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*Stephen M.R. Covey , Greg Link , Rebecca R. Merrill*

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**“Smart Trust is without doubt one of the most powerful and seminal books of our age” (Warren Bennis).** After illustrating the global relevance of trust with his book *The Speed of Trust* by selling more than one million copies in twenty-two languages, Stephen M. R. Covey again illuminates the hidden power of trust to change lives and impact organizations in *Smart Trust*. In a compelling and readable style, he and long-time business partner Greg Link share enlightening principles and anecdotes of people and organizations that are not only achieving unprecedented prosperity from high-trust relationships and cultures but—even more inspiring—also attaining elevated levels of energy and joy.

The sustainable success these leaders and enterprises are exhibiting is paradoxically being produced in what has proved to be the lowest trust climate in years, if not decades. *Smart Trust* shows what they are doing and the five actions they are commonly taking to prosper, against the odds, in the same circumstances causing so many others to fail.

With penetrating insights illuminated by their unique access to many of the world’s most successful leaders and organizations, the authors lay out a breakthrough process and skill set in a practical and actionable formula that makes trust a performance multiplier for leaders, teams, organizations, and even countries. They show why trust is fast becoming the most consequential life and leadership skill of our time—a career-critical competency required to navigate and compete in this perilous twenty-first-century interdependent, global economy. Covey and Link teach how to cut through traditional either/or thinking to extend “Smart Trust,” enabling you to exercise sound judgment in a low-trust world by minimizing risk and maximizing possibilities.

*Smart Trust* has met the strict scrutiny of business leaders around the globe and is validated by research from multiple sources that confirms that high-trust organizations outperform low-trust organizations by nearly three times. *Smart Trust* shares findings that verify how enduring success, vitality, and happiness are directly related to the level of trust in our relationships—whether in our professional or personal lives.

Find out why trusted people are more likely to get hired or promoted, get the best projects and bigger budgets, and are last to be laid off. This sea-changing book will forever shift your perspective as it reveals and validates, once and for all, the transformational power of trust. Reading *Smart Trust* will increase your probability of thriving in this increasingly unpredictable marketplace. The more unpredictable it becomes, the more your (and your organization’s) sound judgment and ability to trust in this low-trust world will give you a tremendous competitive advantage—and the capacity to navigate the uncertainty low trust creates.

**Smart Trust: How People, Companies, and Countries Are Prospering from High Trust in a Low Trust World Details**

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## From Reader Review Smart Trust: How People, Companies, and Countries Are Prospering from High Trust in a Low Trust World for online ebook

### Wennifred says

I just won a copy from Goodreads. Looking forward to reading it. Thank you.

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### Rusty Fischer says

I won this in a Goodreads Giveaway and was really happy to. I try to read as many business books as I can, although this book would really apply to a lot of areas of our lives. The writing, as expected from these two authors, was great but the ideas were even greater. Trust is such a tenuous thing, and it's hard to invest in things we can't see, but this book makes a great case for it! Highly recommended...

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### Casey Wheeler says

I read this book as the monthly selection of the Credit Union Leaders Book Club group on LinkedIn.

This is an expansion of the last chapter in the author's prior book "The Speed of Trust." It contains numerous examples in each chapter along with many great quotes and extensive notes at the end of the book.

The first chapter deals with The Paradox. The authors raise some interesting issues in regards to a crisis of trust in the world and its overall impact using different examples and quotes. It also presents hope for building trust.

Chapter two deals with Blind Trust or Distrust and addresses the dangers of blind trust (being too trustful) and distrustful (not being trustful enough). The authors discuss how society causes blind trust or distrust to develop within individuals and the net impact it can have going forward. The chapter contains a table that you can use to determine how you see others and the cost of your view.

