Employee Accountability

Handout #3: Workplace Scenarios

Name: Date:

Directions: Read each scenario pair carefully. Scenario A shows STRONG accountability (positive example). Scenario B shows WEAK accountability (negative example). Answer the guiding questions after each scenario.

SCENARIO SET 1: Healthcare Setting

Scenario 1A: A Busy Day at Vandela Care Home (Strong Accountability)

Maria Taylor, a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) at Vandela Care Home with two years of experience, is working on the long-term care unit. The unit is short-staffed, and Maria's shift has been chaotic.

While preparing medications, Maria notices that a metformin pill for Mr. Henderson looks different than usual. Maria calls the pharmacy to confirm the medication is correct. The pharmacy confirms the supplier changed. Maria documents the call in Mr. Henderson's chart.

Later, Maria notices a resident, Ms. Rodriguez, looks unsteady getting out of bed. Maria leaves the medication cart to help Ms. Rodriguez safely back to bed and calls a nursing assistant to stay with her. When Maria returns, she realizes she forgot to lock the cart. Maria calls her supervisor, Beth Daniels, and explains what happened. Together they check all medications—nothing is missing.

That afternoon, a newer LPN, Derick Garner, asks Maria for help with a wound dressing change. Even though Maria is busy, she takes time to guide Derick through the proper procedure.

Guiding Questions for Scenario 1A:

1. List THREE specific actions Maria took that demonstrate accountability:

2. Maria made a mistake by leaving the cart unlocked. How did she handle it? What does this tell you about accountability?

3. How did Maria demonstrate "team collaboration"?

4. Which Habits of Mind does Maria demonstrate? Give examples.

Scenario 1B: A Busy Day at Hawk's Nest Care Haven (Weak Accountability)

Annette Akins, an LPN with six years of experience, is working on a dementia unit at Hawk's Nest Care Haven. The unit is hectic.

A CNA, Isabella Porter, tells Annette that Mr. McCord is agitated and trying to get out of bed. Instead of checking on him, Annette says, "I don't have time. Turn his TV on and leave him be." Annette does not document this in Mr. McCord's chart.

An hour later, Mr. McCord falls while trying to get out of bed. During the investigation, Annette says, "The CNA should have told me he was still agitated."

When the charge nurse reviews the incident with Annette, she becomes defensive. She complains about being understaffed and says it's impossible to manage every resident.

Guiding Questions for Scenario 1B:

1. List THREE actions (or failures to act) that show Annette lacked accountability:

2. When confronted, Annette blamed the CNA. What should she have said instead?

3. Annette complained about being understaffed. Is this a valid excuse? Why or why not?

4. Compare Annette to Maria. What Habits of Mind does Maria have that Annette lacks?

SCENARIO SET 2: Warehouse/Distribution Setting

Scenario 2A: Crazy Eddie's Distribution Center (Strong Accountability)

Mark Downs, a warehouse worker for five years, is loading a delivery truck. The warehouse is understaffed and under pressure to complete orders before the weekend.

While pulling an order, Mark notices a barcode doesn't match—it's the wrong gaming console model. Mark stops, alerts his supervisor Jessica, pulls the correct product, updates inventory, and notes the error in his end-of-shift report.

Later, Mark sees a coworker trying to lift a heavy pallet with a hand truck instead of a pallet jack. Mark stops to show the new worker the correct, safe procedure.

Near shift end, coworker Lisa asks for help completing a rush order. Mark checks with his supervisor, who agrees, and Mark stays an hour late to help Lisa finish.

Guiding Questions for Scenario 2A:

1. Mark could have shipped the wrong console to save time. Why is catching this error an example of "ownership"?

2. How did Mark demonstrate accountability for his coworkers' safety and success?

3. Which of the 5 Cs of Accountability (Clarity, Commitment, Communication, Collaboration, Consequences) does Mark demonstrate?

Scenario 2B: Dollar World Distribution Center (Weak Accountability)

Kevin Nadir, a warehouse worker for less than a year, is rushing to finish an order and leave for the weekend.

Instead of using a step ladder, Kevin stands on a shelf. Climbing down, he knocks dishes onto the floor, breaking several. Rather than reporting it, he pushes the carton to the back of the shelf.

Kevin's scanner shows an item is available at another location across the warehouse. He ignores this and marks the item "out of stock."

Kevin leaves a pallet jack in the middle of an aisle. Later, a forklift driver must move it.

Kevin tells his supervisor the order is "almost complete" so he can leave for childcare pickup. His replacement discovers only half the items were pulled, and two are wrong.

Guiding Questions for Scenario 2B:

1. List FOUR examples of Kevin failing to be accountable:

2. Kevin hid the broken dishes. What are the consequences for: (a) Kevin, (b) coworkers, (c) the company?

3. Kevin lied about how much work was done. How does dishonesty relate to accountability?

4. Kevin had a legitimate reason to leave (childcare). How could he have handled this accountably?

FINAL REFLECTION: Connecting the Scenarios

1. What are the TOP 3 behaviors that accountable employees consistently demonstrate?

2. What are the most common EXCUSES that unaccountable employees make?

3. Think about your own life. Describe a time you acted accountably AND a time you didn't. What did you learn?

4. Write your own definition of "employee accountability" in your own words: