

# Blind Spots Holding You Back from Success:

## #5 Accountability & Results

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BLINDSPOT NAVIGATOR



# #5

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# #5

# Blind Spots

## Accountability

### What is Accountability?

According to the Webster's dictionary, accountability means, an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions.

Accountability is when you can trust people to deliver on a project or a commitment when they said they would. The second part of accountability is having faith in yourself to deliver on the promises you made so others will trust you. Accountability is what builds trust in our relationships because we are ensuring we take responsibility for our promises. We are respecting others and ensuring they know they can count on us in the future. Accountability is the actions we take when a promise is broken, an excuse is made, or a deadline casually pushed out. We can choose to not hold someone accountable and ignore the issue or we can step up and hold them accountable by having the hard conversations with them or ourselves. When we do not take responsibility for ensuring our promises are met, we cannot successfully demand others take responsibility for theirs. It starts with us through example and ends with us through communication of expectations.

*"Building a results-based organization starts at the bottom of an organization."*

# My Story

Accountability used to be an issue for me because I lacked trust in others.

I wasn't able to hold people accountable because I never trusted them and if I couldn't trust them, I couldn't have the tough conversation to hold them accountable. Instead, I would say things like, "Can you just get that done for me?" I wouldn't explain that I needed it done by a certain time and ask if they were able to do it. I didn't hold people accountable to the task at hand because I didn't trust they'd stay if I held them to a deadline or a level of excellence. When I had my IT company, we used tickets, which would not be closed on time for one reason or another. Not because people didn't want to get them done, they wanted to do the work. The problem was, I wasn't clear about my expectations because I didn't want to create conflict. I figured if I created conflict, they were going to leave the company



When you are not being accountable to yourself, you do not take responsibility for what you promise to do because you don't trust the process to get it done. You won't hold yourself accountable if you have limiting beliefs about yourself, don't care about your performance, and do not trust yourself to do the job you promised to do. It's easier to let the deadline pass, to only do the minimum of effort, or to produce at a level of, "Good enough," than it is to have tough conversations with yourself and those who rely on you. If you don't do what you said you were going to do, it affects other people who will either have to initiate a difficult conversation with you or do the work themselves.

Limiting beliefs like, I'm not good enough will always come into play when we fail to be accountable because if I'm not good enough, I don't trust the process. If I don't trust the process, how am I going to hold myself accountable? It's a cycle, which starts when we agree to do something we don't think we can do because we feel pressured or it's part of our job and we are scared others will find out we can't do it. It is the same reason why we don't start the task and hope it goes away because we believe we can't figure it out proving we don't belong in the role, in the relationship, or with the company. We hope it will go away because our manager won't want to have the hard conversation and will eventually give the task to someone else to complete.

There is also the other side of the coin where we want to try lots of different things. We start projects but then they get hard, boring, or something more interesting comes along and squirrel, we're off





on another project. People who suffer from shiny object syndrome won't hold themselves accountable because they are on to the next shiny thing, which is a better idea than the last one, promise. And of course, nothing ever gets done.

A lot of people, like myself, are a quick start. My Colby index says I will start new projects on an ongoing basis because I get bored easily. However, it also says I will finish them. My history shows I'm naturally a great starter but I'm not as good a finisher. I have worked hard to hold myself accountable and ensure I finish what I start and stay focus. I still stray off the road after a shiny object or two, however, I have a great coach who holds me accountable. He shines the light on those shiny objects to show me that they aren't part of the plan, and they don't fit, they blind me from my goal. He helps me to keep myself accountable and to complete the work I set out to do.



# Behaviours

Your blind spots affect every aspect of your life, how you show up in relationships, and how you react to others. Every single one of your actions causes either a positive or negative impact on others, who then react either positively or negatively towards you. This cycle can cause an issue to escalate out of control or an emotionally charged situation to explode. In a professional environment these reactions can impact a person's future opportunities for advancement and the team's effectiveness to succeed. As a leader, you will need the tools to understand the situation and how to defuse any negative emotional build up.

**What does accountability  
in an organization look like?**



# Avoiding Accountability Behaviour

We behave in certain ways when we aren't held accountable to the people on our teams, which affects our ability to succeed. Leaders who avoid accountability will create ineffective teams because they are creating an apathetic environment of mediocrity. Here are some of the behaviours avoiding accountability creates in people.

