



How to Deliver Hard Truths and Build Trust at the Same Time

MITRE HR | August 14, 2013



In this “moment of truth,” what should I do?

- A. Cancel or delay my meeting
- B. Prep the PM to deliver the news – it’s a growth opportunity
- C. Bite the bullet
- D. Book those tickets to Cancun

Here's what I thought then:

It's impossible to
deliver bad news
without degrading
trust.



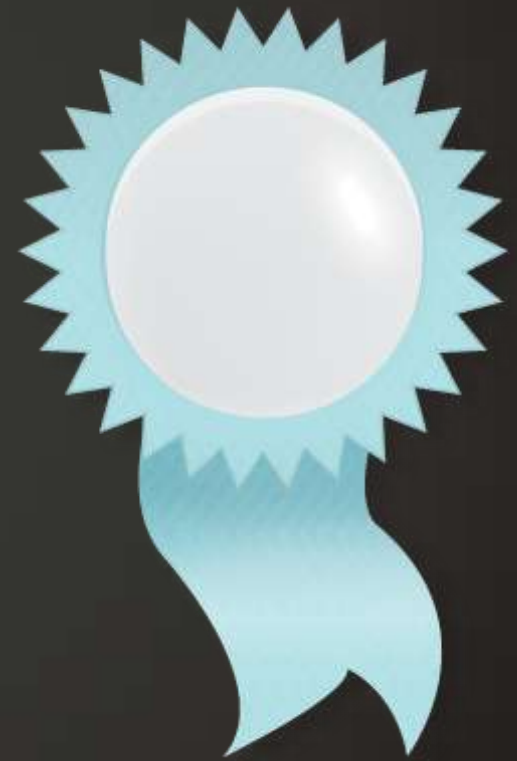
Here's what I know now:

It is entirely possible to deliver bad news and dramatically increase trust in the process.



Today, we'll explore ...

1. what it really means to be **trustworthy**
2. Your **trust temperament** strengths and opportunities
3. some **unconventional wisdom** about bad news
4. a **delivery technique** that's tried and true



Who's *your* Trusted Advisor?

- Bring to mind someone in your life you would turn to for advice on a wide range of topics, including sensitive ones both professional and personal.
- What words would you use to describe this person?

Looking up “trust” in the dictionary is a waste of time



The Trust Equation brings clarity to ambiguity

$$T = \frac{R}{C}$$

T trustworthiness
R reliability
C credibility

Source: *The Trusted Advisor* by Maister, Green, and Galford, The Free Press, 2000

The Trust Equation brings clarity to ambiguity

$$T = \frac{C + R}{\quad}$$


T trustworthiness
C credibility
R reliability

Source: *The Trusted Advisor* by Maister, Green, and Galford, The Free Press, 2000

The Trust Equation brings clarity to ambiguity

$$T = \frac{C + R + I}{}$$

T trustworthiness
C credibility
R reliability
I intimacy

Source: *The Trusted Advisor* by Maister, Green, and Galford, The Free Press, 2000

The Trust Equation brings clarity to ambiguity

$$T = \frac{C + R + I}{S}$$

T trustworthiness
C credibility
R reliability
I intimacy
S self-orientation

Source: *The Trusted Advisor* by Maister, Green, and Galford, The Free Press, 2000

There are four variables of trustworthiness

Words

Credibility

Truthfulness
Credentials

*I trust what she
says about...*

Actions

Reliability

Dependability
Predictability

I trust him to...

