



Head & Heart is a collection of ideas, resources and frameworks to support your personal and professional development in leading yourself, others and organizations with head and heart.

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## From the Editor

### Dear Readers,

As we look off the coast of Italy or at the complicated and deeply entangled web of many (not all) financial and governmental institutions, it's often difficult to determine who is or was accountable for these tragedies. Through these mishaps, however, we painfully see and feel what an absence of accountability creates.

After each catastrophe or crisis, people busy themselves with new laws and governance to bring more accountability to future situations. And the pattern continues.

But throughout all of this, there are other stories that we hear, share and that energize us. These are the stories of ordinary people who have become accountable and have shown us the remarkable fruits that accountability bears.

If you are searching for more accountability, within yourself, your team and or your organization, read on!

*Dan Norenberg*

## Look Inside

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- How to Avoid Mixing Hippies and High Explosives

## Thought Leadership

### In Search of Accountability

*"Accountability starts with the captain of the ship."*

Leaders often ask me how they can create more accountability in their teams, their departments and their organizations. They cite examples of where things went wrong, paths got crossed or the obvious gets over-

an individual's response-ability. Use the table to determine where you initiate your accountability practices.

While rules and policies can create a degree of organizational clarity, en-

Engineered Accountability	Emotional Accountability
Outside-In Orientation	Inside-Out Orientation
Rationally Driven	Emotionally Compelling
Process Driven	Purpose Driven
Policy Dictated	Promises Demonstrated and Kept
Activity Oriented	Results Oriented
Compliance Monitored	Commitment Initiated
Prescribed Obligation	Personal Choice

gineered accountability (outside-in) feels superficial and is not taken seriously by members of the organization. High levels of engagement, innovative

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looked, sometimes with significant damage to their organization. "Why can't people simply be more accountable," they ask?

How can we anchor ourselves in emotional accountability?

Let's start with what accountability is. The seeds of accountability start to bloom when people take responsibility for things they are not officially accountable for. As individuals stretch the boundaries of their personal response-ability, accountability begins to emerge and manifest itself in others.

This starts with emotional maturity, behaving with a deep sense of personal responsibility that is seen and felt by others. Leaders who question, coach and encourage more than they instruct, are eager to be called into account. This is where emotional accountability begins.

The search for accountability starts on our own ship.

*Dan Norenberg*

## Leading Self

### Stepping Up

*"Personal accountability is opportunity"*  
Allan Forbes

Can you recall when you first felt accountable? I don't think I had ever asked myself this question until now. I had always thought that accountability and responsibility were more or less the same thing. But when I did ask the question, I was surprised at what came up in my mind.

I had just started a new role. I remember feeling profoundly different



about myself in the role. I knew that I had the opportunity to do something that held a deep interest for me and something in which I instinctively knew I had competence. I knew that I really wanted to make a contribution. I also realized that until that 'crucible moment', as Warren Bennis would say, I had only chosen to be responsible for tasks. I had not given myself permission to commit to the higher order of personal accountability.

With further hindsight, I can see that I had been searching for accountability for a while in my life, needing an opportunity to express myself more strongly and release myself from being defined by a series of responsibilities. Now, I can see that there is a need to feel an inner sense of personal accountability before you can commit

creatively to an external process of management accountability (clear expectation, specific date & time, ownership, share) and to go the extra mile.

I believe we can become imprisoned very easily by a set of responsibilities and choose to be the victim of our circumstances, unless we are able to catch a glimpse of the bigger prize of personal accountability and see its significance for our performance and well being.

So, as the Americans would say 'How do we step up?' As I visualize stepping up, I feel an immediate sea change in attitude is required. I step up by giving myself permission to see the world as an opportunity; for me

to decide what responsibilities and tasks I need to deliver to make a 'fitting' contribution. By stepping up, I am deciding that I am in charge of my destiny. I am not the snowflake in the avalanche!

As leaders, we must see how we can do our best to enable our talented potentials to learn what personal accountability feels like and how they can develop from it. We must support them in their search for accountability and ensure that we have leaders throughout our organizations capable and skilled to champion their unique power of accountability. It will only be by creating a culture of accountability that our organizations will be equipped to leverage fully their infinite range of opportunities.

*Ed Norman*

## Point of View

### A Count Ability?

I speak three languages reasonably well and a fourth pretty poorly. By modern European standards, that is good but not great. Future generations will laugh at me. I'm telling you this because, in all of the languages I speak (even poorly) some form of the saying "you can count on me" exists. With these words, I am literally saying "I will be accountable to you on this matter!" So, the commonality of this expression suggests it must be important. These are wonderful words in any language and knowing and feeling that you can count on somebody is magical. The interesting question, particularly for a leader is: how do I give you the **ability** to **count** on me? One key ingredient must be consistency.

If I have, over a longer period of time, consistently done what I say I am going to do, that consistency will help create trust in you. This is why it is so critical to be careful of promises you make; over-promising is not anybody else's fault but not delivering will be your's. If, on a very rare occasion, you cannot do what you said you would do, then say it early and be completely open and honest about why.

"You can count on me" (said in the language of your choice). Whether you believe me or not depends on your point of view.

*Michael Couch*

**"Delegating responsibility does not relinquish personal accountability"**

Jeffrey Benjamin

**Word Watch****Accountability**

"Can you explain for me the difference between 'accountability' and 'responsibility'?" This is a question I've been asked more than once in my coaching and consulting work with non-native English speakers. Easy to understand; not so easy to explain. Offering synonyms such as "liability" or "obligation" doesn't seem to help much. So let's take a closer look at the word "accountability".

