

Personal Accountability - Workbook



Objectives:

- ↳ Overcoming the Blame Game
 - ↳ Focus on Results
 - ↳ Playing Above the Line
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To many people, the word accountability has a negative association. The reason for this is simple. With accountability comes responsibility. When I am responsible for an expected result that doesn't happen then I must give an answer for that result.

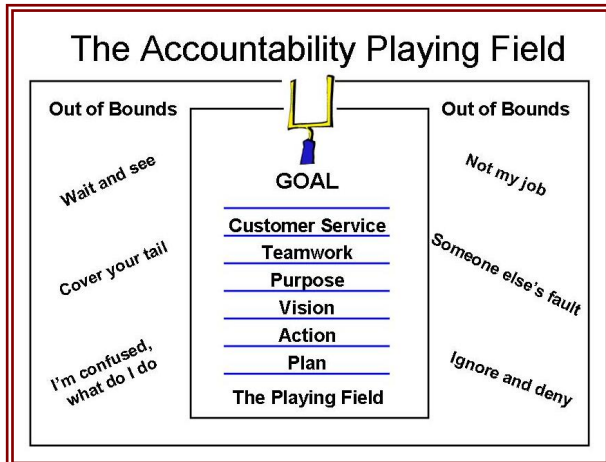
But if we dig a little deeper into the power of accountability we will begin to understand the key place this concept holds in business and life in general. When I hold myself accountable to accomplish personal goals and ambitions, I will also enjoy the benefits of achieving those goals.

The same is true in business. When a company requires its employees to identify, plan, and achieve predefined metrics and objectives, the company and the employees enjoy the greater production, profits and overall growth.

The Accountability Playing Field

Accountability is like boundaries on a playing field. It defines the rules of the game, how to move forward, what is fair, when I am out of bounds, and how to score.

Unfortunately we all learn at a young age that it's not how you play the game but whether you win or lose that really counts.



The Blame Game

So instead of playing by the plan, we play the Blame Game.

When something goes wrong in life, do you immediately focus on finding out who to blame, going on unnecessary witch hunts, or do you ensure that your full attention is on finding a solution to the problem?

It's easier to play the blame game because it doesn't take much work to come up with a

theory, but it does take energy to devise meaningful solutions and take action.

By all means, learn from the experience and make sure that you aren't exposed to unnecessary risk, but don't take the easy way out by pointing fingers every time life throws you a curve ball.

While it's called the blame game, it's not fun or productive. Those placing blame look petty and those being blamed lose focus from their task and end up covering their tracks rather than doing great work.

Focus on Blame

- ↳ Ignore & Deny
 - This problem is not that bad, it will probably take care of itself
 - It wasn't me, I didn't know anything about it
- ↳ It's not my job
 - That's not what I was hired for
 - It's my problem
- ↳ I don't get paid to do that
 - Let someone else take care of it
- ↳ Someone else's fault - Who can we blame?
 - People deny their own responsibility for poor results and seek to shift the blame to others
- ↳ Confused - tell me what to do
 - Oh I didn't know you wanted it done that way
 - Can you show me now
- ↳ Cover your tail
 - Here people craft elaborate stories to avoid responsibility
- ↳ Wait and see
 - Let's see what happens

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Focus on Results

Instead of focusing on blame we must focus on producing results, especially after a mistake or miscalculation occurs. When support and training is the first response to errors, then staff will improve and results will be positive.

- ↳ Define the Playing Field
 - Stop – To be willing to stop the activity long enough to stay in tune with the desired results
 - Look – The ability to see an issue. To listen, look for and stay open to seeing obstacles and challenges
 - Own – The choice to take responsibility. To accept ownership by being a part of the solution
 - Think – Constant focus on identifying the desired outcome and asking, “What else can I do to achieve the result?”
 - Plan – Putting together an effective game plan to maximize the result, prioritizing the action steps and setting target dates for accomplishment
 - Act – Taking action to guarantee progress and results. Actively and relentlessly pursuing the ultimate goal

“Above The Line” Steps to Accountability

There is a thin but definite line that separates success and failure; great from ordinary. Below this line are excuses, the blame game, confusion, a victim attitude, and feelings of helplessness.

Above the line is a sense of ownership, commitment, solutions, and an attitude of action. Blamer’s stay below the line making excuses when achievers live above the line empowered by commitment and vision.

SEE IT

- ↳ I am accountable to **See It** by:
 - Obtaining the perspectives of others
 - Being open and candid in my communications
 - Asking for and offering feedback
 - Hearing the hard things

The *See It* definition embodies those actions and beliefs that help an organization and individuals see things as they really are.

- ↳ The clearer the picture of how things really are, the better we can move forward and succeed

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OWN IT

- ↳ I am accountable to **Own It** by:
 - Being personally invested
 - Acknowledging my involvement
 - Creating and maintaining a sense of alignment
 - Owning both my personal and my team's objectives

Personal ownership is the linchpin in the framework for achieving results, everyone counts!

- ↳ Results cannot be obtained in today's ever-changing environment without enlisting the hearts and minds of all the people at all levels of the organization

SOLVE IT

- ↳ I am accountable to **Solve It** by:
 - Constantly asking, "What else can I do?"
 - Actively redefining boundaries
 - Creatively dealing with obstacles
 - Staying focused on results

This third definition, *Solve It*, boils down to not taking "no" for an answer and not accepting failure as an option.

- ↳ This definition embodies the key attributes and actions that are necessary to breaking through and achieving the result

DO IT

- ↳ I am accountable to **Do It** by:
 - Reporting proactively
 - Relentlessly following up
 - Doing the things I say I'll do
 - Measuring my progress toward achieving the intended result

The *Do IT* definition describes the essence of full accountability, the will and commitment to follow through and achieve the result.

Implementing the plan and staying *Above the Line* is the fourth and final step in the *Steps to Accountability*. It is this final step that validates the effort spent on the first three.

- ↳ Live Above the Line
- ↳ Play Above the Line
- ↳ Work Above The Line

Personal Accountability – Quiz

Based on the material circle the correct answer:

1. To many people the word accountability has a negative association:
 - a. True
 - b. False

2. the Blame Game is necessary and improves morale:
 - a. True
 - b. False

3. Which are part of the Blame Game:
 - Select all that apply
 - a. Ignore & Deny
 - b. It's not my job
 - c. I don't get paid to do that
 - d. Someone else's fault - Who can we blame?
 - e. Confused - tell me what to do
 - f. Cover your tail
 - g. Wait and see
 - h. Define and accomplish results

4. Which is not one of the steps to accountability:
 - a. See It
 - b. Own It
 - c. Solve It
 - d. Do It
 - e. Believe It