Safety

Intimacy

Discretion
Empathy
Risk-taking

*I trust her
with...*

Focus

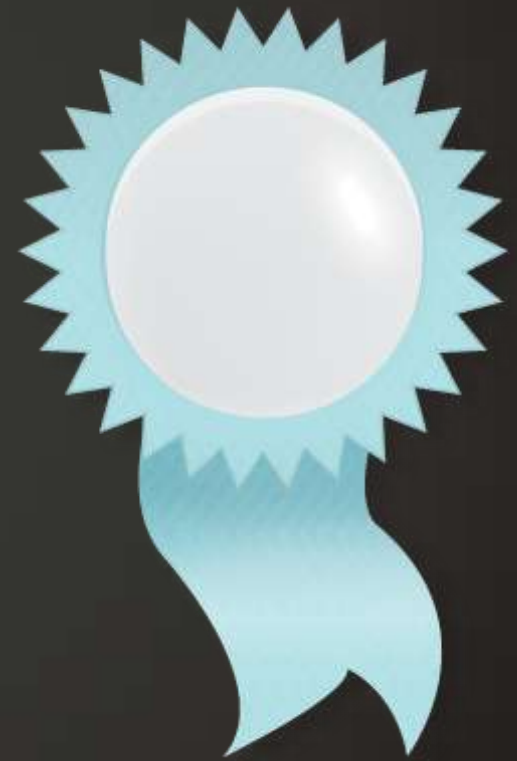
Self-Orientation

Motives
Attention

*I trust that he
