

Developing Fast Trust in Emergency Management

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Abstract

This paper delves into the pivotal role of trust in emergency management, with a special focus on 'fast trust' in diverse, omni-cultural environments. It draws from a wide array of emergency management practices to explore the foundational elements of trust, including consistency, honesty, integrity, openness, empathy, competence, and respect. The paper emphasises the critical importance of 'fast trust' in emergency situations, highlighting key strategies like rapid response, clear communication, visibility, empathy, and community engagement. It integrates perspectives from Māori, Global Indigenous, Pacific, and Ethnic communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, illustrating diverse and culturally embedded trust-building approaches. The significance of respecting cultural values, incorporating traditional knowledge, and promoting active community participation is underscored. Furthermore, the paper addresses the nuances between acceptance and trust, and the reciprocal nature of trust in emergency management, emphasising mutual respect, trust, and acceptance. Importantly, it introduces Misinformation Management as an integral part of the Fast Trust Model, underscoring the need to proactively address and counter misinformation to establish and maintain trust. The integration of futures systems thinking into this model highlights the anticipation of future scenarios, the embrace of inclusivity, and the fostering of collaborative networks. This exploration offers valuable insights into the dynamics of trust in emergency management, proposing a multifaceted approach that is grounded in both scholarly research and real-world application and experiences, aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and responsiveness of emergency management practices.

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The contributions of these professionals have not only provided practical insights but have also imbued this paper with a sense of real-world applicability and relevance. Their shared experiences and wisdom have been invaluable in shaping a comprehensive and pragmatic approach to trust-building in emergency management.

Introduction

Trust, a complex and evolving concept, is foundational to an array of human interactions, extending from personal relationships to the functioning of societies and economies. It is predicated on beliefs or expectations about the reliability, integrity, and competence of others, and involves a readiness to be vulnerable based on these expectations.

In emergency management, the development of 'fast trust' is not merely important but essential for effective response, collaboration, and recovery efforts – impacting on the renewal of impacted communities. This type of trust, established swiftly and rooted in deep understanding, is vital for navigating the often chaotic and unpredictable scenarios presented by crises. It relies on established trust frameworks, but uniquely integrates social factors, cultural considerations, and now, the critical aspect of Misinformation Management, to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency response operations.

This paper aims to provide emergency management professionals with an in-depth understanding of the crucial role of trust in their field. It explores strategies for developing fast trust, enriched by practitioner experiences and scholarly insights from diverse global contexts. Additionally, the paper delves into the dynamics of acceptance versus trust, emphasising the reciprocal nature of trust and the importance of mutual respect and understanding between emergency management professionals and the communities they serve.

Incorporating perspectives from Māori, Global Indigenous, Pacific, and Ethnic communities, the document highlights the significance of cultural competence and inclusivity in trust-building. It also examines the impact of personal collateral and reputation in initiating trust-building, especially in communities with historical grievances or scepticism towards official authorities.

The paper further introduces the concept of Misinformation Management as a key component of the Fast Trust Model, emphasising the need for accurate, reliable communication in combating misinformation to establish and maintain trust during emergencies.

Through this comprehensive exploration, the paper offers nuanced insights into trust in emergency management, underscoring its role as a critical component in fostering resilient and responsive communities. By weaving together theoretical frameworks with practical experiences, cultural insights, and a focus on futures design thinking, this document aims to serve as an invaluable resource for professionals navigating the complex and ever-evolving landscape of emergency management.

The Concept of Trust in Emergency Management

Trust is a belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something. In emergency management, trust influences the effectiveness of resilience initiatives, response and recovery activity, cooperation amongst stakeholders, and public adherence to safety measures.

The role of trust varies across different scenarios, where context is everything. In omni-cultural environments, trust must navigate and integrate multiple cultural dynamics, while in crisis situations, the establishment of 'fast' trust is critical.

Trust from a psychological standpoint involves expectations of benevolence and integrity, while sociologically, it is about predictability and normative assurance.

The foundation of emergency management lies in relationships in both institutional trust (trust in organisations and systems) and personal trust (trust in individuals and leaders).

Trust is not a static entity; it evolves and fluctuates based on actions, communications, and changes in circumstances. Once established, trust needs nurturing and reinforcement to thrive. Maintaining trust is often more challenging than building it, requiring consistent effort and integrity.

Setting the scene through Personal Experience

Experience One

In early 2023, one of my deployments in flood response efforts led me to a profound realisation about the essence of community trust. I was tasked with evaluating a Community Defence Centre (CDC) in a less affluent area of the city. What struck me was the stark contrast in community engagement between this officially funded CDC and a nearby community centre offering assistance. Despite the former's official status and resources, it attracted merely 8-10 people daily, whereas the latter, a non-official centre run by local community leaders, drew in an astounding 1,000 individuals daily in need of aid.

