



Washington Association  
of COUNTY OFFICIALS



# Effective Management Strategies

October 8, 2025



# Effective Management Strategies

*"Not finance. Not strategy. Not technology. It is teamwork that remains the ultimate competitive advantage, both because it is so powerful and so rare."*

Patrick Lencioni

# Effective Management Strategies- Your Favorite Leadership Quote Poll

*“Leadership is not about being in charge, it is about taking care of those in your charge”*

– Simon Sinek

*“Before you are a leader, success is about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others”*

– Jack Welch

*“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.”*

- Phil Jackson

*“If you think you are leading and turn around to see no one following you, then you are just taking a walk”*

– John Maxwell

# Effective Management Strategies

## The essential Five Behaviors®

### Foundational skills:

- Communicate Effectively
- Create Clarity
- Give Effective Feedback
- Embrace Accountability

# The Five Behaviors<sup>®</sup> Model

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# Building Trust – the Foundation

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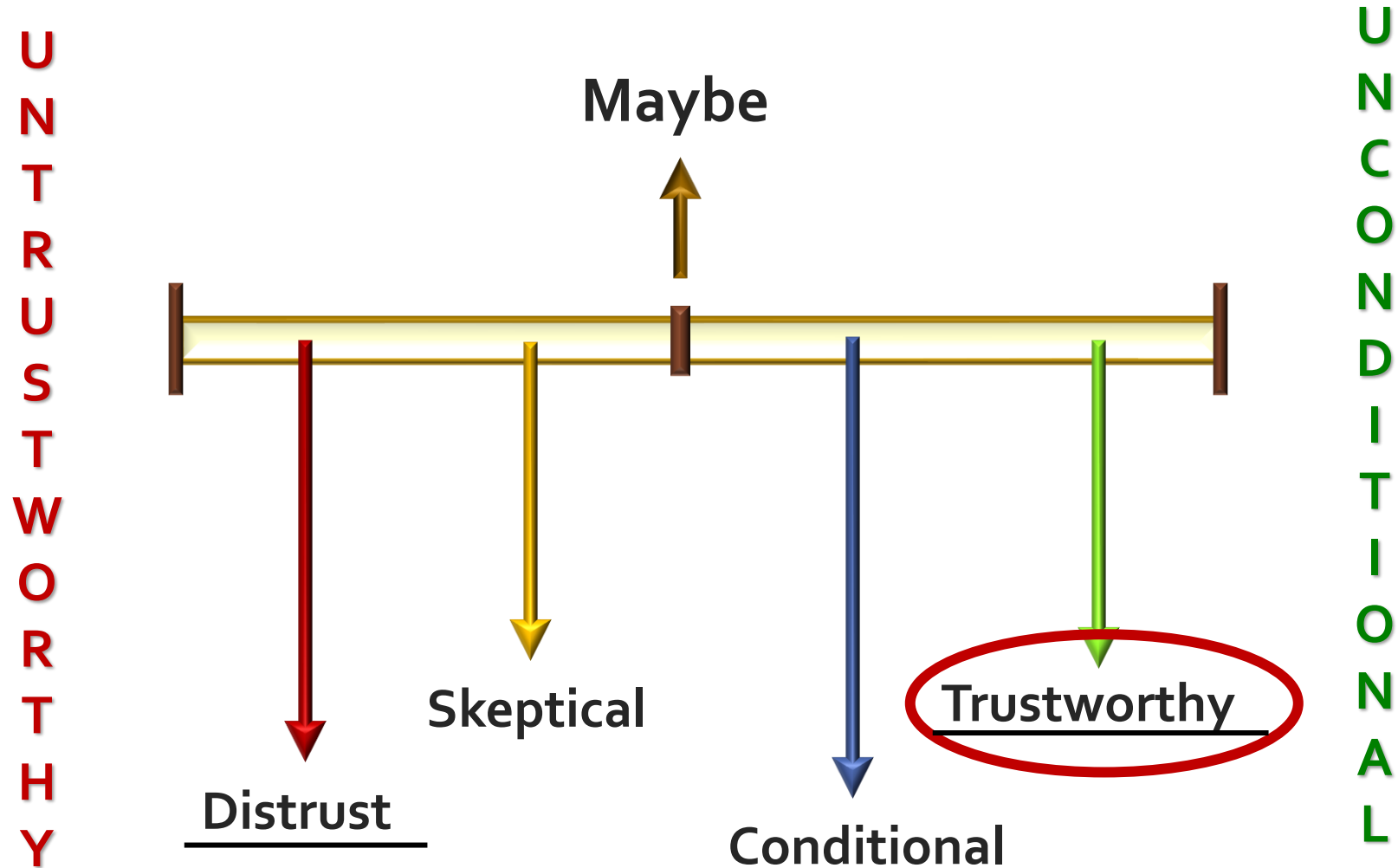
Great teams:

- Trust on a fundamental, emotional level
- Admit weaknesses, mistakes, and fears
- Are completely open with one another – no filters



TRUST

# TRUST CONTINUUM



# Teams with Trust

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- ❖ Admit weaknesses and mistakes
- ❖ Ask for help
- ❖ Assume positive intent
- ❖ Take risks in offering feedback
- ❖ Focus time on issues, not politics
- ❖ Offer and accept apologies easily





# Vulnerability Based Trust

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What do you need?

