be utilized to ensure the confidentiality of all information, including informed permission and transcribed data. In addition, a pseudonym will be allocated to each individual recording in order to de-identify the data.

To inquire about the study or express interest in participating, kindly reach out to me at your earliest convenience.

Thank you,

Suelen Schneider Demaria

Pepperdine University| Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX B

IRB Approval Notice

eProtocol
24255 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90263
TEL: 310-506-4000

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: March 12, 2024

Protocol Investigator Name: Suelen Schneider Demaria

Protocol #: 22-09-1935

Project Title: DARE TO TRUST: A LEADERSHIP MODEL FOR BUILDING TRUST IN MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Suelen Schneider Demaria:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at community.pepperdine.edu/irb.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

cc: Mrs. Katy Carr, Assistant Provost for Research

APPENDIX C

Recruitment Script



Recruitment Script Template (E-mail)

Study: How Leaders Build Trust

Dear [Name],

My name is Suelen Schneider Demaría, and I am a doctoral student in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am conducting a qualitative research study examining the practices leaders apply to build trust with their team members in multinational organizations and you are invited to participate in the study.

If you agree, you are invited to participate in a Zoom interview to discuss practices, strategies, and challenges you encounter to build trust with your team members. The interview is anticipated to take no more than an hour online using Zoom. The interview will be audio-recorded only, using Otter.ai. Participation in this study is voluntary. Your identity as a participant will remain confidential during and after the study. Confidentiality will be maintained using a series of security measures, including password-protected email communication using university firewall protections, a password-protected Zoom meeting, deidentification of data using pseudonyms as well as compartmentalization of the various data elements, keeping all information separate, and the recordings will be deleted once the research is completed. If you have questions or would like to participate, please contact me.

Thank you for your participation,

Suelen Schneider Demaria

Pepperdine University| Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX D

Pepperdine University Informed Consent Form

SOCIAL- BEHAVIORAL ADULT PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

IRB #: 22-09-1935

Formal Study Title: DARE TO TRUST: A LEADERSHIP MODEL FOR BUILDING TRUST IN MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES

Authorized Study Personnel:

Principal Investigator: Suelen Schneider Demaria,
Suelen.schneiderdemaria@pepperdine.edu

Key Information:

If you agree to participate in this study, the project will involve:

- Males and Females between the ages of (18-80) in leadership position who work or have worked for multinational organizations
- Procedures will include (Contacting participants using the recruitment script, informed consent, data collection via structured interview, transcription of data, analysis of data, documentation of findings)
- One virtual visit is required
- This visit will take 60 minutes in total
- There is minimal risk associated with this study
- You will not be paid any amount of money for your participation
- You will be provided a copy of this consent form

Invitation

You are invited to take part in this research study. The information in this form is meant to help you decide whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please ask.

Why are you being asked to be in this research study?

You are being asked to be in this study because you are a leader in a multinational company located in the US and lead a team of multiple members. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate.

What is the reason for doing this research study?

The purpose of this study is to determine the strategies, best practices, and challenges for leaders to build trust with their team members in multinational organizations.

What will be done during this research study?

You will be asked to complete a 60-minute semistructured virtual interview via Zoom. The interview will be audio-only recorded using Otter AI and will be separated from Zoom. The PI will ask you a series of questions aimed at figuring out what strategies are used by leaders in your field. While the research will take approximately 26 to 52 weeks, your interview will only take 60 minutes. The audio-recording files will be destroyed after transcription.

How will my data be used?

Your interview responses will be transcribed, analyzed, and aggregated in order to determine the findings to the established research questions.

What are the possible risks of being in this research study?

This research presents minimal risk of loss of confidentiality, emotional and/or psychological distress because the interview involves questions about your leadership practices. You may also experience fatigue, boredom, or anxiety as a result.

What are the possible benefits to you?

You are not expected to get any benefit from being in this study.

What are the possible benefits to other people?

The benefits to society include a better understanding of leadership strategies to build trust used within your industry. Other emerging leaders might also benefit from any additional recommendations that are shared through this process.

What are the alternatives to being in this research study?

Participation in this study is voluntary. There are no alternatives to participating other than deciding not to participate.

What will participating in this research study cost you?

There is no cost to you to be in this research study.