cares about...*

Next up:

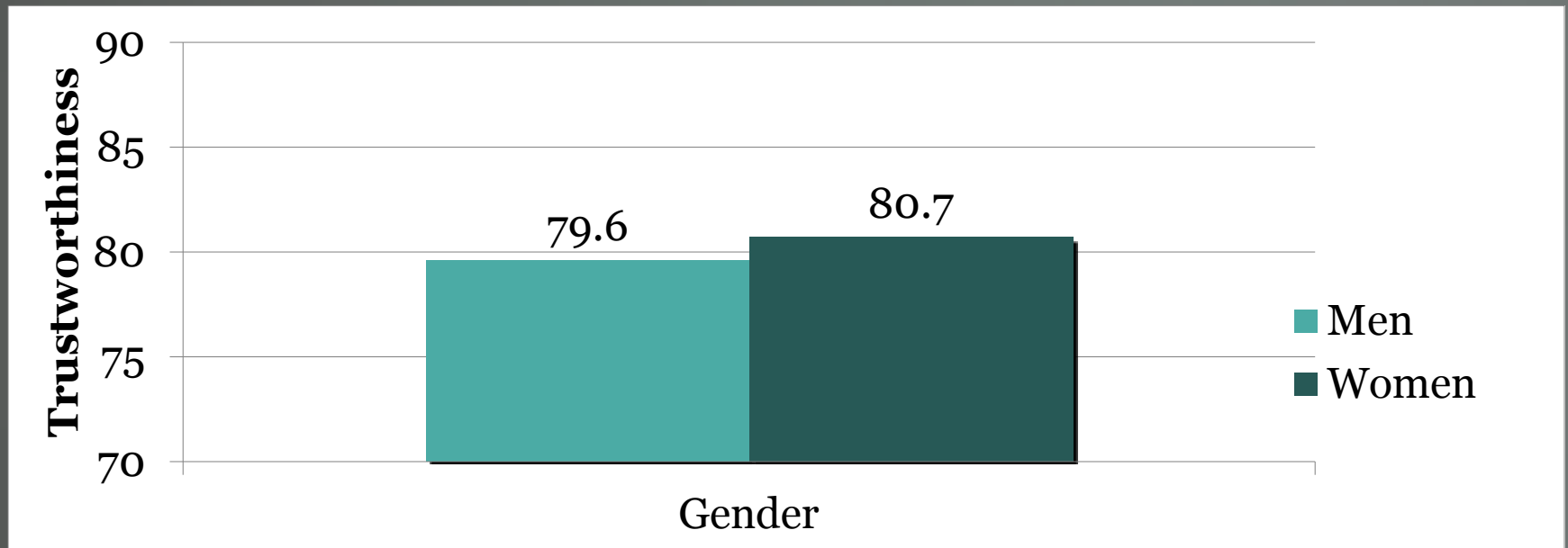
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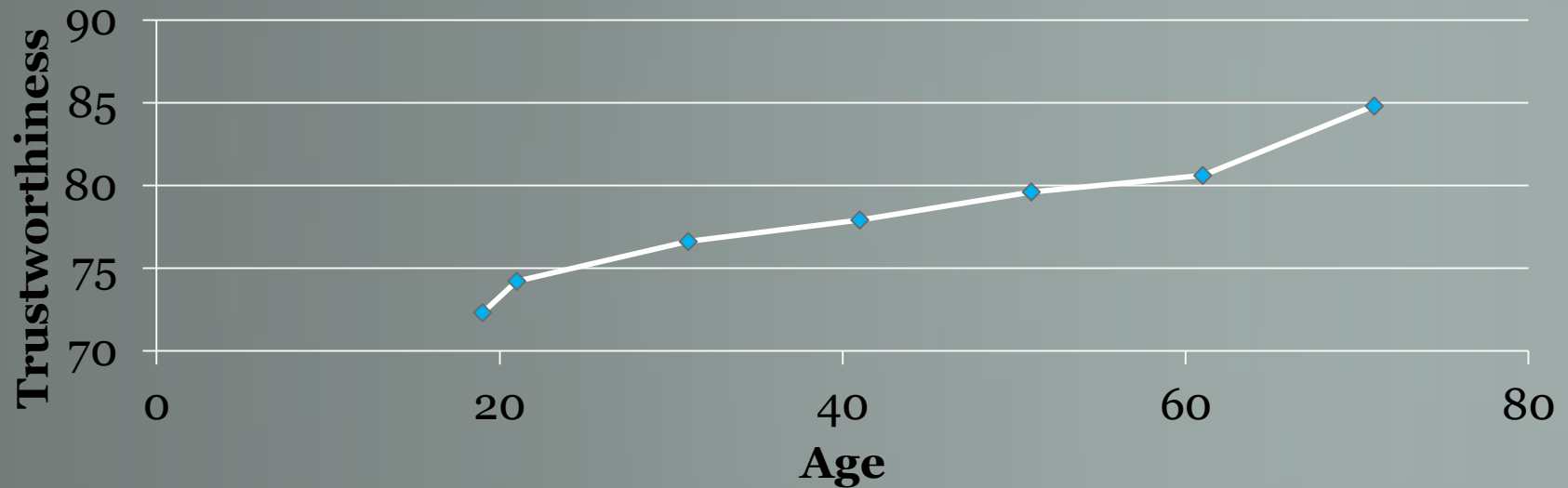


