

Accountability – A New Approach

This tool draws from the world of open-source software and web-based performance management.

Laying the Foundation

The first step in open-source is laying the foundation – critical success factors in fostering successful results. Laying the foundation means:

1. **Leader** – A strong leader starts the ball rolling and is an active, involved member of the team initially; he or she attends meetings, asks great questions, and provides encouragement and inspiration. No drop and run!
2. **Vision** – An inspiring and real statement of desired future that answers the question “Why should we care?” In open source software, it was a desire to challenge Microsoft’s empire.
3. **Urgency** – Answer the question “What happens if we don’t do this?” If you don’t provide a compelling and tangible reason to participate, you won’t get real engagement. Engagement is the foundation of true accountability.
4. **Empowerment** – Let the team know they are empowered to create the result without hindrances from overbearing compliance functions in the company. Contract to “test” empowerment in the right places in your organization before unleashing it everywhere.

Steps to Improved Accountability

With the foundation in place, following are the key steps to fostering shared ownership, accountability, and teamwork in the open source model:

1. **Team Selection** – Choose people who are detailed-oriented with a bias for action. No pontificators – either they catch the wave or get washed out.
2. **Communication** – Create an open list-serv or shared drive where every piece of information related to a project (e.g., code in the software model) is available to everybody. People will create their own meaning when they share up-to-date information.
3. **Collaboration** – Requires structure. Team leaders need best practice facilitation skills in online moderation and real-time meetings. This includes key ground rules and structures that help everyone stay relevant.
4. **Trust** – Is built through actions not words. Most organizations are sloppy about managing actions, rely too much on people’s word, and don’t deal with under-performance soon enough. This sends a message “We tolerate mediocrity.” Start every meeting with a visible review of “who agreed to do what by when.”
5. **Peer pressure** – Is a powerful accountability mechanism. Schedule “deep dives” among your teams often to examine and inspect what you expect. You need a process to openly discuss failure without punishment or judgment.
6. **Future Focus** – The most critical element of feedback. Too often, we deal with problems too late and feedback is a historical activity, rather than focusing on course-correction.
7. **Check out** our web-based performance management system, **KEYNE Link™** for driving accountability and engagement through regular line-of-sight and communication.

Call Lisa at 303-904-8193 today for an online discovery meeting.