Will you be compensated for being in this research study?

There will be no compensation for participating in this study.

What should you do if you have a problem during this research study?

Your welfare is the major concern of every member of the research team. If you have a problem as a direct result of being in this study, you should immediately contact one of the people listed at the beginning of this consent form.

How will information about you be protected?

Reasonable steps will be taken to protect your privacy and the confidentiality of your study data. The data will be deidentified, encrypted, and stored in a password-protected computer and will only be seen by the research team during the study and until the study is complete.

The only persons who will have access to your research records are the study personnel, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and any other person, agency, or sponsor as required by law. The information from this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings, but the data will be reported as group or summarized data, and your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

Furthermore, all audio recordings will be destroyed immediately after they are transcribed.

What are your rights as a research subject?

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study.

For study related questions, please contact the investigator(s) listed at the beginning of this form.

For questions concerning your rights or complaints about the research contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB):

Phone: 1(310)568-2305
Email: gpsirb@pepperdine.edu

What will happen if you decide not to be in this research study or decide to stop participating once you start?

You can decide not to be in this research study, or you can stop being in this research study (“withdraw”) at any time before, during, or after the research begins for any reason. Deciding not to be in this research study or deciding to withdraw will not affect your relationship with the investigator or with Pepperdine University.

You will not lose any benefits to which you are entitled.

Documentation of informed consent

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to be in this research study. Signing this form means that (1) you have read and understood this consent form, (2) you have had the consent form explained to you, (3) you have had your questions answered and (4) you have decided to be in the research study. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

Participant

Name:

(First, Last: Please Print)

Participant

Signature:

Signature

Date

APPENDIX E

CITI Certificates

Completion Date **30-Aug-2020**
Expiration Date **29-Aug-2025**
Record ID **38091126**

This is to certify that:

Suelen Schneider Demaria

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

GSEP Education Division (Curriculum Group)
GSEP Education Division - Social-Behavioral-Educational (SBE) (Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Pepperdine University

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME. Do not use for TransCelerate mutual recognition (see Completion Report).

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w1d366323-561d-46c2-949a-8394f9a49de6-38091126

Completion Date **01-Sep-2020**
Expiration Date **31-Aug-2024**
Record ID **38091125**

This is to certify that:

Suelen Schneider Demaria

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

CITI Conflicts of Interest (Curriculum Group)
Conflicts of Interest (Course Learner Group)
1 - Stage 1 (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Pepperdine University

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME. Do not use for TransCelerate mutual recognition (see Completion Report).

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w825ed576-caba-42d1-b2ea-4888e4706c0d-38091125

APPENDIX F

Interview Protocol

Ice Breaker: How is it to work in a multinational organization?

Interview Questions

Think of your simple, most successful experience in building trust among your team members:

1. What practices did you engage in, or what techniques did you use that led to that success?
2. What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques?
3. Think of another successful experience in building trust among your team members: what practices did you engage in or what techniques did you use that led to that success?
4. What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques?
5. Are you aware of other practices and techniques for building trust among team members recommended or practiced by others in the field?
6. Are you aware of any challenges or difficulties faced by others who have successfully built trust among team members?
7. How do you define and measure your success in building trust with your team?
8. How do you maintain that trust over time?
9. What mistakes have you made in the trust-building process that you would warn leaders to avoid?
10. Is there any other recommendation you would like to offer?

APPENDIX G

Peer Reviewer Form

Dear Reviewer:

Your consent to engage in my research project is much appreciated. The purpose of the table below is to guarantee that the interview questions matching to the research questions for the study are appropriately addressed.

In the table below, please study the interview questions that relate to each of the research questions and indicate the extent to which the interview question corresponds to the research topic. Indicate “Keep as stated” if the interview question is directly pertinent to the research issue. Please indicate “Delete” if the interview question is not pertinent to the research question. Lastly, please indicate any possible revisions to the interview question that might better align with the research question. You may also propose any other interview questions that you consider essential.

Please send the completed form to me via email at Suelen.schneiderdemaria@pepperdine.edu once your analysis is complete. I express my gratitude for your participation.