Chapter 3 begins the discussion of Smart Trust, the alternative to blind trust and distrust. Smart Trust is judgment and boils down to how to trust in a low trust world. The two key factors for Smart Trust are a propensity to trust and analysis. The propensity to trust is about leading out with trust. Analysis is about not getting burned in a low trust world. The analysis involves 3 components: Opportunity, Risk and Credibility. The authors use these components to launch into a discussion of the Smart Trust Matrix citing a number of examples. The chapter ends with examples of the reciprocity of trust.

The next several chapters deal with the five Smart Trust Actions:

- Choose to Believe in Trust: The authors delve into the three beliefs of trust:
  1. A belief in being worthy of trust.
  2. A belief that most people can be trusted.
  3. A belief that extending trust is a better way to lead.
- Start with Self: Based on the principles of responsibility and credibility.
- Declare Your Intent and Assume Positive Intent in Others: Stating what we want to do and why we want to

do it.

- Do What You Say You Are Going To Do
- Lead Out in Extending Trust to Others: It produces results, it increases trust and it elicits reciprocity.

The authors end with a chapter on how one person can make a change.

My recommendation is that while this book can stand on its own, the reader will get more out of it by reading the author's prior book "The Speed of Trust" first.

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## Soundview Executive Book Summaries says

*Smart Trust: Creating Prosperity, Energy, and Joy in a Low-Trust World* by Stephen M.R. Covey, Greg Link & Rebecca R. Merrill was chosen by Soundview Executive Book Summaries as one of the Top 30 Business Books of 2012.

### THE SOUNDVIEW REVIEW:

There are times when the launch of a book coincides with current events in a way that makes it a touchstone for navigating a new era in business. The first decade of the new millennium saw the emergence of transparency as both a frequently used buzzword and, more importantly, a guiding principle for organizations enduring increased scrutiny from customers. Stephen M.R. Covey's 2006 release *The Speed of Trust* became the go-to resource for executives that wanted a clear, executable strategy to increase trust and remove time-wasting roadblocks. Now available is Covey's follow-up volume *Smart Trust: Creating Prosperity, Energy and Joy in a Low-Trust World*, co-authored by Greg Link with Rebecca R. Merrill.

*Smart Trust* is the result of the most frequently asked question Covey received while teaching others the principles from *The Speed of Trust*: how can someone balance the two extremes of blind trust and total distrust? Anyone who has ever heard Covey speak knows his abilities as a storyteller. There is no loss of fidelity when the stories are translated to the page. Covey profiles notable companies who are successfully applying the principles of smart trust.

Those principles are defined by five actions. Readers may find each of the five actions somewhat simplistic. However, the difference comes in applying them on both a team and organizational level. Consider the third smart trust action: Declare Your Intent and Assume Positive Intent in Others. Executives may readily vouch for their own ability to keep an open mind when dealing with clients or co-workers, but what if you have a team that's experienced trust issues in the past? Suddenly, the advice Covey dispenses goes from intuitive to essential. This is true of the book as a whole, and a quick scan of the headlines proves that *Smart Trust* will join *The Speed of Trust* as a must-read for this era and beyond.

Soundview's 8-page Executive Book Summary of *Smart Trust* is available [here](#).

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## M G says

I received the book for free through Goodreads First Reads. My initial interest in it was not for myself...when I saw the book in the giveaway, I thought of my father-in-law and husband, who both enjoy Stephen Covey's books. When the book showed up in my mailbox, I decided to start the book the next day.

Although I am in education, not business, I realized that many of the principles this book discusses can be applied in the business world, in the education world, and in life at home.

The premise of this book is declared right away (incorporating the authors' own suggestion to declare intent): "They [people and companies] can sense that their lives would be a lot better, their jobs a lot more fulfilling, and their personal relationships a lot more joyful if they could only operate in an environment of high trust" (page 3). The book is divided into three parts to address this issue. The first section sets up the problem with statistics and examples of low trust. The question is posed regarding if a lack of trust hurts companies and countries economically. This section also introduces Smart Trust: "a competency and a process that enables us to operate with high trust in a low trust world. It minimizes risk and maximizes possibilities. It optimizes two key factors: (1) a propensity to trust and (2) analysis" (page 57). The next section discusses how individuals and companies can enact Smart Trust, giving multiple examples of companies and individuals who did just that. The final section challenges readers to establish Smart Trust as well as summarizes the previous two parts.

