

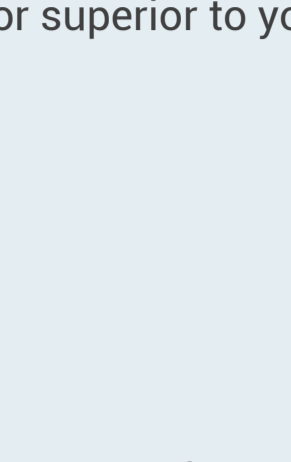
# THE IMPORTANCE OF DIGNITY IN LEADERSHIP

New research has shown how leaders who don't promote dignity in the workplace damage both the workforce and their companies. Treating people with dignity is a core leadership activity and should be part of a leaders' mind-set. This study looked at an internal conflict which escalated to the extent that the organisation became un-tenable and had to be sold.

## WHAT IS DIGNITY?

Hicks Breaks Dignity into Ten Elements:

### 1 ACCEPTANCE OF IDENTITY



a. Approach people as neither inferior nor superior to you.



b. Give others the freedom to express their authentic selves without fear of being negatively judged.



c. Interact without prejudice or bias,



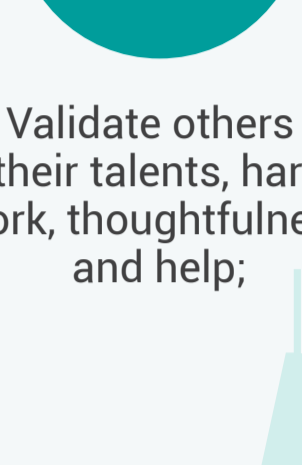
d. Accept how race, religion, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, disability, etc. are at the core of their identities.



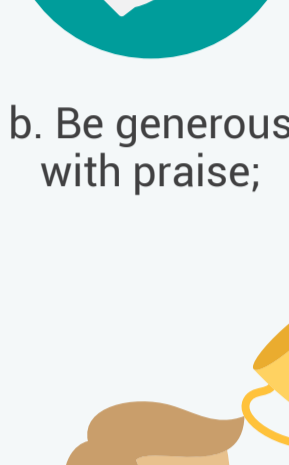
e. Assume they have integrity.



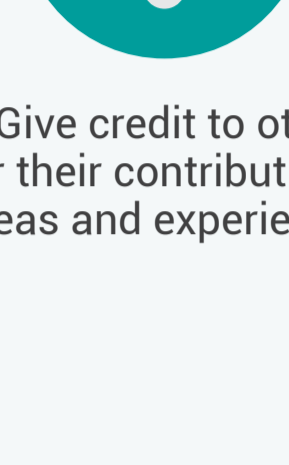
### 2 RECOGNITION



a. Validate others for their talents, hard work, thoughtfulness, and help;



b. Be generous with praise;



c. Give credit to others for their contributions, ideas and experience.



### 3 ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Give people your full attention by listening, hearing, validating and responding to their concerns and what they have been through.



### 4 INCLUSION

Make others feel that they belong at all levels of relationship (family, community, organization, nation).



