

CREATING ACCOUNTABILITY

If accountability is an issue in your team - in other words, people are not prepared to take responsibility for their work or the results of the team - then it is important to start by looking at your own leadership style and how you might be inadvertently creating this behaviour in the team. There are 6 key things you can do to encourage accountability in the team:

1) Check you're not micro-managing

How much control do you think you need over specific tasks? Are you checking in on work and so micro-managing your team members? If so, this can strip them of accountability. To what extent do you think you're micro-managing? Tick the relevant box:

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Not at all

Sometimes

Yes, that's me!

If you've ticked the yes box, think about:

What tasks you could let go of a bit more, whilst still feeling informed?

How can your team members keep you informed so that you don't need to keep checking in on decisions or plans of action?

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2) Are you just giving your team the answers?

When your team members come to you for a decision or advice, do you just give it to them, even if you've done so before? This can be a quick fix for them and it feels good to be helpful, but are you just firefighting all the time? Tick the relevant box:

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Not at all

Sometimes

Yes, that's me!

If you've ticked the yes box, what questions could you ask your team members to help them come up with their own answers themselves? For example: "What do you think we should do?" or "What options have you considered?"

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3) Are you expecting a lack of accountability?

How involved do you expect to be in decisions and tasks on a day to day basis? Do you expect people to involve you in most things? Do you get involved in conflicts between team members? Do you expect the team to come to you about most things they're working on? Tick the relevant box:

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Not at all

Sometimes

Yes, that's me!

How can you turn your expectations of the team into them being accountable for more?

What behaviours you can demonstrate to reinforce that expectation?

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4) Are you making all the decisions?

Do you find yourself making all the decisions for the team, no matter how big or small they may be? Do you find that when you are out of the office, decisions get delayed until you come back or you're interrupted whilst you are away?

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Not at all

Sometimes

Yes, that's me!

How can you change the way decisions are made in the team? Agree with the team what decisions they can make on their own / in your absence and when they should escalate to you.

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5) Do you demonstrate a lack of composure?

Do you express how you feel about things really overtly to the team? Do you sometimes express negative emotions a bit too openly with your team? Tick the relevant box:

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Not at all

Sometimes

Yes, that's me!

How might this impact your team and their willingness to be accountable? When a leader lacks composure, the team may fear making the wrong decision in case they experience your disapproval or frustration.

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6) Are you closed to others' ideas?

Do you shut down other people's ideas? Do you think there is a right and a wrong way to do things? Are you closed to ideas that are not your own?

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Not at all

Sometimes

Yes, that's me!

How can you be more open to other ways of doing things? Can you ask your team for their ideas about how to approach something and remain genuinely open to their thoughts? This will encourage accountability in the team.

COACHING

What insights does this give you about your leadership style and the levels of accountability in your team?

What actions will you take to increase the level of accountability in your team?