Assessing Trustworthiness

Who's more trustworthy: men or women?



Do we get more or less trustworthy as we age?

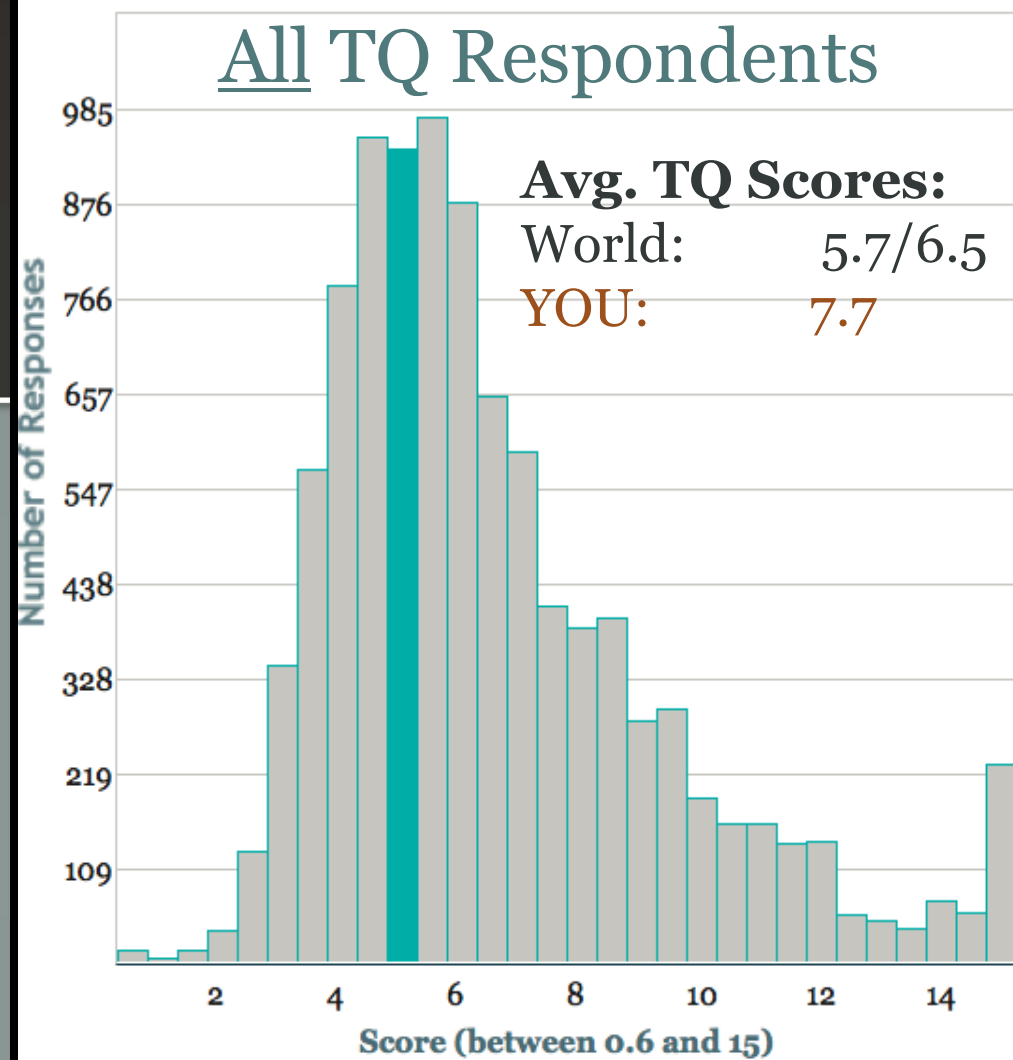


What's your TQ?

