



Increasing Accountability Competence in the Workplace

Is accountability key to organizational success? In short – Absolutely! To improve transparency and gain commitment of staff, accountability is key. Although some individuals may take responsibility for their assigned tasks, not all will hold themselves accountable.

The Accountability Loop

So how do you build up accountability competence in the workplace? You can follow the four steps outlined in the accountability loop.¹



Step 1: Set Clear Expectations

People need to know what they are accountable for. Confirm that every team member understands what their role is and what they are responsible for. A responsibility assignment matrix or RACI chart outlines who is responsible for completing tasks defined in the project plan and also identifies who is ultimately being held accountable to ensure the work is completed. Clearly communicate the objectives of the initiative upfront to increase project success.

¹ Colter, Carolee. (Jan 2013). Closing your accountability loop opens door to higher morale. <http://newhope360.com/retailing/closing-your-accountability-loop-opens-doors-higher-morale>.

Step 2: Gain Commitment

To increase the likelihood that team members will actually do what they are supposed to, it is important for the leaders to bring together all related parties to think through potential challenges, determine priorities, reasoning and process for resolving issues. Involving the team in this process can increase their personal buy-in. You can also gain people accountability by putting things in writing, involving people that have authority and being specific regarding what you need and by when.²

Consider an “Accountability” Learning Program

To increase accountability competence, productivity and performance in your organization, consider the following courses as part of a learning program:

- Strategies for Effectively Leading Through Change
- Recognizing and Removing Barriers to Performance
- Exercising Influence
- Project Management Concepts
- Strategies for Execution

² Perry, M. (Mar 2008). PMO Results: Better people results through better people accountability. <http://www.projectmanagement.com/blog/PMO-Setup-T3---Tips-Tools-and-Techniques/?showDate=06-01-2008>

Step 3: Monitor and Track Progress

This is a no brainer. You need to know how you are doing so that you know what needs to be adjusted. Have frequent progress status meetings with your team and hold them accountable for their assigned tasks. In addition to adhering to the timelines, a leader is also accountable for tracking costs, reviewing the quality of the team's output, removing barriers and providing support mechanisms to sustain any change initiatives.

For further information on how we can help you and your organization, please contact Catherine McKernan at TidalShift.

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People will focus on what is being measured. Leaders need to work with their team members to integrate initiative objectives into individual performance management plans. Make sure that the objectives are meaningful and realistic. To ensure integration in the performance management process, 1) communicate metrics, 2) partner with team member's, and 3) make sure that the priority of key tasks are clearly understood in relation to the team members' other projects and daily responsibilities.

By addressing your staff's skill gaps through personal development, you can increase the accountability competence within your organization, which can further boost morale, enhance project engagement and improve overall performance.