This observation was a revelation. It highlighted that official designation or funding is not always the primary driver of community trust and engagement. The local community centre, though lacking formal recognition and funding, had earned the trust of the residents. This trust was built on familiar faces, relationships, and a deep understanding of community needs — elements sometimes missing from official response centres.

As an emergency management practitioner this scenario initially seemed counterintuitive. However, it emphasised a critical lesson:

People gravitate towards sources they trust, even in crisis situations – and especially in times of uncertainty.

Recognising this, we made a strategic decision to reroute resources to the community-run centre. This action was not just about optimising resource allocation, but also about respecting and harnessing the inherent trust within the community. It was an acknowledgment that sometimes, the most effective response lies in empowering local, trusted entities, particularly in areas where socio-economic challenges add layers of complexity to emergency situations.



This experience underscored a fundamental principle in emergency management: the importance of building and maintaining trust with the communities we serve. It's a reminder that trust is often rooted in local leadership and grassroots connections, and recognising this can significantly enhance the effectiveness of emergency response efforts.

Experience Two

Several months ago, during a deployment in which I assumed a regional leadership role following a severe weather event, I encountered a critical lesson in communication dynamics. Initially, as per our training, the focus was on listening and observing the community and governance dynamics. This was essential to understand the community's needs and concerns accurately. However, it quickly became apparent that there was a significant disconnection. The issue was twofold: not only were we missing vital information from the community, but our efforts to communicate were also falling short.

The disconnect lay in our engagement strategy. Conversations with local community leaders revealed that while we were actively disseminating information, our methods weren't resonating. The community had its own respected leaders, and our failure to channel our messages effectively

through these established figures was a major oversight. This experience highlighted a crucial aspect of crisis management: the importance of identifying and engaging with the right community leaders to facilitate effective communication.

This insight was a turning point. It led to a strategic shift in our approach, prioritising direct engagement with recognised community leaders. By leveraging their influence and established trust, we could ensure that our messages were not only delivered but also received and acted upon.

From this experience, the lesson was clear: **Effective communication in emergency management is not just about the content of the message but also about the medium and the messenger.** It's about understanding who the community trusts and ensuring that the flow of information goes through these trusted channels. This approach doesn't just facilitate speaking but, more importantly, being heard, acknowledging the complex interplay of community trust and leadership.

Experience Three

In this deployment, marked by governance and cultural disputes, my ancestral ties and understanding of local and central government positions, combined with my emergency management training, played a pivotal role. However, beyond these factors, my technical knowledge in emergency management was crucial in envisioning the end result — a resilient, empowered community.

My expertise allowed me to picture what a successful outcome would look like, not just in terms of immediate aid delivery but in fostering long-term community resilience and self-sufficiency. This



vision was grounded in technical knowledge of emergency management best practices, risk assessment, and sustainable recovery strategies. It was about understanding the community's needs from a technical standpoint and aligning them with broader goals of empowerment and support.

By marrying this technical insight with a deep understanding of the community's cultural landscape, I was able to craft pathways towards a solution that was both practically sound and culturally sensitive. My role evolved into that of a facilitator who not only advocated for the immediate well-being of the district but also for its future resilience.

This experience highlighted that in emergency management, trust-building is about more than bridging cultural divides; it's about integrating technical acumen with empathy and strategic foresight. It's about painting a picture of a possible future where communities are not only aided in times of crisis but are also equipped and empowered to face future challenges. This approach was not a product of luck, but a testament to the power of combining technical knowledge with empathy, strategic thinking, and an ability to navigate complex cultural landscapes for the greater good of the community.

Reflecting on my recent experiences and the cumulative insights from almost 16 years serving in the background of the emergency management ecosystem, I was motivated to gather research and practical knowledge into a cohesive framework. This paper, therefore, is not just an academic exercise, but a crystallisation of real-world learnings, hard-won wisdom, and a deep understanding of the nuances and complexities inherent in emergency management. It's an attempt to distil the

essence of trust-building, community engagement, and leadership amidst crises, drawing from a rich tapestry of personal encounters, challenges, and triumphs.

My journey within this field, as well as servant leadership in other sectors, has underscored the importance of adapting to evolving scenarios, respecting diverse cultural perspectives, and recognising the indispensable role of effective communication and genuine empathy in crisis situations. These experiences have not only shaped my professional outlook but have also reinforced my commitment to enhancing the emergency management field's effectiveness and responsiveness.

In penning this paper, the aim is to offer a guide that melds theoretical frameworks with practical insights, serving as a resource for current and future emergency management professionals. It is my hope that these reflections and analyses will inspire and inform others in this vital field, contributing to a more resilient, empathetic, and effective approach to emergency management.