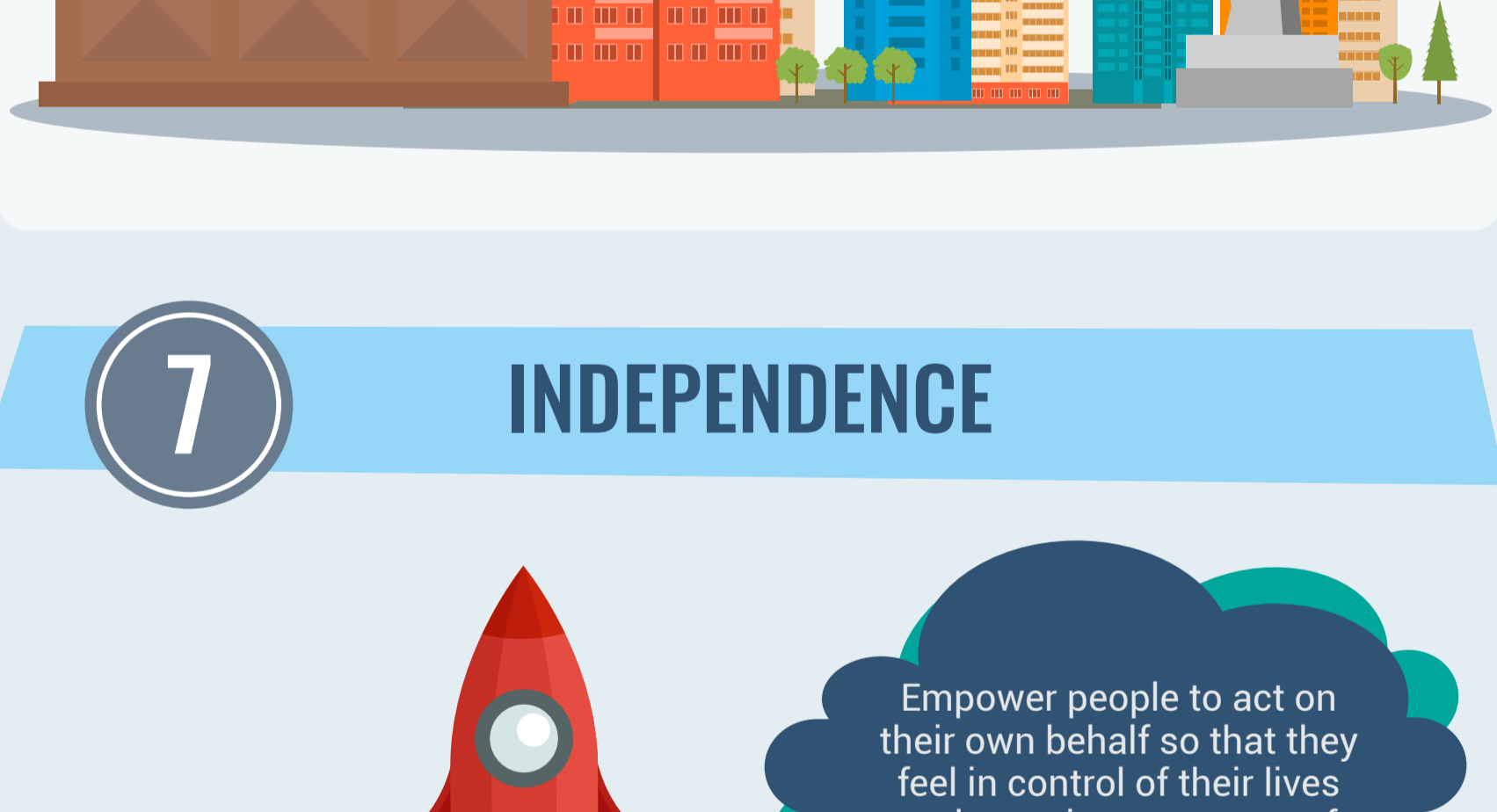
### 5 SAFETY

- a. Put people at ease at two levels:
  - i. Physically, where they feel free of bodily harm, and.
  - ii. Psychologically, where they feel free of concern about being shamed or humiliated,
- b. That they feel free to speak without fear of retribution.



### 6 FAIRNESS

Treat people justly, with equality, and in an even-handed way, according to agreed-upon laws and cultural rules.