N = 12,857

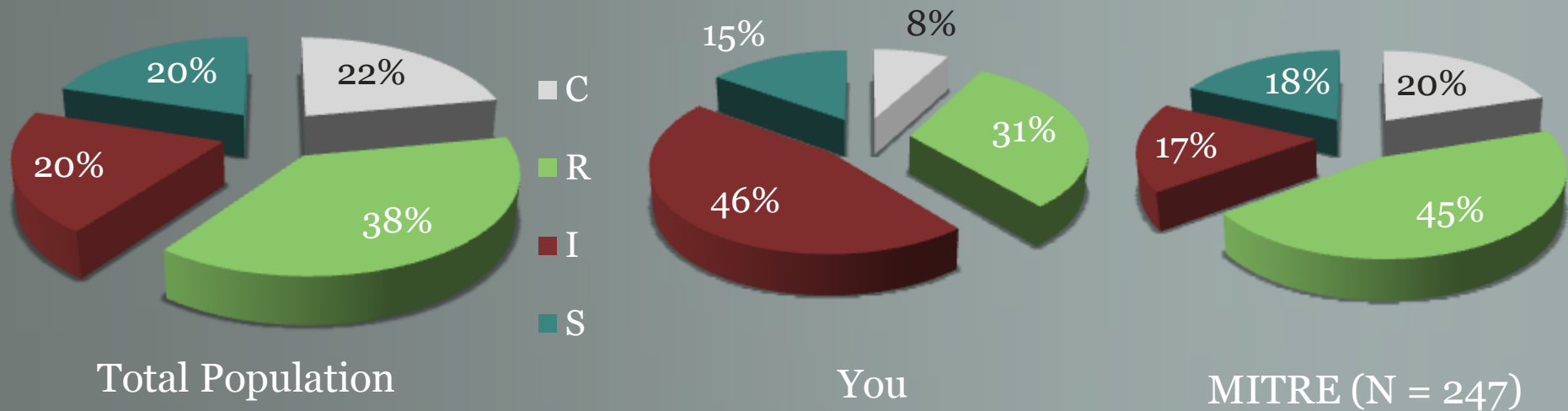
Median skewed left:
3 x S

$$T = \frac{C + R + I}{S}$$



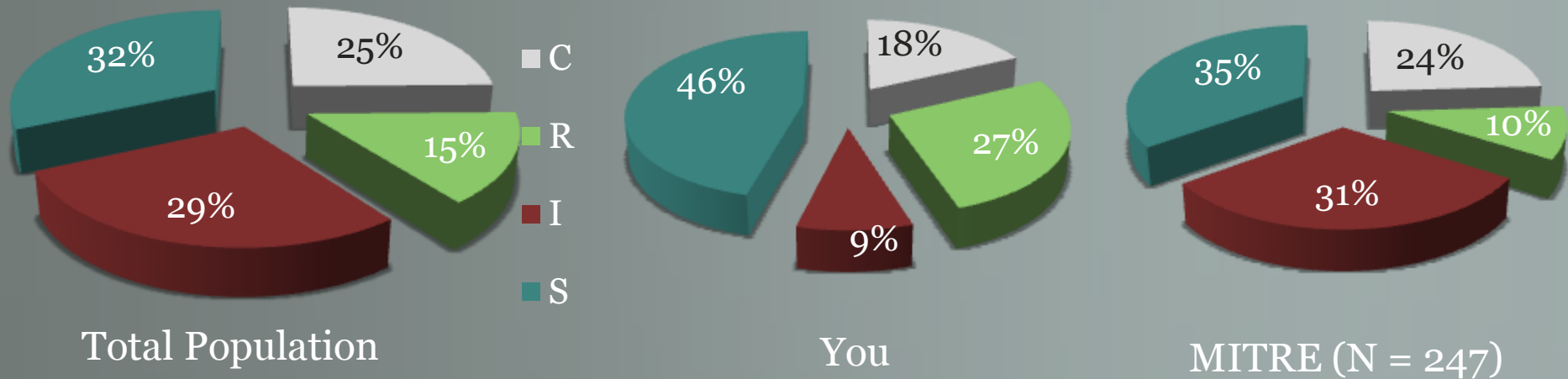
How does this group compare?

HIGHEST RATED VARIABLE



How does this group compare?

LOWEST RATED VARIABLE



What's in a Temperament?

- Derived from the two strongest variables
- Your *innate preference* when it comes to building trust

Trust Temperament™	C	R	I	S
Expert	✓	✓		
Catalyst	✓		✓	
Professor	✓			✓
Doer		✓	✓	
Steward		✓		✓
Connector			✓	✓

Each Temperament brings a unique approach

“My goal wasn’t to make a ton of money.
It was to build good computers.”

Steve Wozniak



“Lead, follow or get out of the way.”

— Thomas Paine



“The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.”

— Albert Einstein



“I just did what I had to do as things came along.”

— Eleanor Roosevelt



“Invisible threads are the strongest ties.”

— Friedrich Nietzsche



“A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus.”
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Let's make it real



In groups by Trust Temperament™:

- What do people appreciate about working with you?
- What might frustrate them about working with you?
- What would your ad/commercial/slogan/logo be?

What about effectiveness vs. distribution?

WORLD EFFECTIVENESS

Temperament	TQ Score
RI Doer	80.6
IS Connector	80.4
CI Catalyst	79.9
RS Steward	79.7
CR Expert	79.1
CS Professor	79.1

What about effectiveness vs. distribution?