Understanding Fast Trust

Fast trust, as conceptualised by Yu, Saleem, and Gonzalez (2014), focuses on the rapid formation of trustful relationships, especially pertinent in high-pressure situations like emergency management. Baier (1986) and Baker (1987) provide foundational insights into the nature of trust, emphasising its critical role in rational decision-making and ethical considerations in times of crisis.

Strategies for Developing Fast Trust

Shared Definitions and Goals - Establishing a common understanding and aligning on objectives

Holton (1994) and Hupcey (2002) highlight the importance of a mutual understanding of what trust means in a given context. This shared definition helps all parties to have a common language and perspective on trust.

Aligning on Shared Goals: As Krogh and Lo (2023) discuss, aligning on shared goals creates a sense of unity and purpose. It ensures that all parties are working towards the same objectives, which is critical for fostering collaboration and trust.

Institutional and Personal Relationships - Ongoing relationship-building activities

Between Disasters Relationship Building: Huss et al. (2012) and Mohammadfam et al. (2015) emphasise the importance of maintaining and strengthening relationships not just during crises but also in times of normalcy. These ongoing relationships form the foundation for rapid trust-building when emergencies occur.

Trust as a Continuous Process: Building trust is not a one-time effort but a continuous process of interaction, mutual support, and understanding, crucial for effective collaboration in times of crisis.

Adaptive Leadership - Leaders must be flexible and responsive

Flexibility and Responsiveness: According to Roud and Gausdal (2019), adaptive leadership involves being flexible and responsive to changing situations. This type of leadership is crucial in emergencies where conditions and requirements can change rapidly.

Building Trust through Leadership: Leaders who demonstrate adaptability and are able to navigate through uncertain situations effectively gain the trust of their teams and stakeholders.

Inter-Organisational Trust - Enhanced overall preparedness and efficiency

Catalyst for Collaboration: Bengtsson and Brommesson (2022) discuss how trust between organisations enhances emergency preparedness and response.

When organisations trust each other, they can collaborate more effectively, share resources, and coordinate responses more efficiently.

Building Networks: Developing networks of trust among various organisations before emergencies ensures a more unified and effective response when a crisis does occur.

Communication Efficiency – Enhanced clarity

McLean and Power (2014) state that trust directly impacts the efficiency of communication. In emergency situations, where timely and accurate information is crucial, trust ensures that messages are conveyed and received effectively.

Transparency and Clarity: Clear, transparent communication fosters trust and ensures that all parties are well-informed and aligned in their response efforts.

Seeking Relevant Information - Gathering and updating information

Ongoing Information Gathering: Seppänen et al. (2013) emphasise the importance of continuously seeking relevant information to maintain situational awareness. This is crucial in dynamic emergency situations where circumstances can change rapidly.

Informed Decision Making: Regularly updated information allows for more informed decision-making and builds trust in the capabilities of the emergency response team.

In summary, these strategies emphasise the importance of shared understanding, continuous relationship building, adaptive leadership, inter-organisational cooperation, efficient communication, proactive information gathering, insightful analysis of past events, and skilful leadership in the collaborative process for building and maintaining trust in emergency management.

Acceptance and Trust

The nature of acceptance versus trust in the context of community engagement and emergency management is nuanced and multifaceted.

In exploring community dynamics, it's crucial to distinguish between acceptance and trust. While interconnected, these concepts play distinct roles in forming and strengthening relationships within emergency management and community engagement contexts.

Acceptance generally refers to the acknowledgment and inclusion of individuals or groups, particularly by a community. It's a precursor to trust and crucial for initial engagement, often based on shared cultural backgrounds, familiarity, or recognition of common goals.

Trust, however, delves deeper than acceptance. It involves confidence in someone's competence, reliability, integrity, and ethical conduct. Trust is built over time through consistent, positive interactions and experiences. While acceptance can open doors and allow for initial cooperation, it is the development of trust that fosters deeper, more sustainable relationships and effective collaboration.

In emergency management, both acceptance and trust are vital: acceptance allows emergency professionals to gain initial entry into a community, and trust enables them to work effectively within it to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

Advantages of Ethnic Origins

Professionals with strong connections to their ethnic origins can more easily gain acceptance in communities with similar backgrounds. This initial acceptance can facilitate the development of trust, but it doesn't automatically translate to it.

The pathway from acceptance to trust involves demonstrating understanding, empathy, competence, and consistent, reliable actions.

Acceptance as a Step Towards Trust

Acceptance can be viewed as the first step in the journey towards building trust. In emergency management, where time is of the essence, acceptance can open doors and allow for initial cooperation and engagement.

Over time, as emergency management professionals demonstrate their abilities and commitment, acceptance can evolve into trust.

Emergency management professionals can leverage acceptance as a starting point and actively work towards building deeper trust through several key strategies. Transitioning from being accepted to being trusted in emergency management involves strategic steps that emphasise cultural competence, empathetic leadership, effective communication, and community involvement.

