The Five C's for Building Team Accountability

Excerpt from: *The Five C's of Leadership and Team Accountability*, 2019
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COMMON PURPOSE	CLEAR EXPECTATIONS	COMMUNICATION & ALIGNMENT	COLLABORATION	CONSEQUENCES
Discuss The Importance	**Clarify Expectations Together**	**Focus & Align Everyone Involved**	**Collaborate & Adjust As Needed**	**Make Results & Consequences Visible**
Connect to WHY	Get clear about WHO & WHAT	Communicate HOW	Monitor progress & COACH	Assess the RESULTS
"Why does this matter?"	"What does success look like?"	"How are we going to achieve success?"	"Are we on track, & what adjustments are needed?"	"How did we do, & what did we learn?"

1. Common Purpose:

Set the stage for any team initiative by talking about the 'why.' Why are they here? Why are they working on this project, or this special task force? Connect what you need the team to do with *why* you need them to spend valuable time doing it. What's the point? Why does it matter? We always tend to tell a team of people what to do; many leaders are good at that. As a result, the 'why' gets completely ignored. The sign of a high performing team is the ability to rally around a common purpose.

2. Clear Expectations:

What is it that you ultimately need the team to do? These are the accountability questions leaders to set clear expectations for the team. You need to tell the team over and over again, so that all of the team members are clear on what is expected of them. It often takes several repetitions before the entire team can communicate them effectively.

- *Clarify*: Are you looking for one specific viable solution to a company-wide problem, or are you asking the team to jointly agree on three potential solutions to present? Do you expect them to define a roadmap for the one (or three) solutions, or not? Do you need them to present a list of pros and cons with their solution(s)? How do you want to be kept informed along the way? An email every Friday afternoon? A white paper three times a week (Side note: Please don't do this last one), or what? Whether it's an intact workplace team or a task force, use the Job Scorecard as a tool to help prompt your thinking as to what you need the team to be responsible for doing.

- ***Accountable Leadership****:*
  If it's a special task force (vs. an intact workplace team), who's the person who's driving the train. In other words, who's ultimately accountable for making sure that what the team needs to do gets done? It doesn't mean this person is the only one doing the work; it simply means s/he is on top of it. The same would hold true for a new initiative for an intact team. You, the leader, shouldn't think you have all the power to check how things are going. Instead, who on the team can take the leadership role to make sure the transition gets moving, and keeps moving? Who's accountable for driving the train? Do you accept responsibility when it is required?

- In your mind, **what does success look like when you achieve a goal**? Setting up a metric for what success looks like clarifies the degree to which people are supposed to do something. Otherwise, you can get a checkmark that says, "We did it." But, was it done relative to the expectations you had in your head? Define (clearly) what success looks like. (Side note: Try to avoid having a due date as a success metric. Any of us can produce a ton of mediocre work by a deadline.)

3. Communicate & Align:

As time passes, as part of their leadership development, it's a leader's job to keep a team focused and aligned so that everyone's involved and moving in the same direction. *How* are they going to do what you need them to do? What resources might they consider using? Keep everyone focused. Over and over, communicate with them, ask questions, remind them why what they're doing is important, etc. Your job as a leader is to keep them all rowing in the same direction, especially when rolling out annual plans and your quarterly plans. Communication and alignment is what provides life to any team because it's what fosters longer-term sustainability.

4. Collaborate and Coach:

Set the stage for collaboration all along the way so that adjustments can be made in real time. Monitor progress and coach your people. Don't tell them what to do. *Coach.* Listen to them (80%) and talk with them (20%) to increase your team performance. Nurture them to converse with each other. Be a resource for them. What roadblocks need to be removed, and how can you help remove them? If what you've tasked your people to do is important, then it deserves your support. Collaboration is at the heart of a great weekly team meeting which is where the accountability rubber meets the road. Did everyone do what they said they were going to do?

5. Consequences:

Most people see consequences and they immediately think of a negative connotation. We overlook that consequences can also be positive. Make results and consequences visible. Talk to your team strategically vs tactically, which is usually done through questions vs. statements. Secondly, for some reason, leaders are the first to let people know when something's not right or if it's gone awry. But when things go well, it's almost as if the success is glossed over. The consequence of that, though, is that you help create a remedial culture. People are only noticed and given attention at <u>weekly team meetings</u> when things don't go as expected. So work to give equal (or more) weight to what's gone *right*. <u>Celebrate</u>!