Throughout the book, the text is broken up by graphs, images, and key quotes. The graphs, images, and a few quotes are helpful. However, I found that most of the quotes only served to disrupt the flow of my reading, and I eventually started skipping those quotes all together. Since I am sure the authors purposely chose those quotes, I would suggest that perhaps the quotes at the end of the section would be more beneficial. On the other hand, I liked the anecdotes from the authors' personal experiences that were placed throughout the book, even if they interrupted the text.

This book would probably be a great book for a small group within a company to read, meet, discuss, and implement actions suggested in the book. Each chapter ends with insightful questions that could lead to business-altering (and life-altering) reflection and answers.

Overall, this book managed to capture and keep my attention. I was left with the desire to personal reflect on the ideas presented within the book. What can I do to build a culture of Smart Trust?

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### **Jim says**

"Smart Trust is the ability to extend trust wisely in a world that seems to be saying you can't trust anyone, and it leads to a virtuous upward cycle of prosperity, energy, and joy."

We do this by choosing to believe in trust, starting with our own trustworthiness. We debate our intent and assume positive intent in others. We do what we've said we're going to do and we give trust to others.

The content of this book is really good and very important. The book itself could have been a lot shorter as it felt repetitive. Lots of stories and quotes from people who are already practising and embodying the principles within.

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### **Kirk G. Meyer says**

The book was another good book filled with useful information. It is the second from these two leaders and I can recommend both with no issues. This book builds extremely well on the previous and compliments Covey's fathers book as well. A must read for anyone who wishes to trust people in a better smarter way.

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## Cathy Allen says

It is probably not fair to compare this book to the one that preceded it, but I just cannot give this one four stars when *The Speed of Trust* was such a life-changing revelation. I wanted the same lift, the same sense of epiphany, and am therefore disappointed. I was glad for an opportunity to spend more time thinking about the all-important subject of building and maintaining trusting relationships, and in fairness there was some solid new stuff in here. I have even used some of the new material to help a client group I have been working with. But what might have been an excellent journal article was stretched out to 258 pages and that makes for some dull reading.

I can appreciate the challenge Rebecca Merrill (the actual writer) had, crafting a book out of very little material. In fact, I think the book gains from her regular repetition of the phrase "prosperity, energy, and joy" because it is an ever-present reminder of why we should work so hard to earn and extend trust. She does well with that. It's all the examples and stories that don't really contribute much that I struggled to slog through. I don't say this very often, but in this case I will: I recommend reading *The Speed of Trust* itself but the two-page summary of *Smart Trust* I will soon post to [www.whatis Cathyreading.com](http://www.whatis Cathyreading.com) is all you'll need to get the full value of this one.

One important take away for me comes in the form of another Covey matrix with four quadrants. It is helpful to understand how lower or higher levels of a propensity to trust combine with more or less analysis of a specific person or situation to produce no trust, blind trust, distrust, or *Smart Trust*. We learned in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (by Stephen M. R. Covey's father) that a whole lot of the sweet life is found in Quadrant 2 and so it is with *Smart Trust* as well. I want to think about every situation and I want to extend trust where and when I can. If I am successful with that then prosperity, energy, and joy are sure to follow.

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## Jacob says

I finished my reading of "Smart Trust." When I first read "Speed of Trust" in 2006 I was profoundly impacted by the structure that was added to a relatively elusive topic. I keep a small paper with the thirteen behaviors of a High Trust Leader on my desk and refer to it often. "Smart Trust" seems like the natural follow up to all the HOW questions that were generated by "Speed of Trust."