What holds you back?



Not wanting to be a  
burden



Fear of  
disapproval



Fear of a loss of control



Not wanting to  
appear incompetent

# Vulnerability Based Trust - Poll

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**What holds you back?**



Not wanting to be a  
burden



Fear of  
disapproval



Fear of a loss of control



Not wanting to  
appear incompetent

# What would you do? Poll

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- A. Keep the issue to yourself.
- B. Wait to see if any teammates encounter problems, and if they do, explain what happened.
- C. Proactively notify your teammates of the situation.

# What would you do?

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Best answer:

**C.** Proactively notify your teammates of the situation.

# How to build Trust

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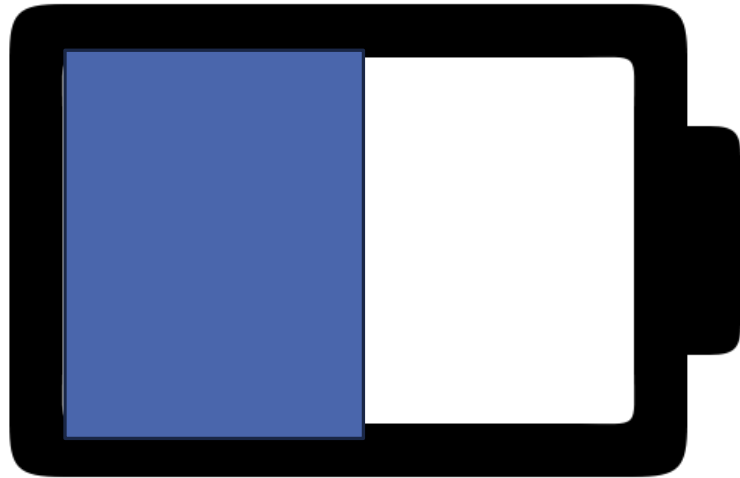
Admit weaknesses and  
lead by example in action

Ask for feedback

Celebrate & learn from  
failures

Trust begets trust

# Trust Battery



Where is your trust level with others?

What is their trust level with you?

# Conflict

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Great teams...

- Engage in passionate dialogue around issues
- Disagree with, challenge, and question one another to find the best answers



CONFLICT

TRUST

# Commitment

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Great teams...

- Engage in conflict to ensure that nothing has been left unsaid
- Achieve buy-in around important decisions





## Achieving Commitment

*“People will not actively commit to a decision if they have not had the opportunity to voice their opinions, ask questions and understand the “why” behind it.”*

Patrick Lencioni

# Achieving Commitment

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Requires BOTH



CLARITY



BUY-IN

# Barriers to Commitment

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## Clarity

No time – need to keep moving

We will just address issue if they come  
up

It seems obvious so I don't want to ask  
questions

## Buy-In

No one seemed that excited – I'll move  
it to the bottom of my list

You see a better way and don't think it  
will be a big deal

I don't think the team is truly committed  
to this

# How to achieve Commitment

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Slow down and take time to ask questions

Make  
up

**Remember, Commitment is  
NOT Consensus!**

Once a decision is made, everyone must  
commit even if they don't agree

## Embracing Accountability

*“Commitment gives team members the courage to hold one another accountable, knowing that they are asking their peers to live up to something they have fully agreed to do.”*

Patrick Lencioni

# Accountability

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Great teams...

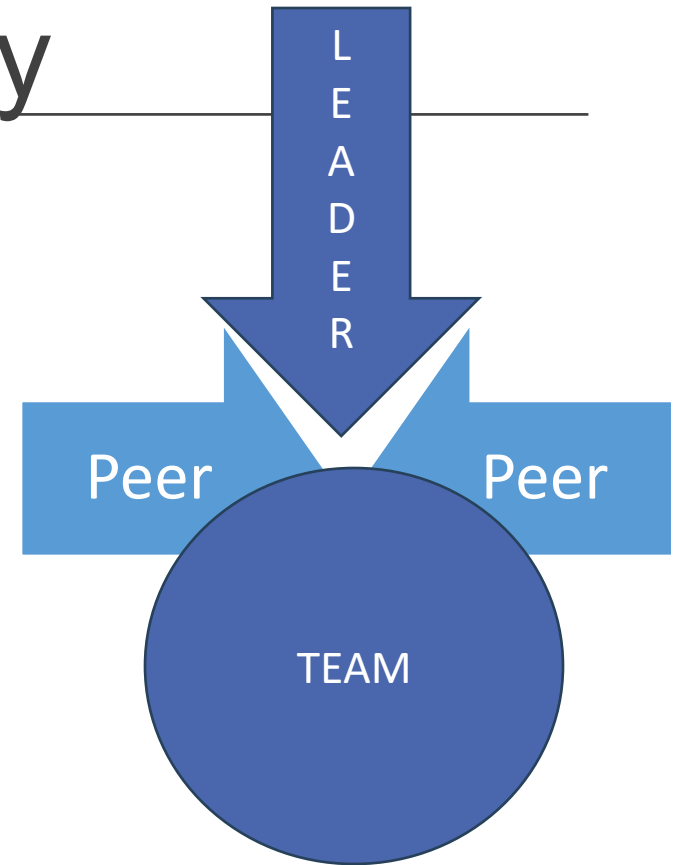
- Hold one another accountable to the **team's** commitments
- Don't rely on the team leader for accountability



