



The Accountability

Set Expectations & Goals



About Assertiveness



Developing your assertive side can really help you in your quest to become more accountable. We sometimes picture assertive people as being inconsiderate and very demanding. Rather, assertive people express their feelings, needs, and opinions in a forthright manner. However, they stop short of the abrasive manner that is the hallmark of the aggressive person.

Often the best way to understand something is by comparison. People with poor self-esteem often have an inferiority complex. They choose passive responses to life. They feel helpless or insecure. They may feel put-upon and resentful, but have a difficult time saying “no.”

On the other hand, people with low self-esteem may also be arrogant, pompous, and presumptuous and seem to have a superiority complex. They meet life in an aggressive way.

The assertive person is someone who communicates with others on the best of all possible levels.

What is Accountability?

The Encarta Dictionary defines accountability as, “responsible to somebody or for something,” or as, “capable of being explained.” In a business sense, accountability is about being true to your word. It is also about being true to yourself and your personal expectations.

Accountability is an individual value. Real accountability cannot be forced; it must be voluntary. However, although accountability is really up to your individual employees, it is up to you to put the tools in their hands so that they can fulfill their potential.



The Building Blocks of Accountability

Transparency

All processes in an organization must be as transparent as possible. The basic process must be shared, and specific goals should be made public. Encourage your employees to ask questions and give them honest answers. Wouldn't you expect the same from them?

Honesty

Demand honesty from all employees at all levels. Everyone should be accountable to someone. Ensure that employees have access to the information that they need to make decisions based on real-time information.

Credibility

Ensure employees are in a position where they can have credibility. Your staff (managers, leaders, and executives in particular) need credibility to be accountable. They can build their credibility by sharing past, relevant experiences with staff.

Integrity

Integrity means following your values and being accountable day in and day out. It means acting consistently, so that people can rely on you, in good situations and in tough spots. Give your employees the support they need to be reliable in their values.

Trust

Employees must trust each other to make honest decisions, to do good work, to provide the best care for patients, and to be accountable for their decisions. Members of a team must also trust each other to ask questions and to test their accountability and reliability.

Top Ten Ways to Create and Share Ownership

- 1 Give employees the power to make decisions about how their job is done. When possible, give them say in the company's inner workings too.
- 2 Build rewards into the success of the company as well as individual departments. Make rewards based on results as well as actions.
- 3 Keep communication as open as possible. Share successes and failures.
- 4 Communication should be personal and intimate whenever possible – a meeting of 50 people with the managing physician is far more effective than a newsletter or memo.
- 5 When you hand off a project, let go completely. Be supportive and offer advice and resources, but don't problem solve. One way to do this is to focus on the end results only, not the details.
- 6 Whenever possible, let people speak for themselves. If a report must be prepared or a presentation must be given, pass it off to the project owner.
- 7 Let employees know what the long-term plan is. Give them options for how they want to be involved through ventures like career and succession planning.
- 8 Encourage a holistic approach through the practice. Focus on quality as well as quantity, customer satisfaction, and other emotion-based factors.
- 9 Invest in your employees. When possible, give them opportunities to learn and do new things. If possible, give them support to try new things – and don't say “I told you so” if it doesn't work.
- 10 Work on creating an atmosphere of cooperation and creativity rather than competition.

Goals with SPIRIT

Specific

Be specific about what you want or don't want to achieve. The result should be tangible and clearly described. “Finish a project” is ambiguous, whereas “Finish the warehouse reorganization” is specific.

Prizes

Reward yourself at different points in the goal, particularly if it's long term. If your goal is to develop a set of standard operating procedures, for example, you might have a small reward for each section that you complete and a larger reward at the end.

Individual

The goal must be something that you want to do. If your boss wants you to work on a project you have no interest in, you will find it difficult to engage. Find something to anchor yourself to the project and make it yours. For example, if you enjoy working with that particular team of people, or you will get to attend a conference in a different city, you can connect to it on an individual level.

Review

Review your progress periodically. Does the goal make sense? Are you stuck? Do you need to adjust certain parts of it?

Inspiring

Frame the goal positively. Make it fun to accomplish. You could make a poster of the end result, frame it, and post it on the wall.

Time-Bound

Give yourself a deadline for achieving the goal. If it's a big goal, split it into small parts and give yourself a deadline for each item.

Ways to Grow

Here are some other skills you might want to develop.

- Coaching
- Teamwork
- Delegation
- Leadership
- Time management/personal productivity
- Communication
- Goal setting
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Public speaking and presentation
- Planning
- Project management
- Relationship building
- Negotiation
- Assertiveness



Monitoring Techniques

<p>Assignment Log Identify milestones in the project or task and then develop a system for tracking what tasks are assigned to whom and when they are to be completed.</p>	<p>Personal Follow-Up Informal methods of follow-up are very effective. An assignment is more important than one you mention once but never monitor.</p>	<p>Sampling Techniques Depending on the type of work, you may ask for a sample of the work to monitor quality.</p>	<p>Progress Reports This is similar to an assignment log, except this time the onus is on the employee to include steps taken and difficulties.</p>
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