

REAL **KM**

**Evidence based.
Practical results.**

TrustRadar Diagnostic

Version 1.0

OpenKM Diagnostic Series

Stephen Bounds

Introduction

TrustRadar is a knowledge management diagnostic that assesses people's feelings of trust about any team, branch, or organisation (the "target group"). Perceptions of trustworthiness directly correlate to levels of confidence in a group's knowledge and their ability, attitudes, and performance.

The diagnostic provides a simple but robust numerical score in five dimensions about different kinds of trust. As well as providing an aggregate snapshot, individual scores can be evaluated to form the basis of subsequent, targeted change initiatives. The assessed kinds of trust can be categorised as either interpersonal or impersonal trust attributes:

Interpersonal trust – *Expectations of relationships and interactions*

- **Reliability trust** – Will the target group do what they promise?
- **Benevolence trust** – Does the target group work to provide benefits to others?
- **Competence trust** – Can the target group achieve what they claim?

Impersonal trust – *Expectations of organisational capability and fairness*

- **Leadership trust** – Are target group leaders effectively setting and executing strategy?
- **Structural trust** – Is the target group well organised, positioned, and supported?

TrustRadar is adapted from the doctoral dissertation of Dr Mika Vanhala, who developed a "comprehensive, psychometrically sound, operationally valid scale" for measuring interpersonal and impersonal trust.¹ A summary of the dissertation is available online.²

Feedback received after testing of the TrustRadar benchmark at the November 2017 KMELB conference led to two additional questions on impersonal trust being added, relating to perceptions of organisational respect and transparency.

Vanhala recently conducted further testing of the impersonal trust dimensions of the scale to further confirm the validity of their use in assessing organisational trust.³

¹ Vanhala, Mika. "Impersonal trust within the organization: what, how and why?." (2011). Retrieved from <https://lutpub.lut.fi/handle/10024/72125>.

² See <https://www.slideshare.net/bounds/impersonal-trust-in-organisations>.

³ Vanhala, Mika. "Trust as an organizational knowledge sharing enabler-validation of the impersonal trust scale." *VINE Journal of Information and Knowledge Management Systems* (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/VJKMS-12-2018-0119/full/html>

Usage

The TrustRadar diagnostic involves administering a survey of 50 questions to a sample population. The population may either be internal or external to the group or organisation being targeted (ie either employees or clients of the target group). Using a mix of both is not recommended.

If an external population is used, the sampling process should select only those who regularly transact with that entity (ie as clients) to minimise responses being biased by stereotypes.

Best practice statistical approaches should be used for methods of population selection and administration of the diagnostic survey, such as randomisation of questions. Failure to adopt these practices may affect the accuracy and robustness of results received.

The standard version of the diagnostic uses a 5-point Likert scale where each question is scored between **0 = Strongly Disagree** and **4 = Strongly Agree**. The result is normalised by dividing the total score for each trust dimension by its relevant scale factor so that the maximum score for each dimension is 10 and the minimum score is 0.

The survey questions as posed are necessarily generic to cover a wide range of organisational structures and operating models. It may be felt appropriate to rewrite some or all of the questions to make their intent clearer and more specific to the target environment.

In this event, the best practice is for questions to:

- be replaced on a 1-to-1 basis
- be rewritten to the minimum extent possible
- remain aligned to the factor identified by Vanhala affecting that dimension of trust

Following these guidelines for replacement will minimise impact on external validity and cross-comparability of the diagnostic across organisations and teams.

Reuse and modifications

All Open KM Diagnostics are licenced for free use under a **no-derivatives** Creative Commons 4.0 licence to limit fragmentation and encourage consensus within the KM community.

In addition to this licence, permission to create derivative versions is granted as long as:

- The derivative diagnostic is named distinctively from the original OpenKM diagnostic
- Its status as a derivative of an OpenKM diagnostic, including any version, is clearly noted
- Instructions on how to find the original document are included in any revised documents

TrustRadar Questions

Instructions

Make sure participants clearly understand the scope of the question by specifying a group or organisation as part of the framing question.

Statement headings are advisory and should be omitted in the constructed survey.

Each statement must be rated by each participant using a 5-point Likert scale, where a response of **0 = Strongly Disagree** and **4 = Strongly Agree**.

After scoring each statement response, add up the score for each dimension's questions and divide by the listed scale factor to calculate the final score for each dimension. This will normalise each result to a score between 0 and 10.

Statement to answer: *In relation to the group or organisation _____, how strongly do you disagree or agree with the following statements?*

Reliability trust

[Scale factor: 3.2]

- R1. **Principled:** The values and principles of group members help them act consistently.
 - R2. **Actions match words:** Group members tell you clearly what they will do, and then do it.
 - R3. **Truthful:** Group members tell the truth and do not mislead.
 - R4. **Keeps promises:** If group members make a promise, they will do what they say.
 - R5. **Accountable:** If a promise is not met, group members accept fault and work to improve next time.
 - R6. **Makes clear promises:** Promises made by group members are clear and check-able.
 - R7. **Self-aware:** Group members know the likely results of their acts, and behave responsibly.
 - R8. **Outcomes follow actions:** Group members act with care and diligence to deliver promised outcomes.
-

Benevolence trust

[Scale factor: 3.2]

- B1. **Good intentions:** Group members prefer to act in a way that benefits others.
- B2. **Concern for welfare:** Group members consider how an action or outcome might hurt others.
- B3. **Cares about needs / desires:** Group members consider who may need or desire an outcome, and why.
- B4. **Avoids harm:** Group members try to act to prevent or reduce harm to others.
- B5. **Volunteers support:** When group members see a problem they can help with, they offer to help.
- B6. **Seeks others' views:** Group members seek the views and knowledge of others to help them make decisions.
- B7. **Unmonitored actions:** Even unwatched, group members act with good intent.
- B8. **Shows wisdom:** Group members use current and past experiences to gain insight.