Professionals can leverage acceptance as a starting point and actively work towards building deeper trust through several key strategies:



Figure 1 – Transitional Strategies: From Acceptance to Trust

These strategies focus on building a relationship based on mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration, thereby transitioning from mere acceptance to deep-rooted trust. They emphasise the importance of being culturally attuned, empathetic, communicative, and actively involved in the community's fabric.

Mutual Trust and Respect

While EM professionals seek trust and acceptance from communities, it is equally important for them to trust and accept the community representatives and their insights. This mutual trust fosters a collaborative environment conducive to achieving shared goals.

Trust is not just about communities trusting EM professionals but also about these professionals having faith in the community's knowledge, capabilities, and perspectives.

A joint vision or outcome is more readily achieved when there is mutual trust. EM professionals and community leaders can work more effectively together when there's a shared understanding and mutual respect for each other's roles and contributions. An aligned vision in the context of mutual trust can expedite the process of establishing effective strategies and responses in emergency management.

Trust and acceptance are not automatic; they are earned through consistent efforts, understanding, and demonstrating competence and reliability.

Building mutual trust can be challenging and may require significant effort and persistence, especially in communities with historical grievances or where trust has been eroded.

Personal Collateral, Reputation, and Integrity

In communities where distrust has taken root, not only due to historical grievances towards councils and CDEM but also because of past mismanagement or adverse experiences in previous emergencies, leveraging personal relationships and presence becomes even more critical. Instances of perceived failure or negative portrayal in media and social media can exacerbate the challenges faced in building trust. In such environments, establishing personal collateral and demonstrating integrity are essential first steps towards opening dialogue and fostering trust.

Building personal collateral, a process that involves cultivating trust and respect over time within a community, can serve as a crucial bridge. This approach, however, comes with its own set of challenges and risks. It involves putting one's personal reputation at stake, which can be demanding and poses a high level of risk. Balancing personal integrity with professional responsibilities becomes paramount in such situations. The process of building trust in these contexts is deeply personal and hinges significantly on individual credibility.

By leveraging personal experiences and connections, emergency management professionals can begin to dismantle barriers and misconceptions, not just about the council and CDEM, but also regarding past emergency responses. This personal touch helps in addressing the scepticism that arises from previous negative experiences or portrayals. Consequently, it paves the way for more structured and formal trust-building efforts.

This expanded perspective emphasises that in emergency management, particularly in regions marked by complex histories, scepticism, and memories of past emergencies, the journey towards building trust often starts at an individual level. It highlights the vital role of personal collateral and integrity of emergency management professionals in initiating and nurturing the trust-building process, especially in challenging situations shaped by historical grievances and memories of past mismanagement.

Trust in Team

Emergency Management leadership often has to trust practitioners to just get on, and get things done. Trust in a team is cultivated through empowering individuals to undertake tasks independently, coupled with the understanding that their execution and results may not precisely align with the original vision. This empowerment includes creating a supportive environment where failure is viewed as a learning opportunity rather than a setback. By acknowledging that variations in execution are acceptable and emphasizing responsibility rather than perfection, leaders foster a culture of trust. This approach reassures team members that their unique methods and potential missteps are part of the growth and learning process, essential for innovation and development in emergency management.



Trust is built through delegation, support in the face of failure, and acceptance of diverse problem-solving approaches within a team.

Misinformation Management

In the digital age, misinformation — the spread of false or inaccurate information, whether intentional or not — has become a prevalent issue that significantly impacts the various phases of emergency management: Response, Recovery, Resilience, and Renewal. The ease of information dissemination through social media and other digital platforms has exponentially increased the reach and influence of misinformation. This phenomenon poses unique challenges during emergency response, where timely and accurate information is crucial for effective decision-making and public safety. In the recovery phase, misinformation can hinder restoration efforts by spreading confusion and mistrust among affected communities. Regarding resilience, the persistent presence of misinformation can undermine efforts to educate and prepare communities for future crises, weakening the overall resilience framework. Finally, in the renewal phase, misinformation can impede the re-establishment of normalcy and community cohesion, as lingering false narratives can create lasting divisions and scepticism. Thus, in this era of digital interconnectedness, managing misinformation has become an integral part of ensuring effective, efficient, and holistic emergency management.

The increased risks of misinformation during emergencies are multifaceted and can significantly impact various aspects of crisis management:

Hampers Effective Response

Misinformation can lead to confusion and panic during emergencies, hindering the ability of first responders and the public to make informed decisions. False information about the nature, scale, or location of an emergency can result in inefficient allocation of resources, delayed response times, and potentially, greater harm to people and property.

Undermines Public Safety

Spreading inaccurate information about safety measures, evacuation routes, or the severity of a crisis can endanger lives. People relying on false information may fail to evacuate timely or might take inappropriate actions that exacerbate their risk.