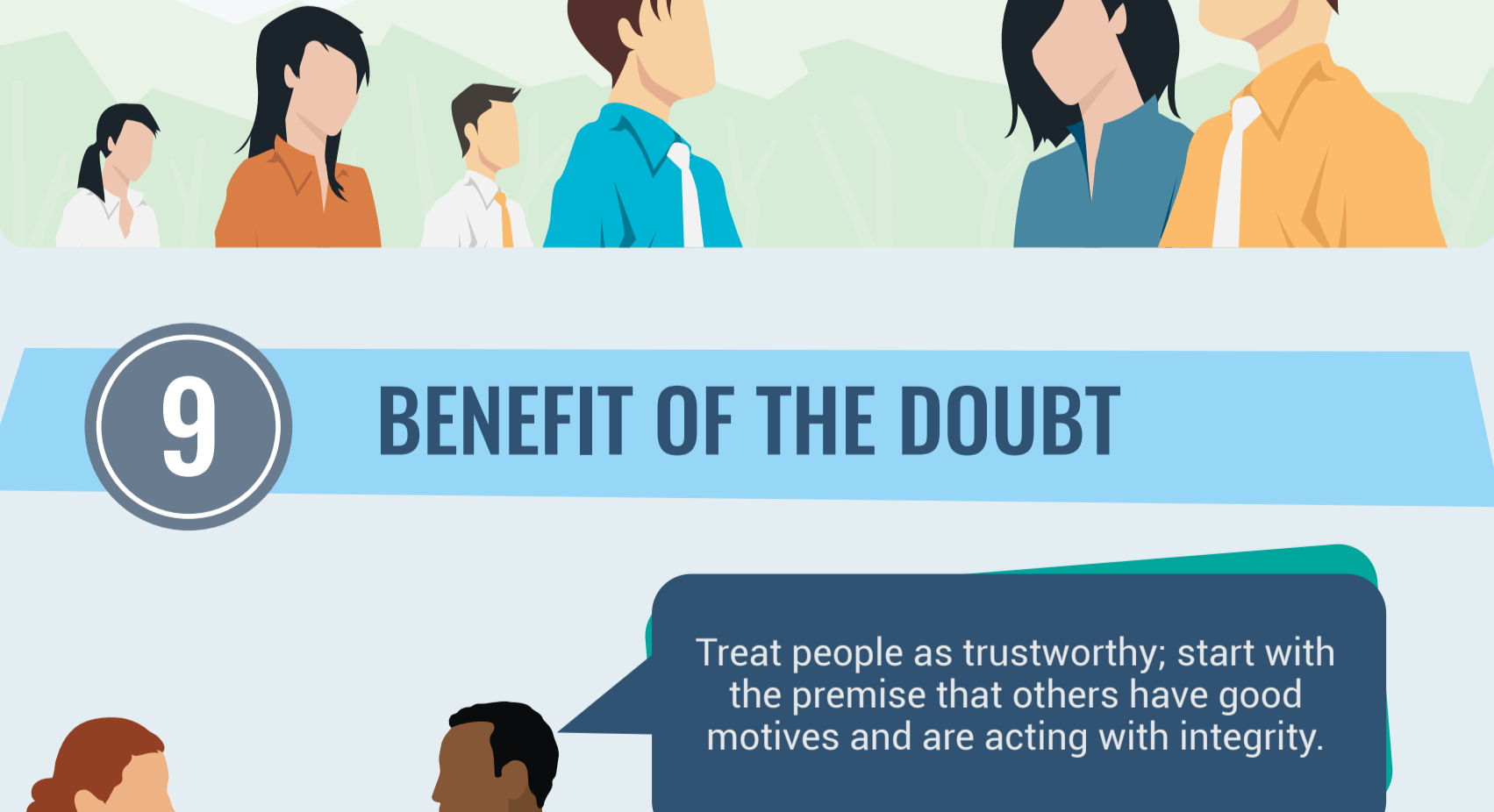
### 7 INDEPENDENCE

Empower people to act on their own behalf so that they feel in control of their lives and experience a sense of hope and possibility.



### 8 UNDERSTANDING

Believe that what others think matters; give them the chance to explain their perspectives, express their points of view, actively listen in order to understand them.



### 9 BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT

Treat people as trustworthy; start with the premise that others have good motives and are acting with integrity.



### 10 ACCOUNTABILITY

- a. Take responsibility for your actions;
- b. If you have violated the dignity of another,
  - i. Apologize.
  - ii. Make a commitment to change hurtful behaviours.



## DIGNITY BREACHES AND HOW THEY CAN BE RESOLVED

Where dignity is breached, a conversation must be had throughout the organisation to resolve it. The offending parties need to acknowledge the issues and take steps toward those wronged to achieve a resolution. Only in backing down can the negative atmosphere be resolved and ultimately the organisation can return to full strength.