

Jimmy Wells and the Seven Rules of Trust

We are watching and discussing a couple of YouTube videos about Jimmy Wells and his book “The Seven Rules of Trust”, but I felt they give a rather superficial idea of what he was talking about.

I actually bought the book and found it totally inspirational and would recommend it to anyone as a simple explanation of trust and the need for it and as a useful practical instruction book.

Here I intend to just go through the seven rules of trust one by one and show or comment briefly on how Jimmy Wells explains them and illustrates them - largely through his experience in launching and developing Wikipedia.

The first rule of trust is to make it personal and understand how trust is created. Here he gives three factors - authenticity, empathy, and logic - o check for trust. Are you authentic - a person of honesty and Integrity? The sort of person who would feel bad if they didn't deliver on a promise? Secondly do you have empathy about others? And third, are you clearly and actually able to deliver what you're promising? Can you do what you're supposed to do?

Rule two is to hold the positive belief that people are natural connectors and collaborators who want to build good things together. Thirdly it is necessary to have a clear purpose, such as “Wikipedia is an Encyclopaedia” providing in an overarching goal to shape and guide all the efforts needed to get it going.

Fourth, you have to give trust to get trust. Assume good faith from other people. An interesting footnote is that it was Lao-Tse who we studied as a Chinese philosopher who said “To give no trust is to get no trust”, so this rule was known two and a half thousand years ago.

The fifth rule is to keep things civil and show mutual respect in one's dealings.

Sixth, be independent from any sponsors and stick to that clear purpose you set down from Rule 3.

Seventh be transparent in everything you do. If you get something wrong, don't hide it but admit it and put it right.

One bonus over-arching rule is that “Do what you're supposed to do”

OK, this summary may still seem superficial. The devil is in the detail, but Wells does not disappoint. His book gives clear detailed explanation and convincing illustrations of these rules in action and achieving results. It is not just good sense, but inspirational and an important weapon against the cynicism and division in the world today. An educational and inspirational read.