Impedes Recovery Efforts

In the aftermath of an emergency, misinformation can slow down recovery processes. It can create uncertainty about the availability of aid, the extent of damage, or the process for accessing assistance, leading to delays in relief distribution and rebuilding efforts.

Damages Trust in Authorities

Persistent misinformation can erode public trust in emergency management authorities and institutions. When people receive mixed messages or false information, their trust in official sources diminishes, making it harder for authorities to effectively communicate and manage future emergencies.

Complicates Resilience Building

Misinformation can interfere with efforts to build community resilience against future emergencies. False narratives or misconceptions about previous incidents can skew the community's perception and preparedness for future crises, leading to inadequate resilience measures.

Challenges in Renewal

During the renewal phase, misinformation can prevent the re-establishment of social cohesion and normalcy. Lingering false information can create divisions within communities, impeding collaborative efforts to rebuild and renew post-crisis.

These risks underscore the importance of accurate, timely, and reliable information management during all phases of an emergency, from immediate response to long-term recovery and renewal. Addressing misinformation is critical to ensuring effective emergency management and maintaining public trust and safety.

Strategies to Combat Misinformation

- **Rapid Response and Fact-Checking** - Implement a rapid response team for fact-checking and debunking false information – this needs to be a focus of the PIM function (Public Information Management).
- **Clear and Consistent Communication** - Use clear, consistent messaging from trusted sources to counter misinformation.
- **Leverage Social Media** - Utilise social media platforms to disseminate accurate information quickly.
- **Engage with Community Leaders** - Collaborate with local community leaders who have the trust of the community to spread accurate information.
- **Educational Campaigns** - Conduct regular public education campaigns to enhance information literacy and critical thinking among community members.

Combating misinformation is a critical aspect of effective emergency management and plays a significant role in developing trust within communities. Proactive measures are essential in ensuring that accurate and reliable information is disseminated during crises. Emergency management professionals must prioritise clear, consistent communication and leverage trusted channels and networks to counteract false information. This includes utilising digital platforms responsibly, collaborating with community leaders, and engaging in public education efforts to enhance information literacy.

The role of emergency management professionals extends beyond mere information dissemination to fostering an informed and resilient community. By establishing themselves as reliable sources of information and demonstrating responsiveness to misinformation, these professionals can build and maintain public trust. This trust is crucial, especially in times of crisis, as it determines the community's willingness to follow guidance and participate in recovery efforts.

Fast trust, developed through effective management of information, becomes an invaluable asset in emergency situations. It enables quicker mobilisation of community resources, facilitates efficient response and recovery efforts, and strengthens community resilience in the face of future emergencies. Ultimately, the proactive management of misinformation and the cultivation of an informed community underpin the success of emergency management endeavours, underscoring the indispensable role of emergency management professionals in safeguarding both the immediate and long-term well-being of the communities they serve.

Indigenous and Cultural Perspectives on Trust and Community Engagement

Indigenous Trust Models encompass a range of approaches and practices, focusing on self-determination, community engagement, stewardship of land and resources in accordance with Indigenous values, legal tradition, and omni-cultural evolution.

Omni-Culturalism

Refers to the concept of exploring and appreciating the unique benefits and characteristics of each culture, with an aim to integrate these diverse elements into a broader societal context. This concept emphasises the value of cultural diversity and the potential enrichment it can bring to societies when different cultural perspectives and practices are acknowledged and incorporated.

Outlined are some key aspects of Indigenous Trust Models and examples based on recent developments, experiences, and research:



Trust and Self-Governance

Studies have shown that trust levels and patterns can be distinct between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, influenced by factors such as education, experiences of discrimination, and integration in diverse communities. Legal and institutional contexts, such as Te Tiriti o Waitangi in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ), and those in British Columbia, Canada, reflect the coexistence of Crown laws and Indigenous laws, affecting the dynamics of trust and governance within Indigenous communities.

Educational Leaders' Approach

In NZ, efforts have been made to build and strengthen relationships between schools and local marae or hapū. This includes ensuring tamariki (children) and whānau (families) have connections to their papakainga (ancestral land) and whakapapa (genealogy). A framework for partnership with Māori communities used in the Kia Eke Panuku programme emphasises identifying community identity, building relational trust, listening to communities, and responding accordingly.

Indigenous-Led Land Trust

Recent trends in Indigenous communities, particularly in land stewardship and conservation, demonstrate a unique approach to trust and governance. Indigenous-led land trusts, such as the

Mno Aki Land Trust, are designed to reflect community needs and prioritise local governance, often overseen by councils like the Grandmother Council. These trusts embody principles of empowerment, respect for the land, and community-based management, offering a model for collaborative and inclusive stewardship.

