Managing Accountability: Expecting and Getting Top Performance

Presented by: Rick Lepsinger, President

HRDQ-U
IDEAS FOR LEARNING

WELCOME TO

Managing Accountability: Expecting and Getting Top Performance

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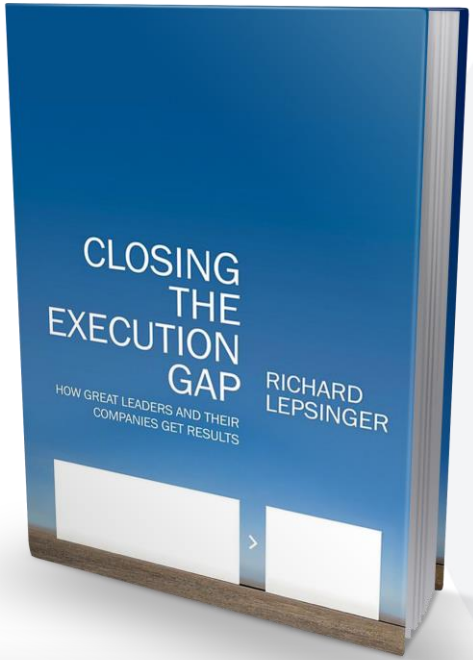
Closing the Execution Gap



Objectives

- Define accountability and learn how to recognize and measure it
- Understand the factors that impact individual accountability
- Enhance people's willingness to take accountability and responsibility for results

Poll: What's Your Opinion?

In your organization, to what extent are employees held accountable for results?

A. To a very large extent
B. To a large extent
C. To a moderate extent
D. To a small extent
E. To a very small extent

Poll: What's Your Opinion?

In your organization, to what extent do managers deal with performance problems in a timely manner?

A. To a very large extent
B. To a large extent
C. To a moderate extent
D. To a small extent
E. To a very small extent

Why Should We Care?

Accountability Makes A Difference

- 77% of leaders in top-performing organizations report that "employees at all levels are held accountable for results" compared to only **44%** in less-successful organizations.
- OnPoint's Execution Gap Survey of 935 leaders revealed that only **45%** believe that managers in their organizations effectively deal with poor performers.

Chat Box

If accountability is so critical to organizational and team success, why don't managers hold others accountable? What are the barriers?

The Seven "Tickets to Slide"

The Seven “Tickets to Slide”

1. **Things will get better if I wait out the storm**

   You “Wait and hope” that poor performance will improve on its own over time without you needing to have a conversation about meeting commitments and delivering results.

The Seven “Tickets to Slide”

2. **It was obvious I was dissatisfied**

   You assume that sending indirect messages and subtle signals will make our satisfaction know and clarify what needs to happen differently.

The Seven “Tickets to Slide”

3. **This isn’t worth arguing over**

   You are certain that differing points of view will lead to an uncomfortable conversation or a real disagreement, and decide to let it go and avoid the conflict.

The Seven “Tickets to Slide”

4. **My team must know what I expect**

   You have not clarified what “good looks like” or when you want projects done, meaning the baseline of clear expectations has not been set.

The Seven “Tickets to Slide”

5. **I don’t want to lose top performers**

   You are inclined to give top performers more leeway because you don’t want to break their momentum.

The Seven “Tickets to Slide”

6. **I don’t want to be a micro-manager**

   You equate following up and monitoring progress with micro-managing, and fear being labeled negatively.

The Seven “Tickets to Slide”

7. **I’ll just do it myself. It’s easier that way.**

   You take on the work yourself and become complicit in the cycle of poor performance and lack of accountability.

