



# WHO'S

# RESPONSIBLE?

How accountability can foster continued success in any business environment

BY DUSTIN WEAVER, PMP

A Right of Way Director walks into the room fuming and wants to know who dropped the ball. If anyone has ever been in this situation, it can be paralyzing. Although no one ever wants to be in this dilemma, accountability is one of the most important aspects for each individual within an organization. What exactly does it mean to be accountable? The dictionary defines it as willingness to accept responsibility. Warren Buffett further explains accountability as a discipline, which becomes an individual's obligation to take responsibility for all of their own actions *and* their team's actions.

This was further emphasized during a recent opportunity I had to interview two well-known executives in the oil and gas industry on the importance of accountability and strategy. We discussed challenges that companies face in today's market, the positive influences and outcomes that a mentality of accountability can bring, and how companies can redirect their strategies to achieve success.

I found it interesting that, although both executives have been in the industry for more than 20 years, their backgrounds and career paths were quite different. One was fanatically focused on very specific aspects of the business, while the other had a global vision for his organization. Despite these vast differences, the executives seemed to agree on one thing: the necessity of accountability in obtaining objectives. Both agreed that with accountability in place, success is possible with a well-planned, executed and integrated strategic model.

Key Concepts

For me, accountability has always meant having a sense of excellence and integrity about every task you perform, no matter how small. Pastor Joel Osteen once said, "It is performing the small task with excellence that prepares us for the larger opportunities in our destinies." Similarly, both executives I interviewed were in favor of having their team embrace this sense of excellence. They each empowered their teams to take on the responsibility of being held accountable for their individual decisions. Of course, the weight of responsibility can be overwhelming, but there are three key concepts that can help manage and guide situations to successful outcomes.

1) Create a Plan

It is essential to create a plan that points and guides your team toward the same goal. This can be further achieved by setting parameters for each team member. This plan must also include buy-in with the right stakeholders to get things moving in the right direction.

2) Trust Your Team

In order to succeed, you must trust your team to take on tasks independently. This helps drive an individual's internal desire for self-efficacy. For this to work, the team must be committed to the strategy set in motion and willing to be held responsible for their specific tasks and duties. Accountability needs to transcend higher than just the boss. It should be an individual's "internal schema" of thoughts toward the team, project and themselves.

3) Revisit Your Key Goals

Be sure to address current challenges and let your team problem-solve the solutions together. Organizations also need to take the time to learn from the lessons of the past, and occasionally revisiting your key goals will help with that. In every facet of our lives, we depend on past experiences to help guide our future decisions. Applying that same concept at work is just good business.



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