## In Sales:

Every single salesperson hates to be held accountable, and yet, the nature of their job means they have to be accountable all the time. If they are not accountable to themselves, their manager will be accountable to them, which means they will have to sit through tough conversations to explain why they didn't meet their quotas, targets, or promises.

When it comes time to set sales goals some salespeople may set low goals by saying they'll bring in \$50 000 in sales this quarter when they have been bringing in \$70 000 to \$120 000 the last two quarters. This ensures they won't be held accountable if they do





not do as well as in the past. Others will come in at \$30 000 every quarter and won't push themselves to achieve higher because they don't want to be held accountable for better results. The blind spots they might be experiencing are feelings of not being good enough, avoiding conflict, or a lack of trust in the process or themselves.

Lots of salespeople have a problem with being on time and they don't hold themselves accountable to the meeting times they set. If you tell a customer you'll show up at 3:00 but you show up at 3:15 without letting them know you were going to be late, you are not holding yourself accountable and you've broken trust with your client or potential client. They do not worry about being late because they start out running late, it's a way of life to be going full speed from one thing to the next just to look busy. They are not focusing on what they need to focus on. They are doing something to show they are good enough, they may not be getting the sales but look at how hard they are working, something will close if I just stay busy. In the end the only result they show is empty promises and unmet goals.

## **In Management:**

Leaders who are unable to hold people accountable, are trying to hide a limiting belief. Maybe they were pushed too much to achieve or complete tasks and they don't want to make others feel the way they felt when being held accountable. For example, you

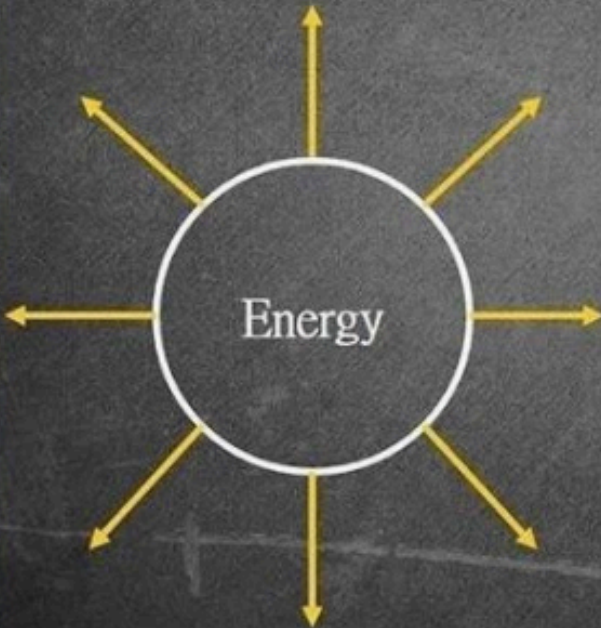
*“ Teams which are results driven achieve more because they are not focused only on their individual goals and they work together to deliver the expected results. ”*

see parents who push their kids. "Do homework, read five books, do these extra-curricular activities, and you must go to Harvard." It's push, push, push, push. When the child grows up, they go the opposite direction and choose not to push others to achieve or produce. By doing so they avoid the accountability conversation.

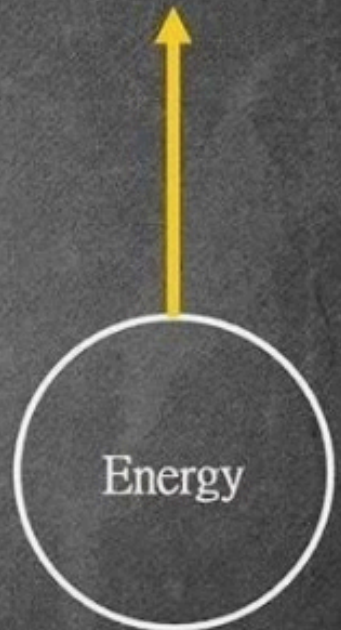
Then there are the leaders who don't hold themselves accountable. They may go from one idea to the next without ever committing to a process, so they get nowhere. They do a lot of busy work without being accountable to producing results and in the end, they let others down. Since they are always changing their minds about what their team needs to do, they break trust with their team.

