

Episode 87: How do you hold yourself accountable?

I often think that those who talk about holding others accountable, are those who hold themselves least to it, You need to understand what it is to be accountable and commit to it.

1. What is accountability?

Webster's dictionary says: an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for your actions.

In business, it is not an either/or – it's both. You must do what you say you are going to do.

You must also be willing to be held accountable for both your actions and your team's.

We're all familiar with the 5 stages - Denial, Blame, Excuses, Anxiety & Accountability.

At work, however, going through these stage in public will cause you harm.

Being seen as accountable and accepting responsibility is huge.

2. How to go about being accountable.

The basis of being accountable is how you work and how you appear to work.

Whenever you are asked to do something you should follow these 5 steps:

- ✓ Clarify the task and expected output
- ✓ Be sure who will want to see the output of the task
- ✓ Understand what they are expecting to get
- ✓ Agree an end date
- ✓ Document and feedback

You have to produce the deliverable, on the date to the right person.

If you can't get there, then you need to give feedback on the issues and problems.

If you succeed in the task, share the glory. If you fail, accept the responsibility. Document and give feedback either way.

3. What can go wrong?

Often when someone is said not to be accountable it is not really true.

What you may be hearing is that the output and the request were not in sync.

That means the receiver didn't get what they expected.

This is why the documentation and feedback loop are so key.

The worst thing would be to publically go through the stages of accountability: Denial, Blame, Excuses and Anxiety.

Clearly you may have all of these but don't do them in public. Remember, the cover-up often looks worse than the crime.

Bottom Line: If you say you're going to do something, do it. If for some reason you're unable to, own up to it.

