

## Base Trust on Risk Analysis, not Moral Judgment

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"In deciding whether to trust someone (...) we often focus on that person's moral qualities. Is he a good person? That question is highly relevant but should rarely be decisive. Good people can go bankrupt. (...) Moral integrity is likely to be a critical ingredient in selecting those with whom I want to have a relationship and in assessing risks, but it is well to remember that it may be neither a necessary nor a sufficient basis for trust.

(...)

Some risks are well worth taking wholly independent of the integrity of the people involved. It is better to get in the lifeboat with someone with whom I have doubts than to go down with the ship. Other risks, however, should not be undertaken even when dealing with the most honorable and upright people. I may have perfect confidence in the moral integrity of a good friend, but if he knows little about airplanes, I should not trust him to fly me home.

(...)

Leaving aside all questions of affection or dislike, we should assess the risks of reliance against the risks of not relying.

(...)

[Even with honorable and upright people] risks remain: risks of misunderstanding, changed circumstances, and unpredictable events."

Source: Roger Fisher, Scott Brown: *Getting Together – Building Relationships As We Negotiate* (Penguin Books, 1988)