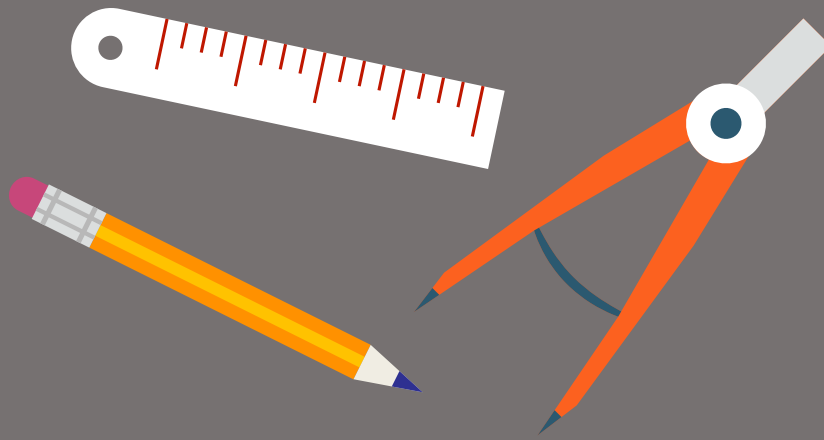


15 Proven Accountability Tools You Can Use



PRACTICAL TOOLS

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Creating a strong culture of employee accountability can't be done overnight. That's the bad news.

The good news is that you don't have to start absolutely from scratch.

Some of the best companies and organizations have shared the resources they have used on their own journeys to employee accountability.

This report is a compilation of "the best of the best" in accountability leadership from organizations as diverse as Disney and the U.S. Department of Energy - and many others.

The key to accountability is agreeing on desired results and reporting eventual outcomes.

Here are 15 examples of accountability tools to help you get there:

1. Values Stories: Encouraging employees to tell the tale

What do leaders value in the way they behave at work? What actions do they take to show their values about their relationship to their co-workers and the company?

Leaders and other workers can dig back into their work history to find situations in which their values, including accountability, showed through their actions.

Encourage employees to develop these stories (putting them in writing is an option) and then be able to tell them as a quick (no

more than a couple of minutes) example of their commitment to personal and company values, including accountability.

2. Cross-functional feedback sessions: Getting employees out of their own groups

Accountability requires honest, straight-forward feedback among co-workers.

Encouraging that feedback within a group is step one. Step two is increasing that feedback to include employees from other groups within the company.

For example, employees see several different perspectives on your company's goods or services when representatives from operations, sales, customer service, quality, safety, etc. are gathered in one room for an honest, respectful feedback exchange.

This type of face-to-face communication will help build greater cooperation and accountability.

3. Strengths builder: Less correcting, more developing

Surveys show the most successful managers leverage and develop their employees' strengths and positive characteristics rather than correcting employees' weaknesses or negative characteristics.

Managers identify employees' core strengths and develop a written plan with the employee to build upon them.

4. Targeting motivators: Build on what makes employees tick

This keys in on intrinsic motivation, the actions driven by internal rewards.

What do employees take the most pride in?

Managers should note what drives employees naturally, and then list ways to deploy the employees that appeal to their individual intrinsic motivators.

5. Success stories: Excellent performance with accountability

What does it look like when an employee does a great job?

If employees are going to be accountable and there will be consequences (good and bad) for their work, they'll want to know exactly what is expected from them.

These success stories describe what it looks like when an employee goes above and beyond. They're not about achieving "average" or "acceptable." They're about being "exceptional" as an employee.

6. Mission statements: Make one and share it!

Most organizations put a good deal of thought and effort into developing a mission statement that is authentic and inspirational.

Then what happens? It sits on a shelf – or somewhere on the company's homepage - for the rest of the world to read.

But how often are employees reminded of these statements? How do employees' daily tasks fit in the mission? What is it that an individual employee is doing today to fulfill the mission? How do an employee's actions represent the company's values?

It's always good to dust off these statements from time to time, and to find a way to relate them to employees and their work.

7. Strategic Plans: Taking the mission and running with it

An organization's strategic plans determine their objectives, fulfill their mission and decide what direction they should move in. It is a foundational document for all planning, budgeting, execution, control and evaluation.

The document should build consensus around organizational goals.

8. Performance Agreements: The nuts and bolts

This document is co-authored by management and an employee. It provides a process for measuring performance and therefore establishing accountability.

Expectations are set for each party. Specific delivery dates are set.

9. Accountability Reports: The view from the top

These are annual reports that include program and financial information, such as audited financial statements and performance measures on key company goals.

This is a management tool as opposed to one given to employees about their specific tasks.

However, it can be shared with employees to give them the big, overall picture for the organization.

10. Performance-Based Contracts: Another way to tell them what's expected

These documents build in performance expectations at the beginning of the process.

However, they allow employees to be innovative in how they deliver the desired end product.

They thread the needle between setting expectations and micromanagement.

11. Self-Assessments: How is the company really doing?

The company monitors its own performance and evaluates its ability to meet objectives and improve its processes.

The information goes into a self-assessment report. These are the basis for continued improvement.

They are brief and include charts and graphs wherever possible. The report should address strengths and weaknesses and include an action plan to correct the weaknesses.

12. Performance Reviews: More than just 'the meeting'

Employee Performance Reviews are often considered to be only annual events.

They should be ongoing processes of planning and monitoring performance.

Actual performance is compared to planned performance. Concerns can be addressed, modifications can be made to performance expectations and future direction can be planned.

These serve as formal documentation of performance.

13. Policies and Procedures documents: How we do what we do

These are the policies and procedures used to ensure programs achieve their desired results, resources consistent with the mission are available, care is taken not to waste resources, and reliable and timely information is reported.

14. Equity Statements: Define “who”

These help define the “who” of proposed action, including who would benefit and how - in the short and long-term; who would bear what costs; and who would be accountable to whom, for what.

15. Accountability Meetings: Status reports on steroids

The purpose of the meeting is not to evaluate employee performance, but to improve future performance by using lessons learned.

These meetings are conducted one-on-one and are held weekly. They focus on what has been accomplished, any on-going problems and what will be accomplished in the upcoming week.

Written notes on those three areas are made before the meeting. While those notes can be kept for reference purposes (and to be used at the next meeting), formal reports aren't necessary.