

Accountability Without Shame.

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In John 8:11, Jesus famously responded to the woman caught in the act of adultery by saying, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

Accountability is growth oriented. It works to improve the future rather than simply assess blame. Its aim is to help us make the changes needed to improve by offering correction rather than merely imposing punishment. Accountability is effective when the previous agreement is reestablished and all members of the group are again working to achieve their common goal.

However, accountability can be harmful to the team when it is voiced in judgment. Attacking the person, rather than addressing their behavior, will likely cause the person to either withdraw from the team or respond to the accountability with an attack of their own. Shame, blame, judgment, and condemnation will not strengthen the team...instead, these will eventually destroy it.

Therefore, when attempting to hold a team member accountable, try to avoid these:

- Judgmental language, such as *should*, *must*, *have to*, *deserve*, *supposed to*, and *need to*. These words are demands that often come across as judging the person instead of focusing on the behavior that needs to change.
- Judgments disguised as feelings, such as "*I feel like you don't care*," "*I feel we've been misled*," or "*I feel mistreated*." These statements describe judgments or interpretations of another person's actions rather than the speaker's actual emotions.
- "You" statements, such as "*You lied to me*," "*You let us down*," or "*You should be ashamed of yourself*," often come across as personal attacks. These statements focus on blaming or criticizing the person rather than addressing the specific behavior or its impact.

Successful teams use accountability to build up team members rather than tear them down. Speak honestly and clearly, but always with respect and love, to get your team to its stated goal.