It comes from the Latin *acomptare* (to account), a prefixed form of *computare* (to calculate), which in turn came from *putare* (to reckon). The concept of the word has its roots in activities related to governance and banking. However, the meaning changes depending on the context.

For example, "a politician is accountable to the people and the political body which elects her" implies a kind of moral obligation to the people but an obligation and liability of a legal nature to the political body. "A husband is accountable to his wife for the choices that he makes" clearly implies that the wife has expectations and will be disappointed if her husband's choices don't meet them adequately.

In both examples, there is a clear account-giving relationship between two or more individuals. It is further clear that to have accountability there must be accounting practices, i.e. some sort of follow-up process when party A will have to answer to party B or vice versa for their actions. The consequences, however, could look differently depending on the context. Therefore, the clearest and most encompassing synonym for me is simply, "answerable".

*Tim Nash*

**Leading Others****Who's Accountable Here?  
Somebody? Anybody? Nobody!**

"Somebody should see to it that this gets done!" "I agree! Actually, anybody could do that". "Yes, but nobody is accountable around here!" Sound familiar? Similar conversations occur every day in many organizations. They might be good for venting frustration but not for finding solutions. So, as a leader, what can you do?

Well, every time one of those three "body" words in the title occur, you could replace them with "I". However, you'll end up trying (and failing) to do everything yourself! You could hire as many people named Somebody, Anybody or Nobody as possible and everything would get done. But these people are in short supply. Why not hold yourself accountable for creating the conditions for others to experience the joy of being accountable for and owning their tasks?

Two big barriers to people accepting and embracing accountability are a lack of clear, realistic and aligned goals and a fear of being blamed when things go wrong. One has to do with structure, the other with atmosphere. Both are important to create accountability.

A clear, realistic and aligned goal means I understand the goal and its measurement, I believe I can achieve it (even if I must stretch myself to do so). "Clear" is actually the easy part. "Aligned" is the danger and opportunity for leaders. I have come across too many situations in which the process by which person A achieves their goals will get in the way of person

B achieving their goals. Or, in today's fast-paced business environment, conditions change and the goal no longer seems realistic. Who holds themselves accountable for a goal they no longer believe they can achieve? Leaders need to periodically talk with both their team members and other leaders in their own and other departments. Frequent dialogs help assure that what a team member is doing makes



sense in the context of the business environment and what other people in the organization are doing.

These dialogs are a good bridge to the atmosphere element of accountability. Talking about progress toward goals allows focus on the learning that is happening along the way. It allows small corrective steps or adjustments on the way. Most importantly, it is critical to avoid blame. Create an atmosphere focussed on learning rather than blame and people will accept their mistakes as well. If we aren't accountable we can avoid blame but we also avoid learning. As songwriter Billy Joel wrote "You're not the only one who's made mistakes. But they're the only thing that you can truly call your own".

*Michael Couch*

## Leading Organizations

### How to Avoid Mixing Hippies and High Explosives

*Accountability can be embedded into organizational structure and behaviors via "responsible autonomy"*

Gerard Fairtlough, a former CEO of Shell Chemicals, knows a thing or two about accountability in organizations, "You can't have a bunch of hippies running a plant full of explosive hydrocarbons." That's a provocative statement. Fairtlough continues, "but would you rather have the plant operated by trained professionals, for whom pride in safe working is part of their personal identity, or by people who only work safely because they are afraid of the boss?" Fairtlough's experience is that safety and discipline are rarely achieved through a strict hierarchy. The biggest barrier is the design of most organizational structures works against accountability. Their origin is in classic command and control structures. Ideas and accountability move up and down the organization. Silos appear, with very little communication and shared innovation between them. One answer is to decentralize. Motorola is a typical example. A tightly controlled, centralized business in 1980s, it decentralized in the early 1990s to spur growth. This happened, but head office struggled with their loss of control. So Motorola centralized again in 1998 – laying off 25,000 people in the process.

So many companies retrofitted what McKinsey called the "matrix overlay", designed to improve flexibility and pace of response. For this to happen, individuals had to move to deeper levels of accountability in hierarchies where it was only skin deep to start with. Unsurprisingly, this led to conflict

and confusion, logjams of reports, turf battles and evaporating accountability. Through all these changes, organizations still haven't overcome their structural Achilles heel: an addiction to hierarchy.

One way to break the addiction is to create a culture of "responsible autonomy", argues Gerard Fairtlough. Responsible autonomy is creating ways in which the outcomes achieved are not externally controlled. Instead, the outcomes are monitored and action is taken to remedy poor outcomes:

**How do our systems and processes support responsible autonomy? How can we put people with problems in touch with people who might have solutions?** This transfers knowledge and builds trust. The more people do this the greater the snowball effect in their willingness to share knowledge.

**When we make people accountable, to what extent do our leaders' behaviors allow it to flourish?** Or rephrased: how do our leaders strike the balance between excessive control (where accountability evaporates) and insufficient control (where self-interested people get away with an inaccurate picture of their performance)? The first one is Stalinism; the second leads to cases like Enron.

The consequences for performance of not finding a balanced approach are severe. *Steven Hunt*

## Food for Thought

**"If you have a manager and aren't clear about what you are held accountable for, you might want to take responsibility for finding out."**

Christopher Avery

## Leadership Facts and Figures

Keep in mind that authority, resources and ability to achieve the goal still vary however, and need to be in place to create accountability.

– From Accountability by Paul Gillard, PhD & Rachel Radwinsky, PhD



## Great Learning Locations

Finding the right off-site learning location can greatly enhance the learning environment and serve as a positive permanent anchor in sustaining learning. Follow the link to learning locations that have worked well for us.

Send us your best locations and we'll continually update this resource.

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