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions	Peer Reviewer #1	Peer Reviewer #2	Peer Reviewer #3
RQ1 - What strategies and practices are employed by leaders to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	IQ1: How do you build trust with your team members? IQ2: How do you increase trust among your team members? IQ3: What competencies and behaviors do you cultivate to be considered a trustworthy leader? IQ4: Are there competencies that you apply specifically to multinational teams? IQ5: Can you share some examples?	IQ1: Keep IQ2: Keep IQ3: Keep IQ4: Keep IQ5: Revise to “Can you share some examples of competencies that you apply to multinational teams?”	IQ 1. Revision – “Can you describe a specific instance where you, as a leader, successfully built trust among team members in a multinational organization, and what strategies did you employ in that situation?” IQ 2. Keep IQ 3. Keep IQ 4 & 5 – Keep, I think you can reword this so that it is “Are there competencies that you apply specifically to multinational teams? If so, can you share some examples?”	IQ1: Keep IQ2: Keep IQ3: Keep IQ4: Keep IQ5: Keep

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions	Peer Reviewer #1	Peer Reviewer #2	Peer Reviewer #3
RQ2 - What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	<p>IQ6: What obstacle do you encounter in building trust with your team members in multinational companies?</p> <p>IQ7: How do you overcome those obstacles?</p> <p>IQ8: How do you maintain or expand your and your team's trustworthiness?</p>	<p>IQ6: Keep</p> <p>IQ7: Keep</p> <p>IQ8: Revise to two separate interview questions:</p> <p>a. How do you maintain or expand your trustworthiness?</p> <p>b. How do you maintain or expand your team's trustworthiness?</p>	<p>IQ 6 & 7 I think you can put these two together: "How do you handle challenges related to trust-building in a multicultural work environment, and what measures have you taken to overcome them?"</p> <p>IQ 8. "Have you encountered any situations where trust was compromised within your team, and if so, how did you address and resolve those issues?"</p>	<p>IQ6: Keep</p> <p>IQ7: Keep</p> <p>IQ8: Consider breaking this one into two questions.</p> <p>a. How do you maintain or expand your trustworthiness?</p> <p>b. How do you maintain or expand your team's trustworthiness?</p>
RQ3 - How do the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations?	<p>IQ9: How do you measure your success in building trust with your team?</p> <p>IQ10: How do you know your team members trust you as a leader?</p>	<p>IQ9: Keep</p> <p>IQ10: Keep</p>	<p>IQ 9 and 10. I think you can reword it to this "How do you define success in the context of trust-building within a multinational organization, and what metrics or indicators do you use to measure your success?"</p>	<p>IQ9: Keep</p> <p>IQ10: Keep</p>
RQ4 - Based on their experiences, what recommendations would participants make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	<p>IQ11: What mistakes have you made in the trust-building process that you would warn leaders to avoid?</p> <p>IQ12: Is there any other recommendation you would like to offer?</p>	<p>IQ11: Keep</p> <p>IQ12: Revise to "What advice do you have on trust-building for emerging leaders?"</p>	<p>IQ 11. Keep</p> <p>IQ 12. Keep</p>	<p>IQ 11. Keep</p> <p>IQ 12. Keep</p>

APPENDIX H

Expert Review Feedback

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
<i>RQ1:</i> What are the strategies and practices employed by leaders to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	Think of your simple most successful experience in building trust among your team members: IQ1: What practices did you engage in or what techniques did you use that lead to that success? IQ3: Think of another successful experience in building trust among your team members: What practices did you engage in or what techniques did you use that lead to that success? IQ5: Are you aware of other practices and techniques for building trust among team members recommended or practiced by others in the field?
<i>RQ2:</i> What challenges are the leaders facing in implementing those strategies and practices to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	IQ2: What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques? IQ4: What challenges or difficulties did you face to implement those practices and techniques? IQ6: Are you aware of any challenges or difficulties faced by others who have successfully built trust among team members?
<i>RQ3:</i> How do the leaders measure the success of their trust-building practices and strategies in multinational organizations?	IQ7: How do you define and measure your success in building trust with your team? IQ8: How do you maintain that trust over time?
<i>RQ4:</i> Based on their experiences, what recommendations would participants make for future leaders trying to build trust among their team members in multinational organizations?	IQ9: What mistakes have you made in the trust-building process that you would warn leaders to avoid? IQ10: Is there any other recommendation you would like to offer?