WORLD EFFECTIVENESS, WORLD DISTRIBUTION

Temperament	TQ Score	World Dist.
RI Doer	80.6	17%
IS Connector	80.4	13%
CI Catalyst	79.9	10%
RS Steward	79.7	21%
CR Expert	79.1	31%
CS Professor	79.1	8%

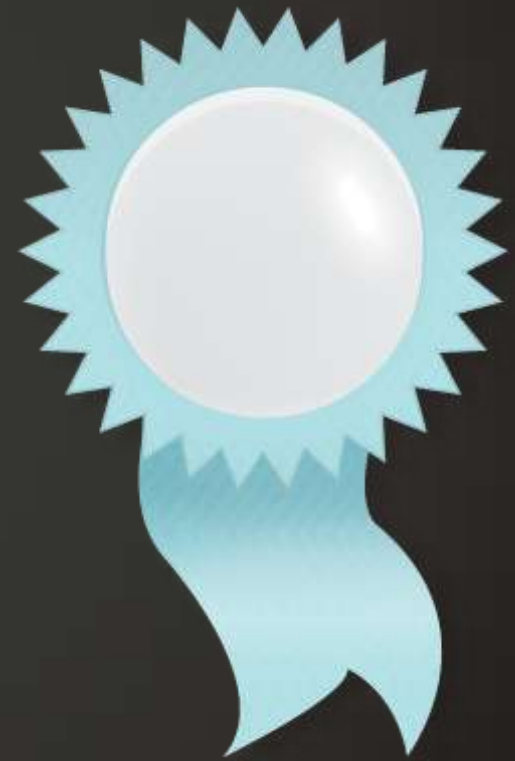
What about effectiveness vs. distribution?

WORLD EFFECTIVENESS, WORLD DISTRIBUTION, YOUR DISTRIBUTION

Temperament	TQ Score	World Dist.	Your Dist.
RI Doer	80.6	17%	20%
IS Connector	80.4	13%	20%
CI Catalyst	79.9	10%	27%
RS Steward	79.7	21%	13%
CR Expert	79.1	31%	20%
CS Professor	79.1	8%	0%

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Web Results

[How do I communicate bad news without getting blamed for ...](#)

Getting bad news also builds their confidence in you as a project manager, because it tells them that you are on top of your project's progress and problems.

www.projectconnections.com/knowhow/burning-questions/new/communicating-bad-project-news.html

[communication - How to deliver bad news to a project sponsor ...](#)

Having all this in mind, shall the project manager always (!) ... There is no good way to announce bad news :) – Lipis Mar 19 '11 at 0:03 ...

pm.stackexchange.com/questions/1125/how-to-deliver-bad-news-to-a-project-sponsor

[How to Make Bad News Better in Project Management « Welcome to ...](#)

May 7, 2011 ... In the day-to-day activities of a project manager, we are faced with people delivering bad news to us, so it becomes our job responsibility to ...

lisamdrake.com/2011/05/07/how-to-make-bad-news-better-in-project-management/

[Common Project Issues: Keeping Bad News from the Customer ...](#)

Mar 22, 2009 ... How we handle these situations often separates the good Project Manager from

the bad Project Manager. The Bad News. Has anyone really ...

pmtips.net/common-project-issues-keeping-bad-news-customer/

[Communicating Bad News About Your Project](#)

Communicating Bad News About Your Project · Tweet · Tweet. As any seasoned project manager can tell you, no matter how well you plan, sometimes ...

cobaltpm.com/communicating-bad-news-about-your-project/

[Bringing Bad News To A Sponsor - Project Management - YouTube](#)

Jan 20, 2010 ... <http://ProjectShrink.com>/potion Dave and Bas answer the viewer question: "How

to bring bad news to a sponsor? Especially when he/she is not ...

www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUYwO14MXQU

[Telling a project manager a new co-worker is bad news - The ...](#)

Telling a project manager a new co-worker is bad news. ... Myself and a co-

Conventional wisdom can't be trusted

“Be objective/factual”

“Bring solutions to the table”

“Stay positive”



It skews to the rational side of trustworthiness

$$T = \frac{C + R + I}{S}$$

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Unconventional wisdom, on the other hand, rounds out the equation

