



Accountability and You: Are You Meeting the Challenge?

- ▶ “Be who you are and say what you mean” – Dr. Suess

What exactly does it mean to be *accountable*?

Accountable: adj. – The obligation of an individual to account for his/her activities, accept responsibility for them and to disclose the results in a transparent manner – (www.businessdictionary.com)

In simple terms, being accountable involves:

- ▶ Accepting **responsibility** for your actions
- ▶ Being **answerable** for the outcomes
- ▶ Taking **ownership** of your mistakes

Being accountable usually doesn't come easy for anyone and it takes practice. However, learning to be accountable is highly beneficial and with time anyone can improve. Consider the following:

Accountability is closely linked with enhancing the following positive life benefits:

- ▶ **Trust**
- ▶ **Successful relationships**
- ▶ **Security**
- ▶ **Teamwork**
- ▶ **Leadership**
- ▶ **Confidence**
- ▶ **Achievement of goals**

To put it in perspective, think of the kind of person who you would want as a leader – Wouldn't you want that person to be accountable for his or her actions? If you were assembling a team of some kind, wouldn't you desire the members of that team to all be accountable? **Accountability leads to success**

Avoiding accountability by making excuses, blaming, lying, etc. is taking the short term easy way out when a problem arises. Facing your problems, mistakes, and challenges by being accountable is a path toward long term success.

Opening thoughts for self-examination: *Which way do you lean when it comes to accountability?*

- ▶ Point fingers or provide answers?
- ▶ Work hard or whine?
- ▶ Accept or accuse?
- ▶ Face the facts or flee?
- ▶ Confront challenges or criticize?



Accountable or Not? Review the following chart. Cross out all of the negative answers that work against being accountable

Procrastinating	Owning your mistakes	Integrity – Your yes means yes and your no means no
Commitment - Sticking with it for better or for worse	Running away or hiding	Creating confusion
Pointing fingers at others	Accepting your role	Taking responsibility
Transparency- Not hiding the details or the facts	Honesty	Lying
Listening to feedback	Avoiding the issue at hand	Making changes when needed
Humility: Willingness to listen and keep on learning	Giving direct answers	Making excuses
Quitting when things get tough	Shifting the focus whenever it is too much on you	Giving vague, unclear information
Playing the victim card	Cover-ups, smoke screens	Your words are consistent with your actions
Setting a deadline & sticking to it	Doing the bare minimum	Telling people what you think they want to hear
Purposely going into a crisis to bail out of the situation	Blaming	Admitting when you are wrong
Working collaboratively with others on your “team”	Dedication	Distancing yourself from your problems

Closing Discussion on Areas of Self-Improvement with Accountability:

1. After crossing off the negatives in the chart above, discuss the remaining positive answers
2. Select a few personal areas of strength for you as an individual and discuss your answers
3. What do you think that this group needs as a whole, in order to be more accountable?
4. What can you work on personally to be more accountable as an individual?