Leaders will say, "We're doing something different again and we are going to get this result from it." The team will say, "You said

### Pursuing everything



### Focus on one thing



this to me last time and there was no result, I don't believe there will be one this time." The leader basically broke all trust with their team and that's huge because there is no accountability without a strong foundation of trust. So, if a leader breaks that trust, they will need to do all the work to rebuild it, which is harder once trust is broken.

If there is no trust there will be no commitment and accountability becomes, "I need this now. Where is it? I asked for this yesterday." This opens teams up to fear-based behaviours and lower productivity. This is how important it is to build trust, be committed to the plan, and hold yourself and others accountable to completing their parts. Less, if what they want will lead to the organization's desired results. They are more concerned with their own careers, goals, and desires than what is best for the team or the organization. A leader who is not committed is always looking for the next opportunity for them instead of producing the best results for the one they have.



## In Service:

Customer Service is about delivering what you promised, on time and on budget. However, sometimes the company is unable to deliver on its promise, this is when customer service needs to amend the promise to stay accountable. There are two things a company can do. One, they can choose not to deliver anything, "I can't do this because I'm overworked." Second thing they can do is call up the client and say, "I won't be able to get the deliverable sent today. Would you mind if I send it tomorrow?" This is what accountability is about. It is open communication to ensure the customer understands what is happening and ensuring you do your best to deliver what you promised.

Accountability and customer service are about managing expectations to find a compromise when you are unable to deliver on your promise. For example, if I was taking a car into service today because I am planning a trip for tomorrow, the person at the desk doesn't know I'm planning to go away. All the service professional knows is, I need my car serviced. However, I'm holding them accountable because if that car doesn't get done, I can't go on my trip, even though I haven't communicated this to the service professional. If they say it's going to be one o'clock and when I show up at one, the car hasn't even been looked at, there is going to be an accountability problem. Had the service person called me to advise me there was going to be a delay, I could communicate my intention of leaving tomorrow and he would be able to manage the priorities of the shop accordingly.

Customer service's job is to manage the accountability of the company.

*" Pivoting is about course correction based on outside circumstances. Following the next shiny trend and abandoning past plans is not being accountable or committed to your success. "*

# Accountable Behaviour

When we are held accountable, it shows and everyone wins because stuff gets done. Leaders who hold their people accountable have boundaries, clear expectations, and drive results. Opportunity flows to accountable teams because they work together to get the job done.

## **In Sales:**

When salespeople are held accountable they hit targets and set new higher ones because they are driven to improve their results. They don't need to be micro managed or waste time on bed check morning meetings, because they get up and start their day knowing what they need to do and committed to getting it done. These are the high performers who understand what their job is and love to do it.

You can tell if a salesperson is accountable because they show up, they do the work, and they obtain the results they promised they would.





*“ If you have the right peer group, whom you trust, you won't want to let them down and they will hold you accountable to your commitments.”*

## **In Management:**

Leaders who hold themselves accountable are clear on their directives and have set deadlines, which they will meet. They understand what it takes to get the results they are expected to get and keep themselves on task. They are willing to take responsibility when they fail and strive to do better the next day.

Leaders who hold their teams accountable, clearly communicate why they are asking for each deliverable, the expectations, and deadlines. If a team member doesn't meet the expectations, they will have the tough conversation to hold them accountable to the job and expected results.

## **In Service:**

Client service teams who are held accountable understand the customer's needs and the needs of the organization. They are able to solve problems and ensure satisfaction because they know what they can do to solve the problem in front of them. They know why they are there and know where to go for help and support to solve a problem. Every day they are completing tasks the right way to move the organization towards the desired result.

# Checklist

- Are told how to do each task
- Don't feel heard by leadership
- Leadership demands accountability
- Unsure which results are expected
- Team members lie about their progress
- Managers are secretive and passive in their direction
- Suspect they will be taken advantage of
- Constantly question the motives of leadership
- Fear others will steal the credit for their work
- Aren't sure about the organization's vision
- Not sure about what the organization's KPIs
- Are often confused and need to ask constant questions
- Don't know how things work
- There is little training or resources to do the job
- Not sure why they were hired and if they are needed
- Leadership doesn't listen or allow feedback
- Can't affect change in the organization
- Don't take on challenges
- Not innovative
- Spread pessimism

