

ASSESSING YOUR LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABILITY

"Accountability is a personal promise or set of promises and is an obligation to deliver specific, defined results. Leadership accountability is a commitment to the organization and to those that the organization serves. And without a high level of accountability, deadlines will be missed, and goals will not be achieved. How do you as a leader promote and drive accountability?"

Review the areas below and ask yourself the associated questions.* There may be areas that you can change as a leader to increase accountability in your organization.

1. Team members embrace ownership for team results. In today's business world, much of results are because of effective and accountable teamwork.
 - If you asked the team what were the processes the team uses, would you get similar answers from each member?
 - How often are team goals reviewed and clarified?
 - How much do team members feel accountable and obligated for improving processes and assisting each other to attain team goals?
 - How much do employees own team results versus mere activities? How much are excuses tolerated?
2. Roles and key success metrics of each team member and leader are clear. People struggle to be accountable when roles and processes are ambiguous, and they are unclear of success metrics.
 - Review the areas below and ask yourself the associated questions.* There may be areas that you can change as a leader to increase accountability in your organization.

- If you asked each member of your team if they clearly understood their role in the organization, how it impacted the organizations goals, and the processes to be used in performing their role, how would they respond?
 - When new members become part of an existing team, how are they integrated?
 - When overlaps in accountability exist between team members, how are they addressed?
3. Employees are encouraged to create their own solutions and make their own decisions. When leaders encourage these behaviors, they develop future leaders and increase ownership of results.
- How much do you support team members with the resources and help they need?
 - How often do you provide the solution and/or make the decision versus letting the team do the heavy lifting?
 - How do you encourage the use of judgment by team members?
4. Consequences should not be viewed as punishment. Gaining commitment from an employee includes an agreed upon consequence; without this a consequence is viewed as punishment leading to fear of failure and a loss in innovation and risk taking.
- When a commitment/goal is not met, how do you react?
 - Are there punishments or consequences when a promise isn't kept? How does the organization's culture support accountability?
5. Sustainable success and growth require continuous improvement through an environment of learning. And learning happens when there is accountability for both success and failure.
- How do you support an environment of growth and learning? How are you coaching the team towards improvement?
 - How often are you asking for employees' opinions versus telling? How do employees learn from success and failure?

6. Employees seek feedback to improve performance and the value they deliver. What feedback mechanisms are being used to evaluate performance?
 - How often is feedback provided?
 - How is feedback linked to key success metrics?

7. Employees own their failures, and don't make excuses
 - Who on your team is not currently meeting their commitments?
 - How do you address an employee who consistently misses their commitments?
 - How quickly do you address a lack of accountability?

*Adapted from the work of Henry Browning, author of *Accountability: Taking Ownership of Your Responsibility*.



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