The Goal of Accountability

Goal is to create clarity and alignment
The Goal of Accountability

Clarity – Clear definition of winning the game

Alignment – Having a common / shared purpose (same story)
The Goal of Accountability

CLARITY

THE most basic component of accountability
The Goal of Accountability

INTRODUCING!

THE CONVERSATION THAT NEVER HAPPENED!!
The Goal of Accountability

1) Context
2) Collaboration
3) Commitments
4) Circle Back
The Goal of Accountability

CONTEXT

This is what we are going to talk about.
The Goal of Accountability

COLLABORATION

This is what we are thinking.
The Goal of Accountability

COMMITMENTS

This is what we are going to do next.
The Goal of Accountability

CIRCLE BACK

This is what we did.
(repeat if needed)
The Goal of Accountability

Alignment – Having a common / shared purpose (same story)
The Goal of Accountability

Our Story

Each person has a story...
The Goal of Accountability

Our Story

Each person has a story... and then there is reality
The Goal of Accountability

Parent Story

Kids must eat vegetables because they are good for them. It really doesn’t matter if they like them or not. In fact, I feel like a bad parent if I make them eat their vegetables.
The Goal of Accountability

Kid Story

My parents are mean. They deliberately put vegetables on my plate that they know I don’t like and then make me eat it just to get dessert.
The Goal of Accountability

Aligned Story

Vegetables are normally part of our dinner and everyone is expected to eat them, even if they don’t like them. While we don’t agree on the end result, we love and respect each other and are willing to move on.
The Goal of Accountability

Eat Your Veggies – Clarity (review)

How do you get your kids to eat their vegetables?
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ALIGNMENT

Long term misalignment is fatal.
The Goal of Accountability

ALIGNMENT

When alignment doesn’t exist, lean on clarity.
The Goal of Accountability

Long term misalignment is what creates a TOXIC EMPLOYEE
Holding Others Accountable

HOW TO HOLD PEOPLE ACCOUNTABLE

Create a “Watershed” moment
The Goal of Accountability

By the way...

Why don’t we ever talk about a TOXIC EMPLOYER?
The Goal of Accountability

Self-Deception

Once we create a story, we look for (and find) evidence to support the story.
The Goal of Accountability

Self-Deception Story (real)

My boss is a jerk. He barely pays us anything. Instead of giving us all big raises last year, he hired his buddy to change our oil for us every 3 months in the parking lot. He’s willing to pay his friend, but not willing to pay us.
The Goal of Accountability

Self-Deception Story (real)

My employee is lazy. He is a full time employee, but he leaves at 4PM every day.
The Goal of Accountability

Self-Deception Discussion

Think about a person you have struggled with on a regular basis. Now try to put yourself in their shoes and imagine their story.

Pretend like you are the other person. Tell the group what it is like to interact with you.

Group – Give feedback on whether the story is believable or not.
Top Accountability Fails

1) Never have the Conversation
2) Lack of Clarity
3) Playing the Blame Game
The Blame Game

DISCUSSION
What is the difference between Accountability and Blame?
The Blame Game

- **Blame**
  - ✓ Assigned to a person

- **Accountability**
  - ✓ Assigned to an action
The Blame Game

Blame
✓ Assigned to a person

If you have a Blame Culture, you can change things by changing **people**
The Blame Game

Accountability
✓ Assigned to a action

If you have an Accountability Culture, you can change things by changing actions
The Blame Game

Blame – 2 sides
1) It’s your fault
2) It’s not your fault
The Blame Game

Blame – 2 sides
1) It’s your fault
2) It’s not your fault

IS EITHER PERSPECTIVE HEALTHY?
The Blame Game

DISCUSSION
You own a restaurant. A customer who just came in for a pick up order, gets home and discovers that they have several mistakes in the order. They call and are very upset.

Discuss how a blame culture would handle this...
The Blame Game

Pick up order mistake **(BLAME LENS):**

- “Who took the order?”
- “Katie did”
- “Katie, you messed up the order”
- “No I didn’t, I swear the customer told me that is what they wanted”
- End Result: Defensiveness, new perspective on Katie, new perspective on the Customer
The Blame Game

DISCUSSION
You own a restaurant. A customer who just came in for a pick up order, gets home and discovers that they have several mistakes in the order. They call and are very upset.

