

LEADING WITH  
**YOUR  
LIFE  
EQUATION**

How to Be  
Indestructible  
Indispensable  
& Unstoppable

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# ACCOUNTABILITY

**STARTS**

**WITH YOU**

Specific exercises and actions that will demonstrate and reinforce **Full Accountability**.

## ACCOUNTABILITY STARTS WITH YOU.

**Full Accountability** happens when you hold others to the same solid standard as you do for yourself, and they do the same with you. When you decide whom to put in certain roles, be sure they understand that accountability is a Team effort. Then cultivate a culture that supports this universally accepted approach. When you do, you become indispensable!

Accountability is at the heart of a motivated Team concept. Be sure that each member recognizes the importance of their role as part of a bigger picture—the Team and its mission. Use this workbook to understand accountability, why it matters, and how to build this vital quality in yourself and others.

**“You can spend time placing blame or you can be effective. It’s one or the other.”**

– Philip Jalufka  
“Leading With Your Life Equation:  
How to Be Indestructible, Indispensable & Unstoppable”

# ACCOUNTABILITY VERSUS RESPONSIBILITY.

“Responsibility” is often used interchangeably with “accountability”, but that’s not accurate. Responsibility reflects your duties, those tasks you’ve agreed to handle.

Accountability takes place after the task is completed—or whatever the outcome is. You are fully accountable for the results of what you do with regard to your responsibilities.

**Responsibility = Accepting a duty or task**

**Accountability = Results for your responsibility**

Accountability is something that requires you to be fully committed even when others aren’t watching. It’s not situational or occasional. Full accountability is taking ownership of what you do, both right and wrong. As a Team member, you hold yourself and others accountable because you know the importance of every contribution to the outcome.

# ACCOUNTABILITY MATTERS.

When you hold yourself and others fully accountable, you accept your failures with your successes, and learn from both. In a Team environment, accountability delivers valuable results:

- Productivity increases when time isn’t wasted on finger-pointing.
- People are willing to take on more responsibilities without the fear of repercussions.
- Better Team morale arises from the supportive environment.
- Innovative thinking and problem-solving are encouraged.
- When each member of your Team can count on the others, trust is strengthened. The result is stronger relationships, which leads to keeping your Team together.

# ACCOUNTABILITY CHECKLIST.

Take time and score yourself honestly on each statement.

Do this exercise for anyone on your motivated Team, have them do it for themselves, and then compare the perceptions. You could discover some training opportunities!

<b>Always</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

- I properly plan and document my course of action.
- I share my action plan with a Teammate.
- I keep working until the job is done.
- I ask for help when I need it.
- I anticipate obstacles and communicate them.
- I know where my resources are.
- I alert the appropriate person when I am not going to meet a deadline.
- I do what is needed without requiring supervision or reminders.
- I own my outcomes, good and bad.
- I know what is expected of me.
- I don't allow myself to offer excuses.
- I don't accept excuses from others.
- I clearly communicate my expectations.
- I model the accountability I expect of others.
- I ask for feedback on my execution.
- I willingly admit to others when I have fallen short of the expectation.

**TOTAL SCORE** \_\_\_\_\_

>52: High accountability

44-51: Good accountability

34-43: Fair accountability

<33: Low accountability

**"An excuse is a long-winded way of saying, 'Here's why I failed.' A solution says, 'I learned.'"**

– Philip Jalufka

"Leading With Your Life Equation: How to Be Indestructible, Indispensable & Unstoppable"



# HOW ACCOUNTABLE ARE YOU?

Answer these questions honestly to check your accountability. Then, keep going to learn how to improve.

1. A member of your Team doesn't complete a task and offers an excuse that there wasn't enough time. What do you say?
  - a. "Well, thanks for letting me know. How about I give you another day or two?"
  - b. "Give me what you've got and I'll get it done."
  - c. "I wish you had let me know sooner. This puts us in a tough situation."
  - d. "Excuses don't provide a solution, just a delay. Let's look at what you could have done differently to meet this deadline."
  