Community Engagement Models

The Aboriginal Indigenous Engagement Model, used in biosecurity management in Australia and New Zealand highlights the importance of incorporating Indigenous knowledge and values in community engagement. This model emphasises key Indigenous values such as empowerment, respect, and partnership, and seeks to ensure that Indigenous voices are central in decision-making processes.

Department of Internal Affairs Strategy

The Te Whakamotuhaketanga Hapū Strategy by New Zealand's Department of Internal Affairs integrates te reo (the Māori language), tikanga (Māori customs), and kaupapa (Māori principles) into its systems, aiming to build strong connections and support between Māori communities and other sectors.

Engagement with Civil Society Organisations

In many Pacific communities, traditional systems like 'big men' and kastom (customary law) play a crucial role in societal organisation and decision-making. These systems have significant implications for how external organisations engage with local communities. For example, in Vanuatu, gaining the support of local chiefs is essential for successful community engagement and project implementation, as demonstrated by World Vision's integrated water, sanitation, and hygiene project on Tanna Island. This project emphasised building trust through close collaboration with local chiefs and employing local staff, recognising local customs, and working with local church groups.

COVID-19 Response for Pacific Communities

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Pacific communities in NZ were supported through targeted approaches that respected their cultural context. This included disseminating health messages in Pacific languages and working with church communities for information dissemination. A Pacific-led and run COVID-19 Community Based Assessment Centre (CBAC) was also established, acknowledging the specific needs and historical concerns of the Pacific community. This approach emphasised the importance of cultural appropriateness and community self-determination in response strategies.

Ethnic Communities Development Fund

This fund supports projects that promote social cohesion and development within ethnic communities, emphasising skills growth, cultural celebration, and societal participation.

Welcoming Communities Program

The Welcoming Communities program in New Zealand works with local councils to develop welcoming action plans. This program highlights the importance of including all community members, regardless of how long they have been residents or newcomers, in the success and future of the country. The program supports councils and communities in developing, delivering, and owning their initiatives. Successes include integrating seasonal workers into communities and engaging with local iwi for cultural sharing and understanding.

The rich tapestry of perspectives from Māori, Global Indigenous, Pacific, and Ethnic communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, as explored in this section, reflects a spectrum of culturally ingrained approaches to building and sustaining trust. These diverse methods of community engagement emphasise the critical need to honour cultural values, integrate traditional knowledge, and ensure active community participation and leadership in a variety of contexts.

Moreover, this exploration into diverse cultural approaches sheds light on the concept of omni-cultural development. Omni-culturalism acknowledges and embraces the coexistence and interaction of multiple cultures within a single context, particularly in nations like New Zealand. This perspective is crucial in emergency management, as it promotes a more inclusive, understanding, and effective approach in dealing with communities that boast a mosaic of cultural backgrounds.



Additionally, the insights gained from these communities provide valuable lessons for engaging with other groups that might have varying perspectives.

Recognising and respecting the unique views and practices of different communities is vital in fostering an environment where trust can be built and nurtured effectively.

Thus, this section not only highlights the distinctive trust-building strategies of specific cultural groups but also serves as a reminder of the broader importance of an omni-cultural approach in today's interconnected and diverse global landscape.

It underscores the necessity of being open to and learning from a wide array of cultural perspectives, which is instrumental in enhancing the efficacy and sensitivity of emergency management practices across different communities.

Fast Trust Model

A "Fast Trust Model" using existing trust frameworks can be summarised as a strategic approach that accelerates the process of trust-building by leveraging key components of established trust frameworks. This model is particularly useful in situations where time is of the essence, such as in emergency management, crisis response, or fast-paced business environments. The model integrates principles from various trust frameworks to create a cohesive approach that quickly establishes trust. Misinformation Management and Futures Design are key new additions to the framework, and Omni-cultural understanding has been added to the contextual understanding component. As trust is built, and by nature ever-changing, the visual (*figure 2*) implies components are utilised where and when needed.

Immediate Demonstration of Competence (Ability)

Borrowed from Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman's model, demonstrating competence and ability in one's role is pivotal. In fast trust scenarios, showing immediate expertise and capability is essential.

Rapid Establishment of Benevolence (Goodwill)

Emphasising the benevolence aspect of trust, as per the Integrative Model of Organisational Trust, entails showing genuine care and good intentions towards others quickly.

Quick Assurance of Integrity

Integrity, a key component in most trust models, involves being honest and adhering to moral and ethical principles. In fast trust, this must be conveyed quickly, often through initial interactions.

Effective and Immediate Communication

Drawing from the Swift Trust Theory, which is common in temporary groups, effective and transparent communication from the outset is crucial.

Misinformation Management

Proactively addresses and counteracts misinformation through transparent, accurate communication and community engagement to establish and maintain swift trust in emergency situations.

Leveraging Existing Trust Networks

Utilising pre-established trust relationships or endorsements from trusted entities can rapidly build new trust connections.

