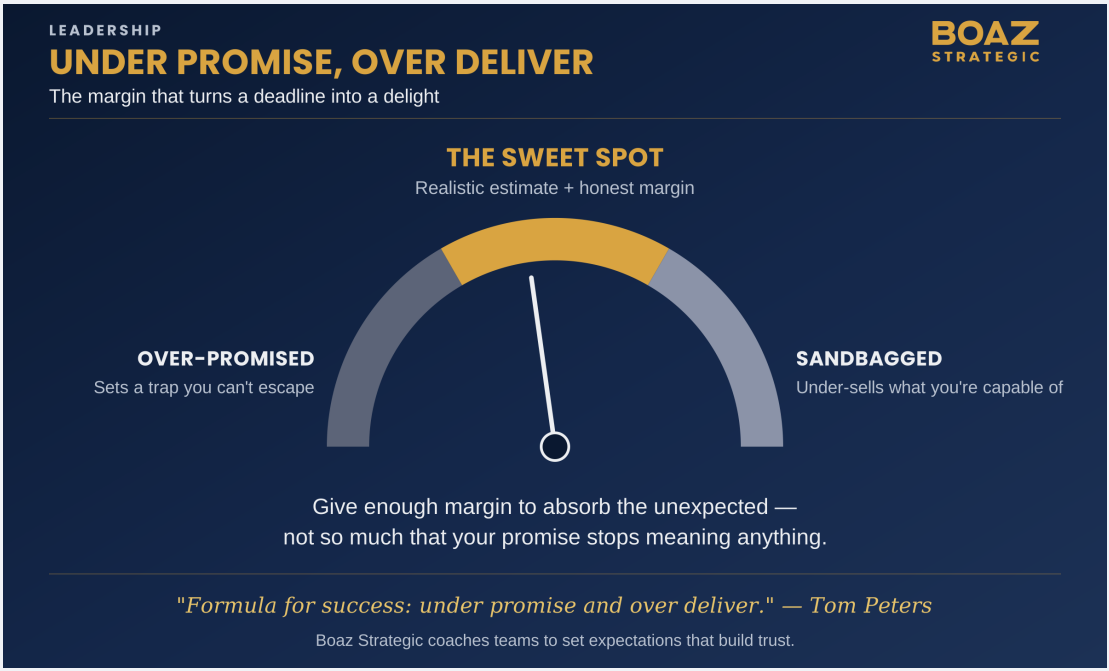


Is your estimate honest, or just *optimistic?*

> *Formula for success: under promise and over deliver. — Tom Peters*

In my first year in business development, someone handed me a phrase that's stuck: under promise, over deliver. Simple advice, hard discipline.

The gap between what you say and do is trust.

If a client's shipment “should” arrive in 1 week, but you communicate to them to expect 10 days, you've given yourself a grace period for any unexpected delays. As it gets closer to arrival and they find out it's coming a few days earlier, they're excited for its arrival.

Over-promise instead, and you've built yourself a no-win situation — every normal delay now reads as a broken commitment, not bad luck.

The opposite failure is just as costly. Pad every estimate so heavily that hitting it takes no real effort, and you're not managing expectations — you're quietly under-selling what your team can do.

The target is a margin big enough to absorb the unexpected, small enough that beating it still feels like something was actually delivered.

No one loves being over-promised and under-delivered to. Everyone loves the reverse.

Boaz Strategic coaches teams to set expectations that build trust.