**Personal Accountability – Reading Material**

**Overview:**

With accountability, you get better results, improved teamwork, and clarity. Without it, you get blame, finger-pointing, missed deadlines and low morale. Employers value hires who have personal accountability

**Objectives:**

This reading material is designed to help you:

* Understand the importance of Personal Accountability and learn to practice it

**Introduction:**

Forget about loyalty, it’s outdated, there’s little payoff and organizations can’t return it. Shift to your commit to yourself. Commitment goes beyond loyalty. Forget about what generation you’re in, from here forward is what counts. Peter Drucker states that "knowledge is the only meaningful resource". Knowledge belongs to you, it’s mobile and it’s for sale. Commit yourself to meaningful and satisfying work, and the organizations that seek out and value you and your skill sets will follow. You’ll control your own destiny. Oh yes, your current employer will see you as loyal—but not take you for granted.

**Importance of Personal Accountability**

Read this article and understand the importance of personal accountability

**Personal Accountability—A Requirement for Life Advancement**

Posted by Todd Smith

Accountability is normally viewed as being responsible—giving an explanation of your actions—to somebody for something. However, today’s lesson is not about someone holding you accountable. It’s about you holding yourself accountable.

When you take 100 percent responsibility for holding yourself accountable, your performance will improve, your relationships will flourish, your market value will soar, people’s respect for you will skyrocket, you will be a great example for others to follow, and your self-esteem will grow.

How is it that in all these areas of your life you can see such dramatic improvement? Because when you hold yourself accountable to doing the things you know you should do, you will distinguish yourself from the crowd.

I am convinced if you want to advance your life personally or professionally, you must hold yourself accountable for your actions, responsibilities, and goals. Think about it. Why should it be someone else’s job to make sure you are doing the things that you know you should to be doing?

The mindset I adopted more than 25 years ago is this: it is up to me and no one else to make sure I am doing what I know I should be doing. When someone has to hold me accountable, because I failed to do what I should have done, I have a serious conversation with myself. My belief is that no one should have to hold me accountable for my actions, responsibilities and goals. While I appreciate others helping me get better, I am the one that must hold myself to a high standard.

**Three Types of Accountability**

There are three areas in which you must hold yourself accountable:

1. **Your actions and choices**—this would include such things as:

* The way in which you communicate with others
* How you spend your time
* Your behavior and manners
* The consideration and respect you show others
* Your eating habits and exercising routine
* Your attitude and thoughts
* The way you respond to challenges

2. **Your responsibilities**—This would include these types of things:

* Returning calls, emails, and texts in a timely manner
* Being on time for business and personal appointments
* Keeping your home, car, and workplace clean
* Spending less than you earn
* Doing the things you agreed to do when you agreed to do them
* Executing your job description to the best of your ability
* Writing things down on a “To Do” list so you don’t forget

3**. Your goals**—This would include your:

* Fitness and health targets
* Financial goals
* Family objectives
* Career ambitions
* Personal goals
* Marital enhancement

**Any other goals you have set for yourself**

Make no mistake about it. You cannot achieve any worthwhile personal or professional goal, if you don’t hold yourself accountable. The reason is simple. It’s your life! If you have to be held accountable at work, don’t expect to be promoted or to experience any type of significant career advancement. If you have to be held accountable at home by your parents, roommate or spouse, it will grow old fast and your relationships will deteriorate.

Holding yourself accountable is nothing more than following through with YOUR commitments and responsibilities. It’s doing what YOU know YOU should do, when YOU should it.

Whether you are 15 years old or 60 years old, let today be the day that you make the commitment to yourself that you will NEVER again require anyone else to hold you accountable. Let me also encourage you to start keeping a prioritized “To Do” list and focus on holding yourself accountable to working through your tasks in a prioritized sequence.

This is your life! Take control. Be responsible for it.

If you will hold yourself accountable for your actions, responsibilities, and goals, you can achieve anything that is important to you.

Planning and Prioritizing

**Planning**

One of the most important aspects of developing strong ways of winning is the planning.

A very famous proverb goes “He who fails to plan, plans to fail.”

**Why is Planning Important?**

Planning is leveraged time. 20 minutes of planning per day can improve your productivity immensely. Affording yourself time to plan will pay off in the future. You'll make sure that you are staying on track with your goals and you can ensure that you become more task oriented. By simply taking 10-20 minutes to go through what your objectives or outcomes are, you will be more likely to achieve them and not get sidetracked which is quite easy to do especially when working online.

Planning provides the framework for informed decision making. By planning what you are going to do you will be establishing a framework and will be able to tick off items from your "to do" list as you go along. This is an extremely effective way to manage any tasks that you have.

Planning reduces crisis management. If you plan effectively there is less likelihood of any critical issues coming up. However, it is important to be prepared for unforeseen situations occurring and be prepared to sit back and plan again around any issues.

Planning allows focus and personal energy direction. As you can appreciate, by establishing a focus through planning you will be able to channel your energy positively into reaching an outcome. Having a course of direction will assist you in accomplishing your tasks in a more timely and efficient manner.

Planning helps to eliminate: bad habits and the fear of failure. If you stick to a plan you are more likely to break some bad habits you might have (ie surfing around the net without really accomplishing anything). By establishing a plan and sticking to it you are less likely to fail.

Planning allows you to set priorities and focus on what is important. Even within your plan you can prioritize your tasks so that items you think are more important than others can be actioned accordingly. You need to discover what is important to you and sometimes go through a few boring tasks in order to get to the exciting end result. Effective planning will have a HUGE impact on breaking bad habits you might have and should lead to successful task management.