Visible and Decisive Leadership

Leaders who are visible and make decisive actions contribute to the rapid development of trust, aligning with the principles of transformational leadership theory.

Cultural and Contextual Sensitivity

Being aware of and sensitive to cultural and contextual factors, as emphasised in various trust models, as well as taking into consideration omni-cultural factors of integration - is critical in quickly navigating and establishing trust in diverse environments.

Consistency in Early Interactions

Consistency in actions and messages during the initial phases is key to building trust fast, as inconsistency can quickly erode it.

Responsiveness and Adaptability

Being responsive and adaptable in initial interactions and decisions helps in quickly establishing trust, especially in dynamic situations.

Shared Goals and Values

Aligning with shared goals and values can expedite trust-building, as seen in the Organisational Trust Model.

Integrating Futures Systems Thinking

Integrating futures systems thinking into the Fast Trust Model enhances its effectiveness by incorporating a forward-looking, holistic approach. This integration can be achieved through the following methods:

- Embed anticipatory thinking into the Fast Trust Model. Encouraging emergency management professionals to routinely consider and plan for a range of future scenarios and their potential impact on communities. This foresight demonstrates competence and preparedness, key components of building trust quickly.
- Use systems analysis to inform decision-making. Understand how different elements within the emergency management ecosystem are interconnected and how decisions in one area might impact others. This comprehensive understanding can lead to more effective strategies and foster trust in management capabilities.
- Futures systems thinking advocates for the inclusion of diverse perspectives in planning and decision-making. The Fast Trust Model can incorporate inputs from a wide range of stakeholders, including underrepresented groups, to build a more inclusive and trustful approach.
- Adaptive leadership is a key component of futures systems thinking. Modifying the Fast Trust Model to emphasise flexibility and responsiveness to changing situations, highlights the importance of adapting strategies based on new information or evolving contexts.
- Encourage the development of collaborative networks that span various sectors and disciplines. These networks can provide diverse insights and resources, enhancing the emergency management team's ability to anticipate and respond to future challenges.
- Prioritise transparent and clear communication about potential future risks and uncertainties. This openness helps in managing expectations and builds trust in the sectors honesty and reliability.
- Embed a culture of continuous learning and improvement within the Fast Trust Model. Regularly review and update emergency plans based on new insights and lessons learned from past experiences, ensuring that the approach remains relevant and effective.



These methods ensure that the Fast Trust Model considers the long-term sustainability of emergency management practices. Strategies should not only address immediate crises but also consider recovery initiatives as well as the longer-term well-being and resilience of communities.

By integrating futures systems thinking into the Fast Trust Model, emergency management professionals can develop a more robust, anticipatory, and adaptable approach to building trust quickly in dynamic and uncertain environments. This integration will enhance the model's ability to address both present needs and future challenges, fostering deeper and more sustainable trust with communities.



Figure 2 – Core Components of ‘The Fast Trust Model’

Application of the Fast Trust Model

- Implementing this model involves demonstrating immediate expertise, clear communication, and decisive leadership in crisis situations.
- In fast-paced project teams, especially temporary or virtual ones, fast trust is established through clear roles, immediate competence demonstration, and effective communication.
- Adaptability and cultural sensitivity are crucial in quickly building trust in diverse cultural contexts.

The Fast Trust Model synthesises key elements from established trust frameworks to create an approach tailored for situations requiring rapid trust-building. It emphasises immediate demonstration of competence, benevolence, integrity, effective communication whilst managing misinformation, along with leveraging existing relationships and showing visible leadership. This model is adaptable to various contexts, from emergency management to corporate teams, particularly in settings where forming trust quickly is critical for success.



Maintaining Trust Over Time

Maintaining trust over time is essential for sustaining effective relationships, ensuring continued cooperation, and fostering reliable communication. It builds resilience in communities and organisations, enabling them to respond more effectively to future challenges and uncertainties. Trust, once established, needs ongoing nurturing to remain strong and effective.

Descriptive Analysis for Emergency Response – Strategic customisation

Understanding Emergency Conditions: Germain (2011) suggests that a thorough understanding of emergency response conditions is needed to develop effective trust-building strategies. Analysing past emergencies can provide valuable insights.

Tailoring Trust-Building Strategies: Using this analysis, strategies can be tailored to fit specific situations, enhancing the effectiveness of trust-building in emergency management.

Building Trust in Collaborative Processes

Trust must be nurtured not only in individual entities but also within the collaborative process of multiple agencies.

Hart and Johnson (1999) and Klewes and Wreschniok (2009) explore how leadership is key in establishing trust within the collaborative process. Leaders must integrate various skills and competencies from different organisations to build a cohesive and trustful working relationship.

Synthesis of Skills and Competencies: Effective collaboration in emergency management requires a synthesis of diverse skills and expertise. Leadership that can bring these together in a harmonious and efficient manner is critical in building and maintaining trust.