# Checklist

- Clear guidelines and tasks every day
- Have a voice and feel their ideas are valued by leadership
- Do the job without having to be asked
- Know what the end result needs to look like
- Meets deadlines and KPIs consistently
- Can count on them to get the job done
- Honest about where they are in the process
- Deliver results which meet or exceed expectations
- Takes responsibility for actions
- Know where the person stands on an issue
- Makes his opinions known and supports teammates
- Share ideas and engages with the team to work together
- Understands where to go for help and support
- Will take responsibility for mistakes
- Feel they have the power to make change
- Asks for help
- Leadership listens and is open to honest feedback
- Looks to expand skill set and take on new challenges
- Have clear personal goals and team goals
- Collaborates with others team members

# Which List has the Most Checks?

If there are more checks on the first list than the second, you might have issues with commitment on your team. Lack of commitment will lead to obstacles and delays on projects.

## **Ask yourself.**

Do you make promises but conveniently leave out when something is going to happen?

Do you avoid performance reviews?

Is your team missing deadlines for no reason?

How does avoiding accountability affect your team?

Do you hear a lot of excuses?

Does your leader bring work to your team because they know you will get it done?

When your team missed a major deadline what was the reason and how could you have motivated them?

Why is accountability easy or difficult for you?

How do you want your team to perform?



# Accountability

When people are accountable for their own decisions, work, and results, the effectiveness of an organization can greatly increase. Holding yourself accountable is very difficult. First you need to have a group of mentors and peers whom you trust, and they trust you. Second, have a set routine, which you've shared with your peers because once you share your routine, your outcomes, your objectives, and your results, you are accountable to getting the work done. Once you say it out loud, that's a form of accountability. Third, work with a mentor to understand why you want to achieve your goals. A mentor will help you understand what the end results are going to look like and the steps you need to take to get there.

If you have the right peer group, whom you trust, you won't want to let them down and they will hold you accountable to your commitments. This works because they only have your best interest in mind and you reciprocate by holding them accountable and having their best interests in mind. It is about supporting each other, inspiring each other, helping each other, and holding each other accountable.





If you are a manager and want to hold your team accountable, you have their best interest in-mind because it's not about you. When you say, "I need you to deliver that ticket by close tomorrow," it isn't about them, it's about you and what you want. They have to understand how doing the work is going to benefit them in the long run. When you see the work as teaching them to improve themselves, and a way to achieve their goals, then they will be more open to being held accountable by you.

### **Why do we avoid things we need to do?**

It's too hard to do the real stuff. It takes commitment and time and it's not fun. My extrovert personality always requires conversations. So, I would rather have a conversation than do the grunt work. Reading a page of a manual is way too much work for me, but getting on a zoom call with somebody, that's easy. However, I started asking myself after I finish the zoom calls, why did I make the call? What was the purpose? I could have read five pages in that amount of time. The answer is simple, we do the fun stuff.

Apart of accountability is staying on track, staying the course. Most businessowners have a plan outlining the goals of the company and how they will meet those goals. They follow the plan until life happens and they get off track, stop doing the daily tasks which will help them achieve their goals. Sometimes, the problem



is they stop holding themselves accountable for the small daily tasks, which they do not enjoy doing. However, sometimes there is a change in their industry, the economy, or government legislation. Suddenly, they feel a need to pivot, like most businesses did during the Covid-19 shut down.

When the Coronavirus Pandemic shut the economy down, businesses had to pivot and make a new plan to provide their clients and customers what they did before. Pivoting during these times makes sense and is not a distraction due to a lack of commitment or accountability. In this case pivoting and change is necessary to survival. Unless, a leader is suddenly doing something so far removed from their core business their customers are no longer receiving what they need. Pivoting is about course correction based on outside circumstances. Following the next shiny trend and abandoning past plans is not being accountable or committed to your success.

Accountability comes when people take responsibility for their work and the promises the organization makes. Accountability is vital to a results-based environment because it ensures tasks are done and goals are met. Without it, organizations devolve into finger pointing and blaming instead solving problems and creating solutions. The whole organization must respect those who hold themselves accountable and take responsibility for their mistakes by fixing them and ensuring the expected results are met. By focusing on individual and team accountability instead of allowing blame and avoidance, organizations are able to have a results based focus.