The five *Smart Trust* actions that this book teaches make a clear outline of how to generate trust in a team, family, or other organization. Simple, but not to a fault, these five actions make it easy to understand. They are, Choose to Believe in Trust, Start with Self, Declare Your Intent, Do What You Say, and Lead Out in Extending Trust. While they sound straight forward on the surface, the book explores valuable examples and insights that help create a framework of putting it all together in a clear action plan.

The order of the five actions is not an accident. I suspect that I will need to go back to the book often to continue my journey in implementing trust in the various arenas of life as I move through the action steps.

The biggest take away from this book is a continuation of the first. Simply put, trust changes everything. It plays the biggest part in the bottom line and success of any relationship or organization. Creating a vocabulary around the principle allows us to discuss it among ourselves in terms that we all understand. These authors have done that and I believe that this is part of the revolution of restoring trust in our families, relationships, work places, communities, and countries.

## Holly Whiting says

One of my favorite parts is the child's story on page 85 of the empty pot. Another part I really identified with was the "The bun lady" story on Cordia Harrington story on page 103. Maybe because it is about a single woman over coming tough circumstances by being doggedly persistent and not just succeeding but dominating her situation. I am about to reread it. Trust is the hidden variable in all relationships both personal and professional. If you can change the trust in a relationship, than you can change the relationship and that's information I need.

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## Lauren RM says

I got this book for free through Goodreads' first reads.

I'm not sure what I expected, but this book wasn't really it. I felt a lot like someone was trying to sell me something, which I didn't really like, although the premise totally makes sense. Assume that people are inherently good but still make logical decisions about how and how much to trust them. Good advice.

I'm pretty sure I got an advance copy because they had the same trust equation twice, when it was supposed to be opposite, and a lot of the arguments seemed a bit circular. I guess it's just the nature of the beast, though. I'm glad someone's reminding us to trust each other, and they gave a lot of examples I never would have come across otherwise.

Thanks for picking me!

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## Daniel Taylor says

This follow-up to Stephen Covey's "The Speed of Trust" drills down into his idea of "Smart Trust", his alternative to distrust or blind faith.

He gives example after example of how Smart Trust increases prosperity, energy and joy in your personal life and in your business. He points out that you don't need to get others to change, become trustworthy yourself and you will be a change agent. The book outlines five principles for building Smart Trust.

Whether you're in business or not, read and apply the lessons in this book to build trust in your life.

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## Leah Blue de Souza says

In my line of work (Talent Development), clients always ask me to recommend a Leadership book. This is what I suggest each time. There is no culture or relationship that can thrive without Trust.

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## Sam Francis says

AFTER MY OWN FAILURES (shuttering my national magazine at age 26) and my many personal ones: breakups, bankruptcy, divorce — and back again — I relate first-hand to the high costs (emotional and financial) of a breakdown of trust.

But we forget that for people in the trenches facing massive failure, they face perhaps an even more debilitating blow. With the realization of our worst fears about the future and our place in it, then depression swept in and left me feeling defeated, tiny... impotent! How does one recover from such devastating blows?

When trust has been broken, can you really ever learn to trust again?

Author and motivational entrepreneur, the late Stephen Covey, thought so. (Covey, you might remember, authored "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People." I find it pretty fascinating that he chose in his final work, to focus entirely on TRUST. He considered this his legacy work Even worse than feeling burned, he argues, is going through life and/or business with low (or no) trust. While released a few years ago, the book stands the initial test of time, because the truths unearthed are perennial.

I found the information on self trust the most important of the entire book. "Self trust" he writes, "is like the tide, it moves all of the boats." What a beautiful metaphor. The book is a must read for anyone who has been through the fire of broken agreements. Bottom Line: There is everything to be gained from learning to trust again, but trusting smart.

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## Esther says

Okay, so I agree with his premise. But I think that he doesn't pay enough attention to the behavioural evidence on how trust works and why it is necessary to how humans function. Also, this mostly felt like an attempt to refute critics of "The Speed of Trust", which I think is a better and more useful book.

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