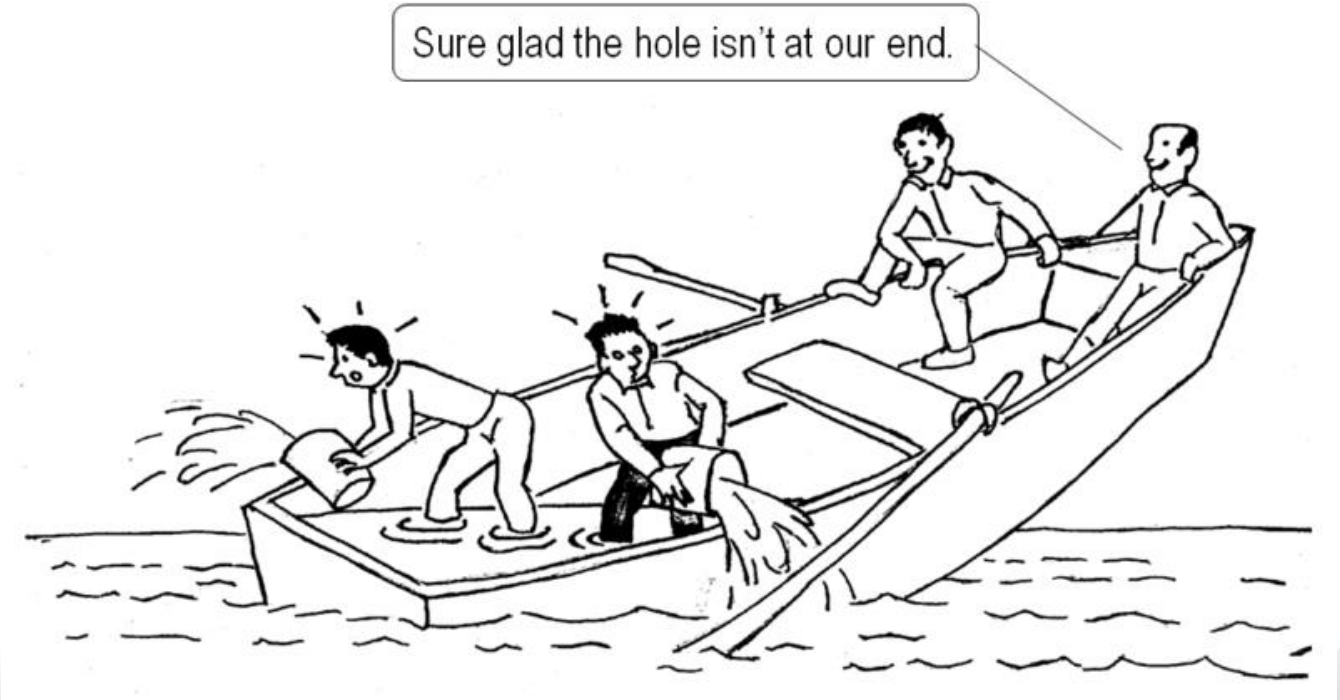
Lack of Accountability

Impact of Not Holding People Accountable

- Low Productivity
- Punishment of Top Performers
- Perception of You as a Leader

Defining Accountability

Managing Accountability



Chat Box

What do we mean by accountability? What does it look like in practice?

Accountability Defined

- We take initiative
- We accept responsibility for our actions
- We accept responsibility for how our actions impact others
- We admit when we make mistakes
- No excuses. No blaming

Accountability Scale

+2 Accepts responsibility for actions and impact

+1 Accepts responsibility for actions

- 1 Acknowledges responsibility but deflects

- 2 Absolutely no accountability

Accountability Scale

+2 Accept Responsibility for Actions and Impact

- Primary focus: Actions AND consequences
- Typical language: “I took those actions and I am responsible for the outcomes of my actions.”
- Thoughts/feelings: No fear, accept consequences

Accountability Scale

+1 Accept Responsibility for Actions

- Primary focus: Acts accountably; explains influencing factors
- Typical language: “Yes, I did those things. Here are some of the factors that influenced the situation.”
- Thoughts/feelings: I accept responsibility, but I want others to understand the contributing factors

Accountability Scale

-1 Acknowledge but Deflects Responsibility

- Primary focus: Deflects responsibility
- Typical language: “I did do it, BUT, BUT, BUT ...”
- Thoughts/feelings: Frustration with others who dropped the ball, and rationalization about my own accountability

Accountability Scale

-2 Acknowledge Absolutely No Accountability

- Primary focus: Blame and denial
- Typical language: “I had nothing to do with it—it was him, not me.”
- Thoughts/feelings: Extreme defensiveness

Case Study: The Lost Sale

Rhonda is a sales associate for a company that sells talent analytics software. Rhonda works from home has been trying to close on what would be the biggest sale of the year for her. As Rhonda starts her workday, she gets an email from the prospect, who tells her that they decided to go with another vendor.

A few hours later, Rhonda's boss calls and asks if she heard from the prospect. She says she just got the email and the prospect selected another provider. Her boss doesn't say anything. Rhonda acknowledges that it was her job to get the sale, but blames the development group for not setting the demo up correctly and the finance department for not getting back to her promptly about the discount requested by the prospect.

Poll: Rhonda's Level of Accountability

How would you rate Rhonda's level of accountability?

A. +2 Accepts responsibility for actions and impact

B. +1 Accepts responsibility for actions

C. - 1 Acknowledges responsibility but deflects

D. - 2 Absolutely no accountability

Case Study: Missed Deliverable

During a team meeting, each manager provides an update on his or her coaching activity. When it's Sheryl's turn, she says, "I committed to meet with each of my direct reports at least twice a quarter but I didn't do it last quarter. My manager's manager put me on this special project, which required extensive travel in Asia. When I'm away from my office, time difference makes it difficult to schedule coaching calls. It's just a scheduling problem I ran into. I commit to rearranging my schedule and leveraging technology to get my coaching schedule back on track by the end of the week. I will also make up the coaching sessions I missed."

Poll: Sheryl's Level of Accountability

How would you rate Sheryl's level of accountability?