Give it a go for the next week whenever you are getting ready to make a sales presentation or if you are online working on a website. Write out what you want your objectives and outcomes to be. Get a "to do" list happening!

***“You must master your time rather than becoming a slave to the constant flow of events and demands on your time. And you must organize your life to achieve balance, harmony, and inner peace.”  – Brian Tracy***

***“It has been my observation that most people get ahead during the time that others waste time.” – Henry Ford***

* Make sure you are very familiar with your course.
* What is required to pass the course?
* When are the assignment cut-off dates?
* What are the learning outcomes?
* How much time do I need to allocate to study?

**Planning your study time:**

Plan ahead by creating a schedule that includes all your commitments relating to study, work, and personal or social life for the next few months. You could use your course calendar for this by adding the other commitments you have.

Recommended study time is around 100 hours study for each 10 points of a course. So work out how much study time you need to put aside and review this regularly as you go through your studies

Do the most difficult work when your concentration is strongest

Take regular breaks, perhaps every hour

Be flexible – reflect on whether your study pattern is successful. For example, if you are getting less done in the evenings than you hoped, try something different, perhaps by studying in the early morning.

**Prioritizing**

**Prioritizing skills are your ability to see what tasks are more important at each moment and give those tasks more of your attention, energy, and time. You focus on what is important at the expense of lower value activities.**

*"Prioritizing is the answer to time management problems - not computers, efficiency experts, or matrix scheduling. You do not need to do work faster or to eliminate gaps in productivity to make better use of your time. You need to spend more time on the right things..."*

We all have many things to do, and we never have time and energy to do them all. We don't have time and resources to do them equally well either. Many things will be left undone, no matter how hard you try. Prioritizing is a way to solve that frustrating problem.

One key reason why prioritizing works, and works well, is the 80/20 Rule. The 80/20 Rule states that 80 percent of our typical activities contribute less than 20 percent to the value of our work.

At first glance, many of the tasks we face during a day seem equally urgent and important. Yet, if you take a closer look, you will see that many of the urgent activities we are involved are not really important in the long run. At the same time, things that are most important for us, like improving ourselves and our skills, getting a better education, spending time with family, often are not urgent.

With good prioritizing skills, you finish as soon as possible all the important urgent tasks, the ones that would get you into a crisis or trouble otherwise. Then, you focus your attention and try to give more and more time to those most important, but not urgent tasks, the ones that are most rewarding in the long run.

Prioritizing principles can be applied to both planned and unplanned activities. For planned activities, like the ones included in your to do list, you can mark each of your tasks with "A", "B", or "C", depending on its importance. The "B" tasks should be done only after you are finished with all the most important "A" tasks, the ones that just must be done. If you have time after you are finished with the "B" tasks, you can move on to the "C" ones. When you set priorities in to do lists, also keep asking yourself if any of your tasks can be eliminated or delegated. When you prioritize unplanned activities, you often need to make quick decisions, and you don't have time to analyze the situation in full. It is best just to keep in mind your goals and rely on your instincts. Your effectiveness in such situations depends very much on the clarity of your goals.

**The Power of Discipline**

The Power of Discipline by Brian Tracy

Why are some people more successful than others? Why do some people make more money, live happier lives and accomplish much more in the same number of years than the great majority?

I started out in life with few advantages. I did not graduate from high school. I worked at menial jobs. I had limited education, limited skills and a limited future.

**And then I began asking, "Why some are people more successful than others?" This question changed my life.**

Over the years, I have read thousands of books and articles on the subjects of success and achievement. It seems that the reasons for these accomplishments have been discussed and written about for more than two thousand years, in every conceivable way. One quality that most philosophers, teachers and experts agree on is the importance of self-discipline. As Al Tomsik summarized it years ago, "Success is tons of discipline."

Some years ago, I attended a conference in Washington. It was the lunch break and I was eating at a nearby food fair. The area was crowded and I sat down at the last open table by myself, even though it was a table for four. A few minutes later, an older gentleman and a younger woman who was his assistant came along carrying trays of food, obviously looking for a place to sit. With plenty of room at my table, I immediately arose and invited the older gentleman to join me. He was hesitant, but I insisted. Finally, thanking me as he sat down, we began to chat over lunch.It turned out that his name was Kop Kopmeyer. As it happened, I immediately knew who he was. He was a legend in the field of success and achievement. Kop Kopmeyer had written four large books, each of which contained 250 success principles that he had derived from more than fifty years of research and study. I had read all four books from cover to cover, more than once. After we had chatted for a while, I asked him the question that many people in this situation would ask, "Of all the one thousand success principles that you have discovered, which do you think is the most important?"

He smiled at me with a twinkle in his eye, as if he had been asked this question many times, and replied, without hesitating, "The most important success principle of all was stated by Thomas Huxley many years ago. He said,**"Do what you should do, when you should do it, whether you feel like it or not."**

He went on to say, **"There are 999 other success principles that I have found in my reading and experience, but without self-discipline, none of them work."**

Self-discipline is the key to personal greatness. It is the magic quality that opens all doors for you, and makes everything else possible. With self-discipline, the average person can rise as far and as fast as his talents and intelligence can take him. But without self-discipline, a person with every blessing of background, education and opportunity will seldom rise above mediocrity.

In the pages ahead I will describe seven areas of your life where the practice of self-discipline will be key to your success. These areas include **goals**, **character**, **timemanagement**, **personal** **health**, **money**, **courage** and **responsibility**. It is my hope that you'll find a few "nuggets" that will help make your dreams come true