

Teamwork Intelligence™

Team Exercise: The First Principle of Teamwork



Do What You Say You Will Do

Imagine a world where all your friends, teammates, family members, educators, coaches, and those you encountered on a daily basis took full responsibility for their actions. In this imaginary world everyone you interacted with did what they said they would do. And people approached interpersonal interactions with a perspective of looking beyond personal goals to consider those of the team or the community.

Trouble is, when it comes to answering for one's word many people see little value in honoring their word.

Accountability entails taking ownership of one's actions (which includes promises and commitments) or the expectation of one's taking action and the consequences that arise from the action or inaction. By failing to honor our word we signal to others that we are unreliable and unpredictable.

The problem is that we live in an era where the definition of accountability has become fuzzy and, for the most part, open to one's personal and situational interpretation.

We often encounter issues of "accountability" within emotionally-charged interactions that involve blame, divisiveness, and hostility. Quality interpersonal relationships are essential to any cohesive team. And nothing destroys quality relationships more than losing confidence in the authenticity of someone's promise or commitment.

The **First Principle of Teamwork** is to simply *Do What You Say You Will Do*. Teamwork accountability requires a level of ownership that involves making, keeping, and answering for personal commitments—to your teammates! Simply put, when you hold yourself accountable, those around you *know* you can be counted on to complete your responsibilities or follow through on your promises. When you do what you say you will do you build credibility.

Honoring one's word is a pathway to trust. The qualities of being honest, courageous, inspiring and committed flow from holding yourself accountable and doing what you say you will do. As a team player, coaches and teammates have every right to expect you to be a person who embraces accountability. The bottom line is when it comes to trusting you, you want your teammates to know you are a person of your word.

Discussion Questions: Discussion Questions: As a team discuss what each of these attitude and behaviors means to the team.

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| -Commitment to teammates | -Respecting others |
| -Saying one thing but doing something else | -Give the appearance you are listening |
| -Concern for the good of the team | |

When you finish the first conversation, explore the following question: "How will we provide respectful support to our teammates?" "Why do we need to hold each other accountable?" "How will we hold one another accountable?" "What should we do when a teammate ignores our attempt to hold him/her accountable?"