

# Fuel for Thought

## Trust

*Bruce is still away, so I have the privilege of standing in for him in this column again this week.*

The recent events in Canberra have generated a lot of public outrage, but none of us are perfect, and maybe it's more useful to think about it as a reminder of the importance of trust in all our relationships.

Trust is like the oil that keeps relationships working smoothly: relationships between friends; between family members; between work colleagues; between suppliers and customers; between the community and our institutions – churches, schools, Governments and companies.

Trust is about being able to rely on the other to be fair; to act in our interests; to do what they said they were going to do; to tell us the truth. Relationships without trust are much more difficult. When we don't trust, we have more rules and more contracts and more lawyers; we have to keep checking and policing; and we are often disappointed.

When there is trust we know that the other will act in our interests, just as we act in theirs; we know they'll assume the best about us, just as we assume the best about them; we know that they'll overlook our occasional failing, just as we overlook theirs.

Trust grows slowly over time – when someone consistently does the right thing by us, eventually we come to rely on them; to trust them. It's not magic, but it does make our relationships much richer; and the world a better place to live in.

At QER we have long recognised the need to trust each other for our team to be at its best. We have also recognised the importance of maintaining trust with the community, to enable us to maintain our social license to operate.

Back to Canberra – it will take a while for our politicians to rebuild trust with each other, and for the community to rebuild trust in them. However I sincerely believe it has to happen. Australia has many opportunities to embrace and challenges to face, and without trust in each other, it's going to be just too damn difficult.

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