

## Episode 81 – Embracing Accountability

**“Each day you are leading by example. Whether you realize it or not or whether it's positive or negative, you are influencing those around you.”**

**— Rob Liano**

Too many people think no one is watching them so they think, “What does it matter if I cut corners or spend extra time on my cellphone versus working on a project or going to visit a new customer?” Who will notice? You should! Accountability begins with you. You may take it for granted and people may not tell you but they do pay attention to what you do and what you do not do. You can't expect hold others accountable if you cannot hold yourself accountable first.

### What is Accountability?

Accountability, in its simplest terms, is doing what you say you are going to do. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accountability is “an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions.” Being accountable means you are taking 100 percent responsibility for your results – good or bad. When you are accountable, you make the decision to “own” your part in a situation versus playing the victim of circumstance. The victim mindset is one of complaining, blaming, and making excuses as to why others are responsible for your results or lack of results – you are disowning it!



**"Accountability breeds response-ability." – Stephen Covey**



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I think people get afraid of being held accountable because they fear the consequences. I like to think by holding myself accountable for my actions I am holding myself to a higher standard to better myself. When you hold yourself accountable for your actions without placing blame on others, you have raised the bar. You will be more intentional with your approach to things to get the desired results.

### **Why Do People Avoid Accountability?**

There are many reasons that you might avoid being held accountable. One reason might be “blame”. It doesn’t feel good when someone blames you for the results achieved. You do not want to be the reason why something did not turn out the way it was anticipated. The second reason is the fear of failure. Too many of us get caught up in worrying about what other people are thinking and saying about us. You may be afraid of failing. In most situations, the world as you know it will not end. What matters is that you take time to review what went wrong and learn from your mistakes to hopefully do better in the future. The third reason is the fear of success. What happens to those who take accountability? They are often given more responsibility because these are the people who get things done or make things happen. They are held to a higher standard and have higher expectations of their performance. Growth comes with success and taking on more responsibility. As you reach one level, you are challenged with new opportunities to help you learn and grow.

### **Why Don't We Hold People Accountable?**

Sometimes I think people don't hold others accountable because it involves having an uncomfortable conversation or that they may not be liked. Trouble is, if you do not deal with it as soon as possible it can have a significant impact on your team members. Your star performers will be the ones picking up the pieces. You will end up lowering the standard or bar because you know that they will not deliver on what is expected of them just to keep peace. What does that solve? It ends up festering division in your team and lowering the performance level of the person you should be holding accountable.

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### **How Do We Start Making Accountability a Priority?**

You start making accountability a priority when you can communicate a clear vision as to what you want to achieve. It is important to define roles and expectations so people have something to measure their progress by. Set a SMART (Specific, Measurable,

Achievable, Realistic, and Timely) goals. This way you have something to measure your progress by. Remember what gets measured gets managed. It also gives us something to aim towards. Otherwise, how would you know if you achieved it or not. Make sure those around you know what accountability means to you and that it is not about consequences versus ownership. Are you able to police yourself and take the actions you need to even if no one is watching?

### **Why Should You Be Accountable?**

You need to recognize that you have more power over your circumstances than you give yourself credit for. You cannot change the past; what happened in the past is in the past. We can all think about all the things we could have done, should have done, or would have done. What are you going to do today to create your best day and set yourself up for a brighter future?

Accountability is about “owning it” instead of letting circumstances own you. When you follow through on what you say you are going to do, you are being accountable. You become seen as a leader or role model. Being accountable for your choices and actions is about being dependable and reliable which also makes you trustworthy. You also boost your credibility in the marketplace. You will never be recognized for all the great things you do in life if you do not put yourself out there to learn what you are capable of being, doing, or having. By choosing to be accountable, you will be more focused and intentional with the action you take as you know that every choice makes an impact as to whether you are getting closer to your goal.

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Set expectations for yourself of what you wish to achieve and by when. Block off time for the items on your to-do list in a calendar. A running list of to do items does not have a timeline so you may be continuously adding to the list. If you want things to get done, put it in the calendar. Don't overschedule yourself. It is okay to so say "no" when you are focused on getting what you need done.

I have heard too many excuses from people like it has been a life long problem...if so in the words of Dr. Phil...how is that working for you? Stop right now and choose to own what you can do something about. No more excuses! Businesses and organizations are looking for someone who will embrace accountability to get desired results.

Are you up to the challenge? Opportunities open for those who are accountable for their actions.

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