

MAKING ACCOUNTABILITY AUTHENTIC: GETTING A GRIP ON RESULTS*

By David Irvine, Best-Selling Author and Leader's Navigator

Accountability is about getting a grip on results. It's about creating trust in relationships so the relationship will last. It's about courageous conversations, about making clear promises that you will deliver on and the courage to hold people to what say they will do. It's about engaging people and breathing new life into the relationships that matter. It is a deep and sustaining way to renew organizations with a promise and a commitment to what matters most, and to bring the very best you have to offer to whatever you do.

Making Accountability Agreements That Work

There are five key elements necessary to make an agreement powerful and meaningful with the people you depend on and who depend on you.

- a) **Contribution Statement** – What is the highest level value you are committed to bring to this relationship? This is what gives accountability agreements heart.
- b) **Accountabilities** – Accountabilities are the promises you make to others, what they can count on from you.
- c) **Support Requirements**. Support requirements are the accountabilities you require from others to ensure that you will have the support necessary to fulfill your accountabilities.
- d) **Consequences** – Consequences describe the results of the agreement (such as what you would like from others in return for delivering on your accountabilities). They are a statement of what is important to you, considering what is fair and reasonable within your current environment.
- e) **Follow up** – Follow up is a statement that indicates how your agreement will be maintained as a meaningful and flexible document over time, a work in progress.

Assessing Accountability Gaps In Your Organization:

Does the Accountability or Authenticity Gap exist in your organization? Are you committed to narrow this gap?

Indicators of an accountability gap:

- A *lack of focus*; busy but not producing results that matter most
- A lack of *dependability, ownership and trust*
- Excess dependency on positional leaders for direction and support

Often times accountability gaps are symptoms of *authenticity* gaps:

- A lack of open, direct *communication*
- A deficiency of *passion, energy, engagement, and commitment*

Where do you start? With yourself. Regardless of your position, *you* are accountable for the level of accountability and authenticity in your organization. You have established the culture. You set the tone.

If there is a gap:

- (a) People are not seeing you as being clear about your accountabilities or do not see you as authentic (you are not walking your talk),

- (b) You are not providing a strong enough model to the organization, or
- (c) People perceive that your team, though accountable, is not *aligned* in its accountabilities.

Four Steps To Narrow The Gap:

1. Look at your own habits as a leader. Fill any blatant Accountability Gaps you are responsible for personally. Go to meetings on time, follow up on commitments, deliver on your commitments, confront poor performers who are old buddies.
2. Identify accountability and authenticity blind spots. Ask trusted advisors to help identify instances where others see that your accountabilities don't match your intentions.
3. Make sure your leadership team is pulling together, and that it does not appear to your employees that is okay to pull in a different direction from the team.
4. Write an Authentic Accountability Agreement™ for yourself, and encourage your direct reports to do the same so you can ensure everyone is clear about their accountabilities. Be sure everyone has been invited to be authentic, and that everyone is aligned.

You can do all of these things on your own. You have the power, and the ability, to build an accountable, authentic company.

We can help you do it faster, and more completely, if you are committed to setting a tone that fosters accountability, authenticity, trust, and better performance throughout your organization. Here's how we can help:

- Coaching to help assess your own level of authenticity and personal accountability performance.
- Leadership assessment for you and your direct reports to identify gaps in your accountability and authenticity that are reflected in your staff members' gaps.
- Assistance for you and your direct reports in writing, aligning and communicating your authentic accountability agreements.
- Customized leadership development programs that promise an increase in accountability and authenticity throughout your organization.

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David Irvine is sought after internationally as a speaker, author, and mentor. He is the co-founder of the Newport Institute for Authentic Living whose focus is to build authentic, accountable organizational cultures that attract and retain great people. David is the best selling author of five books that can be ordered at www.davidirvine.com For information on how David can bring value to your organization or community, contact david@davidirvine.com or call 1-866-621-7008 (toll free).

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