2. You learn from a client that one of your direct reports didn't follow through with a client's request, even though your Team member assured you it was done. How do you handle it?
  - a. Advise the person that they must do what the client requested.
  - b. Communicate your dissatisfaction with the dishonesty, how your trust and that of the client have been eroded. Let your Team member know that you are assigning the client to someone more trustworthy.
  - c. Develop a process that requires workers to track their communication with clients and coworkers to prevent the situation from recurring.
  - d. Put the worker on notice that any similar actions in the future will be grounds for immediate dismissal.
  
3. You review the end-of-quarter sales report and discover a significant drop in the past few weeks. How do you respond?
  - a. You're surprised because the numbers for the previous two months followed expectations.
  - b. You had a suspicion that sales had dipped but not to this extent.
  - c. You aren't surprised and have proactively developed a plan to address the reasons for the downturn.
  - d. You gather your Team and discuss how to improve sales in the coming quarter.

CONTINUED →

4. You promised your Team that you would provide training sessions twice a month, but haven't made the time to deliver on that promise. How do you communicate that to your group?
  - a. Apologize for not providing the training as promised and present a schedule that's more realistic.
  - b. Accept responsibility for not getting around to the task and tell them you'll make it a priority when you can.
  - c. Ask the group to develop a training schedule that they want and you will get it organized.
  - d. Tell them that you're busy trying to keep up with management's demands on your time.
  
5. One of your top Team members is habitually late to a regular meeting. What do you do?
  - a. Advise the person in private that lateness is not acceptable.
  - b. Explain the consequences of tardiness to the group and then follow through with anyone who doesn't comply.
  - c. Remind the individual a half-hour before the meeting is scheduled to start.
  - d. Lock the door at the usual start to the meeting and don't let that person come in.

**How did you do?**

Score yourself according to this chart.

Question	a	b	c	d
1	1	2	3	4
2	2	3	1	4
3	1	2	4	3
4	4	2	3	1
5	3	4	2	1

**YOUR ACCOUNTABILITY SCORE:**

**15-20:** You are an accountability master! You communicate expectations and hold yourself and others accountable.

**8-14:** You've got a good start on accountability. There's room to be firmer and more consistent. Ask your Team members if they need clarification on expectations.

**Less than 8:** Get ready to stand up and accept ownership of what you've done, which includes what you haven't yet accomplished. Show your Team what it means to hold yourself fully accountable, to be the role model for them. Then, make sure you consistently keep them to the same high standard.

# LET'S GET WORKING!

## Improve communication.

An essential part of accountability is living up to the expectations and standards that are set. If you or anyone in your group is unclear about those specifics, you're setting yourself up for excuses and finger-pointing. The solution is to plan, document, and share. Make your plans. Write them down. Share your plans with others so they can hold you accountable.

## Follow these tips to keep everyone on the right track.

- When giving an assignment, provide details, timeline, and expected outcomes.
- Use the Critical Path Method (Chapter 7, "Leading With Your Life Equation") to outline the steps required for successfully completing the task, and assign duties to specific individuals with deadlines.
- Remind all Team members involved to communicate obstacles, changes, or other challenges as soon as they become aware of them.
- Ask each person to describe their assignment and how they plan to manage it.
- Ask each Team member how they view this action, whether it fits into the "Why", to ensure that their plans are on track with the mission.

## Deliver helpful feedback.

- Present an After Action Review (Chapter 12, "Leading With Your Life Equation") that allows everyone involved to provide input on the task, process, and outcome.
- Identify ways to improve, both individually and as a Team.
- Acknowledge each person's positive contributions and strengths.
- Properly reward Team members, as applicable, for achieving milestones.

**"Own your failures. Learn from them.  
Each mistake is an opportunity  
to learn and become a better person."**

– Philip Jalufka,  
[www.philipjalufka.com](http://www.philipjalufka.com)

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