A. +2 Accepts responsibility for actions and impact

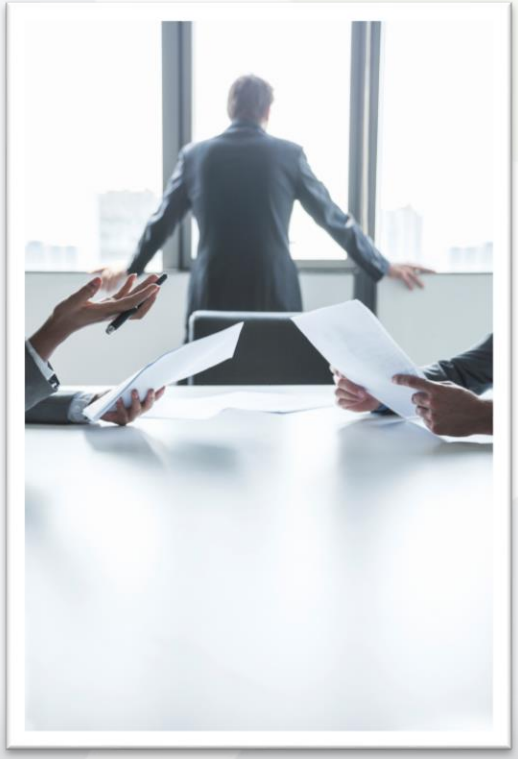
B. +1 Accepts responsibility for actions

C. - 1 Acknowledges responsibility but deflects

D. - 2 Absolutely no accountability

Why People Don’t Take Responsibility

- Excuse Factor #1: Preserving Self-Image
- Excuse Factor #2: “Social Loafing”
- Excuse Factor #3: Locus of Control



The Pygmalion Effect

Impact of Expectations

Confidence
Effort
Persistence
Performance

What Are Leaders Doing?

Five leadership practices that enable people to meet high expectations:

1. Enhance and maintain employee self-esteem
2. Set challenging goals
3. Create a supportive environment
4. Catch people doing something right
5. Provide constructive feedback

Breaking the Cycle

1. Assume value
2. Start with a strength
3. Make the unconscious conscious

Assume Value

- Listen for positives
- Use balanced response

– State what you like about the idea

  "What I like about your idea…", "The strengths are…"

– State key concerns in an actionable form

  "How to…"

Start with a Strength

- Focus on what the person currently does well
- Set a modest stretch goal
- Provide coaching and support as employee takes the risk and tries something new

Make the Unconscious Conscious

1. Enhance and maintain employee self-esteem
2. Set challenging goals
3. Create a supportive environment
4. Catch people doing something right
5. Provide constructive feedback

Application Exercise: Challenging Situation

David Missing Deadlines

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Help | Zoom text | Team

Through your efforts to understand the reasons for the team's performance plateau, it has come to your attention that David has been consistently missing deadlines. He recently missed two important deadlines which caused a delay in a product release.

David's performance is negatively impacting the team and you need to take action. However, because David does not report directly to you, managing this may be difficult. David's Manager is Pamela Jones, your colleague.

David Walker

Time elapsed: 6:48 | Simulation

View choices

Next

Poll: How Would You Handle It?

A. Call Pamela Jones, David's boss, to explain the issue with David's performance and explore what she can do to help enhance his accountability.

B. Send David an email to ensure that he understands the impact of missed deadlines on the team and its customers.

C. Ask David what he will do to get the projects back on track, what he will do to keep from missing deadlines in the future, and what he might have done that contributed to the problem.

D. Clarify your expectations for David's performance and for his current projects agree on periodic check points when you and he will discuss progress and anticipate potential problems.

E. Hold a team v-meeting to discuss the importance of meeting deadlines and identify solutions to existing barriers that are getting in the way.

Four Accountability Busters

1. Talking about an idea, but not agreeing to actions and accountability by people's names, and people thus assuming someone else is going to do the work
2. Agreeing on an action, but without any discussion of a completion date, so the end date is open to interpretation and differing opinions

Four Accountability Busters

3. Waiting until the completion date to check on the results, or not even checking in at all
4. Not holding people accountable for missed commitments after the fact

Accountability Booster

Set People Up For Success

Action

Timetable

Checkpoints

Coaching for Accountability

Three Coaching Questions

After-the-Fact Accountability Booster

- **Past:** "What could you have done to prevent the problem? What, if anything, did you do that might have possibly contributed to the problem"?
- **Present:** "What can you do NOW to get on track?"
- **Future:** "What can you do to prevent this problem from happening again in the future?"

Tips and Best Practices

- Be a role model by holding yourself accountable
- Evaluate the level of accountability of your direct reports; identify probable causes and actions for increasing accountability
- Enable honest communications about problems without fear of reprisal

Tips and Best Practices

- Set employees up for success by applying ATC model
- Use action plans to document commitments
- Coach people to ask themselves three accountability questions
- Encourage a “What else can I do to achieve the results that I want” attitude

Thank you!

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