Set **expectations** up front

Dare to collaborate

Make room for **reactions**

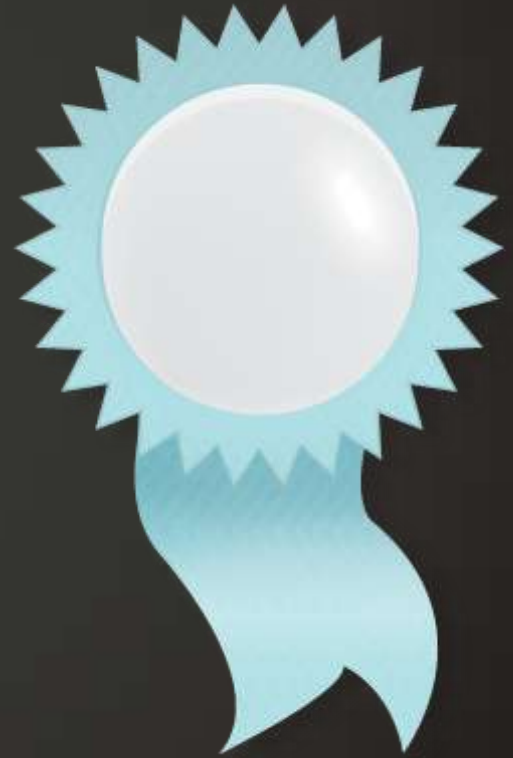
Show some **vulnerability**

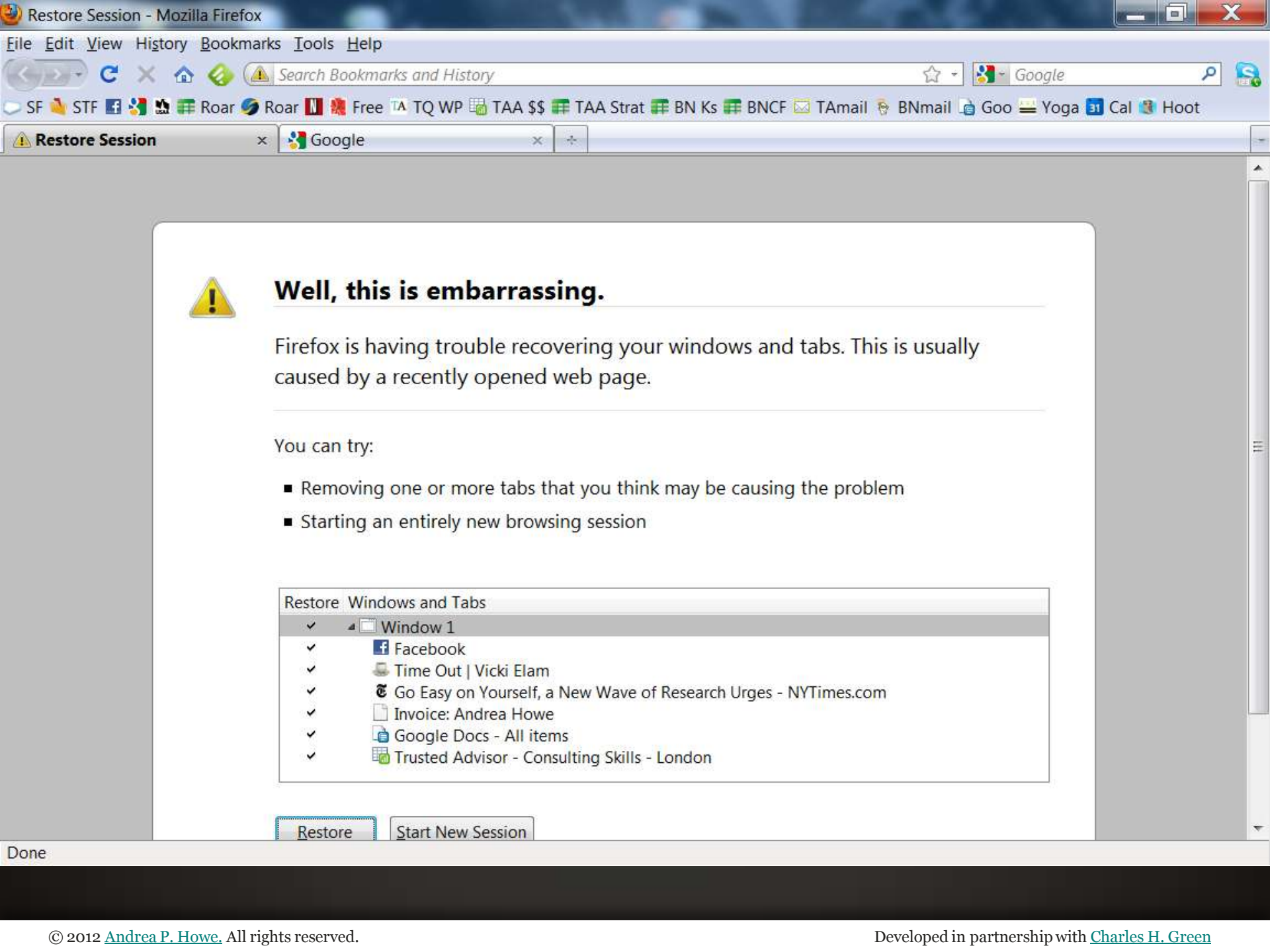


Take **responsibility**

Finally...

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2. Your trust temperament strengths and opportunities
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Well, this is embarrassing.

Firefox is having trouble recovering your windows and tabs. This is usually caused by a recently opened web page.

You can try:

- Removing one or more tabs that you think may be causing the problem
- Starting an entirely new browsing session

Restore Windows and Tabs

✓ Window 1

- ✓ Facebook
- ✓ Time Out | Vicki Elam
- ✓ Go Easy on Yourself, a New Wave of Research Urges - NYTimes.com
- ✓ Invoice: Andrea Howe
- ✓ Google Docs - All items
