

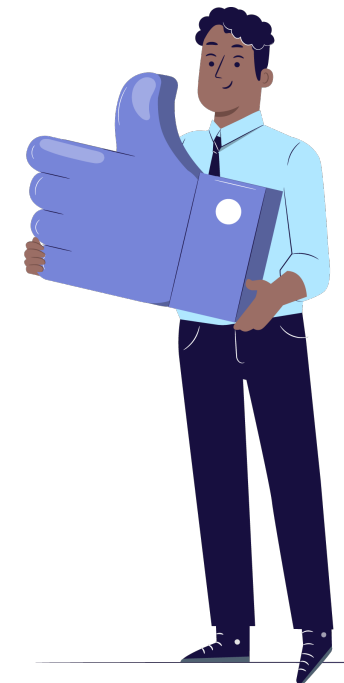
# 3 Steps to Build Credibility in HR

GUIDE

# Why Credibility Matters

**Your ability to build and maintain strong, credible relationships is a key factor in your execution success as an HR professional. When you work within HR operations and administration, you serve as a bridge between employees, managers, HR leadership, and external partners, ensuring that HR processes run smoothly and stakeholders feel supported.**

Credibility isn't just about being knowledgeable: It's about being reliable, responsive, and trusted. When stakeholders see you as a credible partner, they are more likely to engage openly, collaborate effectively, and value your role in the organization. Strong relationships built on credibility enable you to navigate challenges, influence decisions, and drive efficient execution.



# Step 1: Identify Your Stakeholders

**Begin by identifying who you interact with regularly and understanding their needs and expectations.** Use the table below to clarify your role in each relationship.

STAKEHOLDER	INTERNAL/EXTERNAL	HOW THEY RELY ON ME	WHAT I NEED FROM THEM
Employees	Internal	Provide HR support, answer questions, facilitate processes	Clear communication of needs and concerns
Hiring managers	Internal	Assist with recruitment, onboarding, and compliance	Timely feedback and collaboration
Senior HR team	Internal	Execute HR initiatives, provide administrative support	Guidance and strategic direction
Payroll team	Internal	Ensure employee records are accurate for payroll processing	Timely updates on changes
Vendors (e.g., benefits providers)	External	Coordinate services for employees	Service-level updates and responsiveness

→ Action

*Adapt this table to reflect your specific role and organization.*

# Step 2: Apply The 4 Cs of Engagement

When engaging with stakeholders, follow this structured approach to build credibility and trust through your interactions:

1

## Clarify expectations and accountabilities

- Ask direct questions to ensure alignment: “What are your expectations for this process?”
- Confirm deadlines, roles, and responsibilities upfront.
- Be transparent about what you can and cannot do.

2

## Communicate timely and professionally

- Respond to emails and inquiries within an appropriate time frame.
- Use clear, professional language tailored to your audience.
- Proactively share updates before people need to ask for them.

3

## Confirm or close the loop

- Summarize discussions and agreements to prevent misunderstandings.
- Follow up to ensure actions have been completed.
- Ask, “Does this address your needs?” or “Is there anything else I can clarify?”

4

## Continuously build the relationship

- Schedule regular check-ins with key stakeholders.
- Express appreciation for their time and contributions.
- Offer support beyond transactional interactions.



## SCENARIO

### Applying the 4Cs

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Imagine an employee is frustrated because their benefits enrollment was delayed. How do you apply the 4Cs to manage this situation?

- **Clarify:** Acknowledge their frustration and confirm the details of the delay. Ask what they need and explain what steps you can take to resolve the issue.
- **Communicate:** Provide a clear update on what's happening, when they can expect a resolution, and any alternative solutions.
- **Confirm:** Follow up to ensure the issue is resolved and confirm that they have received the necessary support.
- **Continuously build:** Proactively check in later to ensure they're satisfied with the outcome and share any process improvements to prevent future delays.

#### → Action

*Next time a stakeholder approaches you with a question or request, make a conscious effort to apply the 4Cs. After the interaction, reflect on how it went and identify areas for improvement.*

# Reflect Monthly

**Set aside time each month to reflect on your relationships and how you have built credibility. This helps to create awareness and identify actions to improve your credibility in upcoming interactions.**

Use the following questions as a guide:

- > Which relationships did I strengthen this month?
- > Did I drop the ball with anyone? If so, what can I do to repair it or prevent a repeat?
- > Where did I take the initiative or make someone's job easier?
- > Who could I connect with more intentionally next month?

## → Action

*Schedule a recurring monthly 15-minute self-check-in to answer these questions and set relationship-building goals.*



## A FINAL NOTE

*Building credibility takes consistent effort, but by mapping your stakeholders, following the 4Cs, and reflecting regularly, you will become a trusted HR professional. Use this resource as a guide and revisit it often to ensure you're continuously strengthening your credibility.*