Discuss how an accountability culture would handle this...
The Blame Game

Pick up order mistake (ACCOUNTABILITY LENS):
✓ “What happened?”
✓ “The customer called when we were busy. We wrote down the order and I thought it was correct”
✓ “What can we do differently?”
✓ “I can read back the order to the customer to confirm. We also could make a standard order form with menu items.”
✓ END RESULT: Energized team making improvements
The Blame Game

Manager: “Katie, we are getting a lot of customer complaints regarding the accuracy of orders you take. What can we do to keep this from happening?”

Katie: “I don’t know”

Manager: “Well, it’s at the point where we need to do something different. Would you be open to suggestions?”
The Blame Game

Katie: “Sure.”

Manager: “Well, let me first ask you a few questions. Do you write down the order as they are giving it or do you wait until you hang up the phone?”

Katie: “I do it as they are giving it, but sometimes it is hard to keep up”
Manager: “Yes! I’ve taken orders on the phone from customers who speak so fast I can barely keep up. So tell me some approaches you have tried in those situations.”

Katie: “I just try to write faster. I’m certainly not going to tell the customer to slow down. That would be rude.”
Manager: “I totally understand what you are saying, but there are ways you can ask the customer to slow down without being rude. Can we talk through a few ways you can do this?”

Katie: “Sure”

[They discuss specific methods]
The Blame Game

Manager: “So out of all of these methods we discussed, which one do you think would work for you?”

Katie: “I like the idea of interrupting them politely and telling them I want to make sure I collect their order accurately and asking them to slow down a bit.”

Manager: “So are you committed to trying this out and seeing if things improve?”
The Blame Game

Katie: “Absolutely!”

Manager: “Great! Let’s meet up again in a couple of weeks and see how it’s working out. If you are struggling with anything between now and then, please let me know and I’ll help you any way I can.”

Katie: “That’s great! I really want to get this fixed. I hate being the one who messes up the orders.”
The Blame Game

So what if Katie continues to make mistakes?
The Blame Game

But... what if the employee is toxic...

Let’s try again...
Manager: “Katie, we are getting a lot of customer complaints regarding the accuracy of orders you take. What can we do to keep this from happening?”

Katie: “I don’t know”

Manager: “Well, it’s at the point where we need to do something different. Would you be open to suggestions?”
The Blame Game

Katie: “Sure.”

Manager: “Well, let me first ask you a few questions. Do you write down the order as they are giving it or do you wait until you hang up the phone?”

Katie: “I write it down”
The Blame Game

Manager: “Do you have any trouble keeping up with the order as it comes in?”

Katie: “Nope”

Manager: “After the order is taken, do you read it off to the customer?”

Katie: “Yep”
Manager: “Ok. While it sounds like you are doing the right things, I really you to improve your order accuracy. The situation is that your orders are less accurate then others. Do you have any ideas on why that might be happening?”

Katie: “So just because a few customers call and complain, you have decided to single me out? Last week, John makes mistakes all of the time and you don’t talk to him.”
The Blame Game

Manager: “We aren’t talking about John right now. Look, order accuracy is incredibly important for our business and for our team. I’m willing to work with you to solve this problem, but you have to be willing to acknowledge it and work on it with me. Is that something you are willing to do?”

Katie: “I don’t know.”
The Blame Game

Manager: “I understand. Look, I’ll tell you what. Why don’t you go home and really think hard. If you are willing to work to make things better, I’m committed to help you. If you still don’t think we are being fair, then let’s just agree to part ways. I don’t want anyone here to be unhappy or unsuccessful.”
The Blame Game

What if Katie doesn’t align with the Manager?
The Blame Game

REVIEW

The Watershed Conversation
The Blame Game

So in Detroit I have almost gotten hit by a car 7 different times..and 5 times they honked their horns and started yelling at me!! Worst part was all 7 of those times I had the right a way!!

BLAME CULTURE OR ACCOUNTABILITY CULTURE?
KEY TAKEAWAYS

1) Be clear
2) Focus on actions and results
3) Agreement is nice, but clarity is critical
4) Long term misalignment is fatal
QUESTIONS?