- ✓ Trusted Advisor - Consulting Skills - London

Restore

Start New Session

Done

Name It and Claim It is a three-part technique

1. Inventory all concerns, risks, fears (yours)
2. Use caveats to say them out loud
3. Articulate the issue (Tip: 10 words or less)



Name It and Claim It is a socially acceptable way to put hard truths on the table

“I may be completely missing the mark here, and I sure don’t want to step on any toes. I’m concerned we don’t have the executive sponsorship we need.”

“There’s really no easy way to say this. We’re not going to make the deadline.”

“At the risk of embarrassing myself, I’ve lost sight of what we’re really trying to accomplish.”

Saying the hard stuff can be a trust trifecta

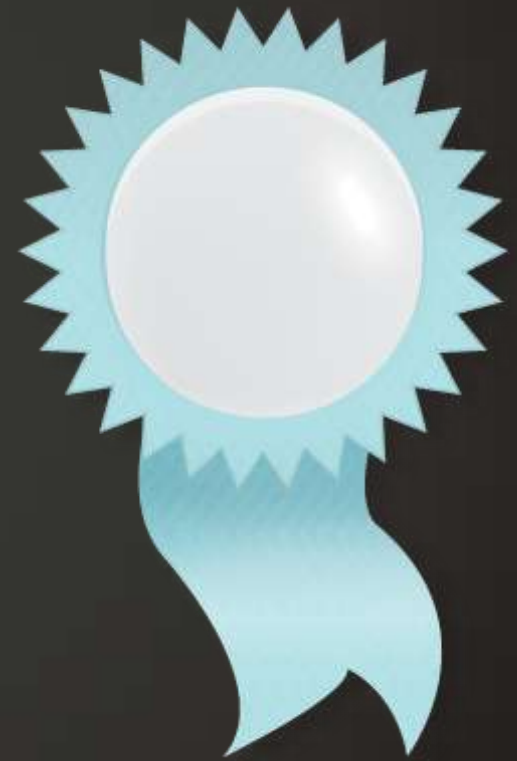
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How will you choose ...



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