

Abstract

General trust – trust in other people in general – was shown to be positively related to social intelligence, or the ability to discern cues of trustworthiness in other people. In contrast to the popular view that people who trust others without proof are naïve and credulous, and thus gullible, our findings supported the view that those who are socially intelligent can afford to have a high level of general trust and participate in social activities that are risky and yet profitable: We showed that high trusters, who scored high on a general trust scale, were more skilled in discerning trustworthiness of others through non-verbal cues when they watched 5-s video clips of unacquainted target persons who were recorded in a setting unrelated to trustworthy behavior.