Competence trust

[Scale factor: 3.2]

- C1. **Environmental knowledge:** Group members know how to handle situations they face.
- C2. **Detect problem from information:** With enough information, group members will know that a problem exists.
- C3. **Triage problem from information:** Given a scenario, group members find the right problem to fix.
- C4. **Solution identification:** Assigned a problem to fix, group members find good possible solutions.
- C5. **Skills and abilities:** Group members have the needed skills, abilities, and training to do their work.
- C6. **Organisational influence:** The group has access to all members and resources they need to complete solutions.
- C7. **Solution delivery:** Group members coordinate and complete all tasks needed for a solution.
- C8. **Correct solution selection:** Group members choose good solutions, given the information they had at the time.

Leadership trust

[Scale factor: 5.2]

- L1. **Clear, sound vision:** Group leaders explain the outcomes they want, and the method to achieve them.
- L2. **Quality of strategy:** Group leaders have strong and rational reasons for choices and actions.
- L3. **Leadership quality:** Group leaders support, direct, and improve the work of their staff well.
- L4. **Reputation:** Group leaders have shown the ability to perform well.
- L5. **Coherence:** Group leaders want reasonable outcomes, given how things work at present.
- L6. **Organisation identity:** Staff and stakeholders understand the purpose of the group.
- L7. **Organisation norms:** Group members know how they should behave in common situations.
- L8. **Clarity of role:** Group members understand what they need to do and why it matters.
- L9. **Competency of execution:** Group leaders give actions and directions that match their vision and strategy.
- L10. **Sincerity and morality:** Group leaders do not abuse their position of power and have good intent.
- L11. **Involvement:** Group leaders seek and respect the opinions of members when deciding what to do.
- L12. **Communicating with purpose:** Group leaders link their decisions to how they will achieve an outcome.
- L13. **Respect:** The group has admirable principles and values.

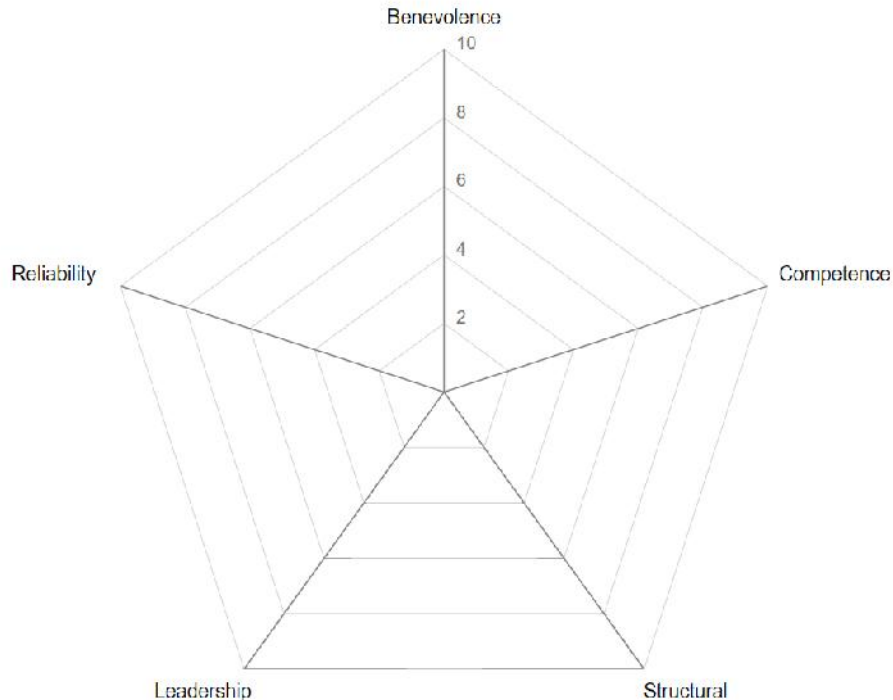
Structural trust

[Scale factor: 5.2]

- S1. **Technological competence:** The group uses technology to help operations and improve decisions.
- S2. **Human resource policies:** Group employee policies are fair, well-considered, and enforced impartially.
- S3. **Coordination:** Members in the group talk so things happen in the right order and right time.
- S4. **Symmetry of rules:** Group rules apply to all members evenly.
- S5. **Generosity / reciprocity:** The group encourages generous acts and repayment in kind.
- S6. **Adherence to rules / promises:** Group members follow rules and expect others to do the same.

- S7. **Rewards for loyalty:** Members loyal to the group receive fair and respectful treatment.
- S8. **Environmental position:** Group choices about its structure make it more adaptable to changing situations.
- S9. **Resilience / robustness:** Overall performance of the group does not drop when the environment of members changes.
- S10. **Well-designed processes:** Common processes of the group have documented steps or are a strong part of its culture.
- S11. **Environmental stability:** The group operates in a situation that is stable and predictable.
- S12. **Competitiveness:** The group does not have many rivals competing with it for resources and success.
- S13. **Transparency:** The way the group operates is understood by people who are not part of it.

TrustRadar results chart



Licence



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).