Overcoming Challenges and Limitations

Addressing the inherent challenges in trust-building, such as cultural misunderstandings, rapid changes, and communication barriers, is essential for maintaining long-term trust. Addressing potential challenges in building and maintaining trust in emergency management requires a multifaceted approach. Here are some common challenges and strategies to overcome them:

Misplaced Trust

Challenge: Placing trust in unreliable or inappropriate entities can lead to mismanagement and a loss of credibility.

Mitigation: Conduct due diligence and continuous assessment of the entities involved in emergency management. Establish clear criteria for trustworthiness based on past performance, transparency, and accountability.

Over-Reliance on Trust

Challenge: Excessive reliance on trust can lead to overlooking established protocols or procedures.

Mitigation: Balance trust with a structured approach that adheres to established emergency management protocols. Ensure that trust complements, rather than replaces, procedural rigor.

Cultural Misunderstandings

Challenge: In diverse settings, cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings and erode trust.

Mitigation: Invest in cultural competence training for emergency management personnel. Encourage open dialogue and understanding of different cultural perspectives and practices.

Rapid Changes and Uncertainty

Challenge: Rapidly changing situations can create uncertainty, affecting trust levels.

Mitigation: Maintain open, transparent, and frequent communication to keep all stakeholders informed. Be adaptable and responsive to changing circumstances.

Communication Barriers

Challenge: Ineffective communication can lead to misinformation and distrust.

Mitigation: Develop clear, consistent, and accessible communication strategies. Utilise various communication channels to reach diverse audiences effectively.

Conflicting Interests

Challenge: Divergent goals among stakeholders can hinder trust-building efforts.

Mitigation: Identify common goals and work towards aligning interests. Facilitate open discussions to address conflicts and find mutually beneficial solutions.

Complacency

Challenge: Once trust is established, there is a risk of becoming complacent.

Mitigation: Continuously nurture and reassess trust relationships. Encourage feedback and stay engaged with all stakeholders.

Privacy Concerns

Challenge: Balancing transparency with privacy and confidentiality.

Mitigation: Develop clear guidelines on information sharing that respect privacy while maintaining transparency where appropriate.

Leadership Changes

Challenge: Changes in leadership can disrupt trust-building processes.

Mitigation: Ensure smooth transitions and maintain consistency in leadership principles and communication.

Burnout and Stress

Challenge: High-pressure environments can affect decision-making and interpersonal relationships.

Mitigation: Provide support for mental health and promote a balance between work and personal life. Foster a supportive work environment.

Accountability Issues

Challenge: A lack of accountability can erode trust.

Mitigation: Establish clear accountability mechanisms. Ensure that actions and decisions are transparent, and that individuals or organisations are held responsible for their actions.

Dependency

Challenge: Over-dependency on certain individuals or groups for trust.

Mitigation: Cultivate a broad base of trust across the organisation or community. Encourage diverse leadership and participation.

By addressing these challenges with targeted strategies, emergency management professionals can build and maintain trust more effectively, leading to more resilient and responsive management practices.

Conclusion

This comprehensive exploration of trust in emergency management has revealed that developing fast trust is a dynamic, multifaceted process, deeply embedded within the intricate fabric of human relationships and organisational structures. The strategies outlined, drawn from various trust frameworks, and augmented by practical experiences and global cultural insights, are not just theoretical concepts but have immense practical relevance in the real-world setting of crisis response.

Central to this model is the proactive management of information, especially in combating misinformation. The challenges posed by misinformation during emergencies – from response to recovery and resilience planning – underscore the critical need for accurate, reliable communication. By addressing misinformation effectively, emergency management professionals can foster a more informed, resilient community, thereby laying the groundwork for fast trust.

The inclusion of personal collateral, reputation, and integrity in the trust-building process highlights the importance of individual efforts, particularly in communities with historical grievances or scepticism towards official authorities. Leveraging personal relationships and credibility can serve as a vital stepping stone in initiating the journey from acceptance to trust.

Furthermore, this document underscores the importance of reciprocal trust and acceptance. It is crucial for emergency management professionals to not only seek trust from communities but also to trust and accept the insights and leadership of these communities. Mutual respect and trust, earned through consistent, empathetic, and culturally competent engagement, form the basis for a connected, aligned vision in emergency response and recovery.

In essence, this paper reinforces that trust is an essential resource in emergency management, as critical as any logistical or technical asset. The challenge for professionals in this field is to continuously cultivate and maintain trust. By doing so, when crises arise, they are building upon a strong foundation of established relationships, mutual understanding, and a shared commitment to collective well-being. This approach, enriched with a deep understanding of cultural nuance and the complexities of modern information landscapes, ensures a more resilient, empathetic, and effective practice in emergency management, capable of navigating the intricacies of contemporary emergencies.



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