*“To ensure your team is committed to drive the organization forward, you need to communicate why you are asking them to do certain tasks.”*

# Results Based Organizations

Results based organizations and leaders focus on the result, solving the problem of the customer, and they are able to do this because they have built trusting relationships with the customer and the employees. They are willing to engage in healthy conflict to debate issues and find the best solutions for the organization, team, and customer. Leadership is committed to the plan, the vision, and mission of the organization to deliver results and ensure the customer receives what they purchased. They can do this by being accountable to themselves and by holding their teams accountable to ensure the necessary tasks get done to deliver the promised result within the timeframe they committed to. When leadership focuses on getting results instead of their own individual goals, they can build teams which collaborate and work together, thereby building the reputation for meeting targets and delivering results.

## **What does a results-based organization look like?**

Leaders who are results driven will focus on the team's goals to meet the overall goals of the organization. Teams which are results driven achieve more because they are not focused only on their individual goals and they work together to deliver the expected results. This collaborative team attitude is set by the leadership. Leaders who are more concerned with their own personal results



and goals instead of the team's or the organization's, will create a competitive environment where team members feel they need to put their goals before the organization's in order to get ahead.

Results based organizations provide the customer what they really need, even if they don't understand that need. For example, I go into a car dealership to buy a car, but that's not what I am after. I'm really after a method of transportation which will safely take my family where they need to go. I want to feel safe, cared for, and I want to fulfill my vanity by purchasing a nice vehicle. The salesperson needs to discover what I need before solving my problem by showing me the features and benefits of each vehicle. To be able to fulfill my need, the salesperson must take the time to build trust, so I will open up about what I really am there for. He has to be committed to helping me solve my problem and ensuring I get what I am there for. Then he has to hold himself and others accountable to ensure the vehicle I purchased is delivered to me when promised. If organizations want results, they need to be able to build trusting relationships, commit to the task, and be accountable to get the job done.

If the car salesman is only interested in the transaction, getting cars out the door, he will become frustrated because the process will fall apart either during the sale, after the sale, or when the vehicle



is delivered to the customer. This is because people don't always know what they want, they only know they have a problem and are looking for a solution.

If you think about a service advisor who is checking in a customer, and their expected result is to upsell every single thing possible, then the customer's trust is already broken because they came in for an oil change and being told they need to spend a lot of money on other things they didn't know were a problem. They aren't sure these things are necessary because they haven't experienced any issues while driving the vehicle. If the expected result of the service advisor is to take care of the customer to ensure satisfaction, then they will behave differently with the customer. They will start with the customer's experience with the vehicle and determine their expectations from this visit. They will build trust with the customer by being honest and upfront, so when a problem is detected, there is a level of trust in what the service advisor is saying. This happens when the whole organization behaves with integrity, is committed to the customer's satisfaction, and is accountable to delivering on promises.





# Measuring Results

Results can be measured by Key Performance Indicators, tasks, goals, and balance sheets. However, leaders who lead from the trenches instead of from behind spread sheets have a different measurement of results. They measure the softer targets, things like customer satisfaction, employee retention, training, and growth of the organization in relation to its vision and mission. They understand the process and trust it to provide the financial goals of the organization.

Building a results-based organization starts at the bottom of an organization. Results based leaders will ask employees questions, listen to their answers, reward their initiative, and focus on the main result the organization produces, or the solution it provides the customer. These leaders are clear about the result they want and know how everyone in the organization will contribute to that result. They inspire and help employees by ensuring they have the tools to meet clear expectations. They hire the right people because they understand exactly what the organization needs and all decisions are based on achieving the focused result. It takes effort and buy in along the whole organization, which makes decisions easier to make because they are based on clear defined expected results. Leaders who engage in building these types of organizations are servant leaders whose main focus is to serve others and help them achieve results. Do you want to build a results oriented organization?

# Results





Likky helps leaders find their Blind spots to gain control of their businesses and relationships. He is a sought after keynote speaker and corporate leadership coach.

For businesses to excel they need to search for organizational and personal blind spots because they are why we fail to have authentic connections with people. They are the reason we struggle to find our purpose and passion in life and why we don't have a clear focus to get the outcomes we want in our work and our lives.

Getting to the source of what's driving our behaviors requires vulnerability and a willingness to accept how we show up to others, which can be uncomfortable. Especially, if we are not ready to accept our flaws and faults.

## **Contact Likky Lavji**

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