# How to embrace accountability

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- Openly accept feedback from teammates
- Find a way to ask questions and ask for accountability
- Follow through on your commitments
- Keep your team informed of changes or inability to meet commitments



## Focus on Results

*“Accountability helps a team avoid far more costly and difficult situations later on, and allows them to embrace the last critical behavior: the focus on results”*

Patrick Lencioni



# Results

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Great teams...

Set aside individual needs  
and focus on what is best for  
the team

Emphasize collective results  
that define team success



# The Five Behaviors® Model



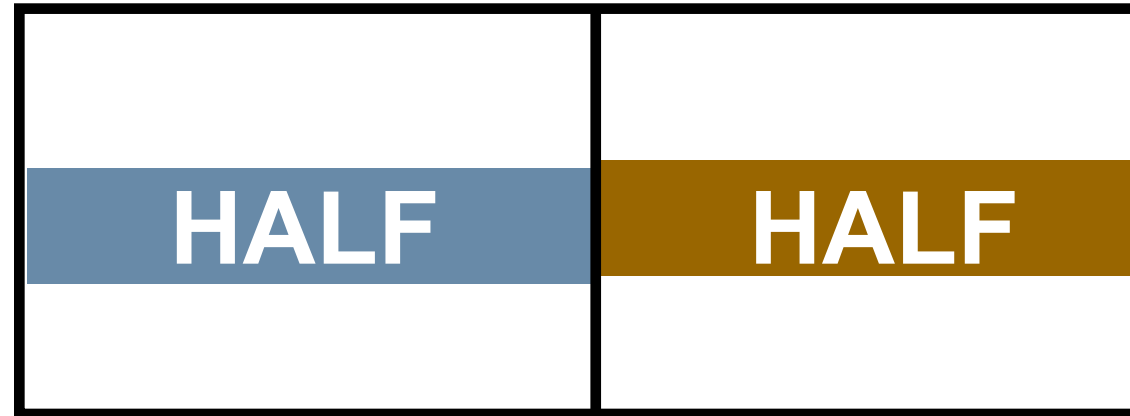
# Definition of Leadership

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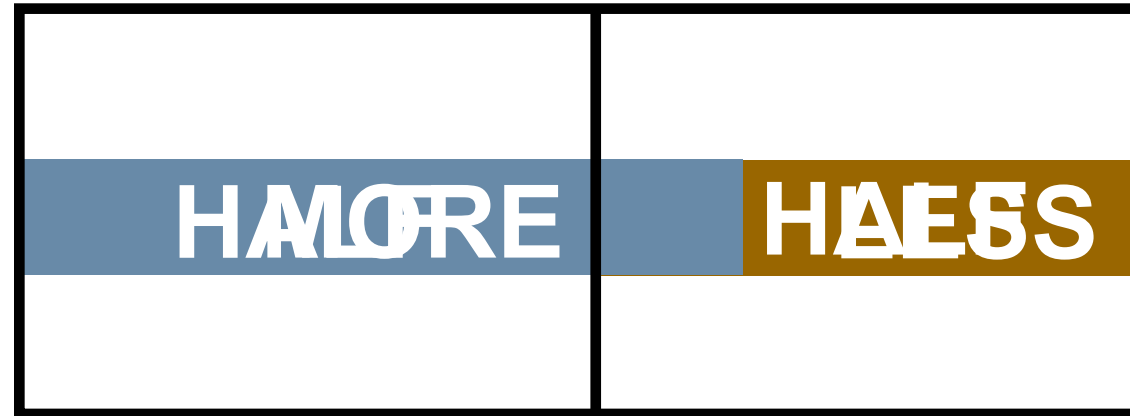


Leadership is the ability to *inspire* and *guide* a team toward a common goal.

# UNDERLYING BELIEFS IN RELATIONSHIPS



# UNDERLYING BELIEFS IN RELATIONSHIPS

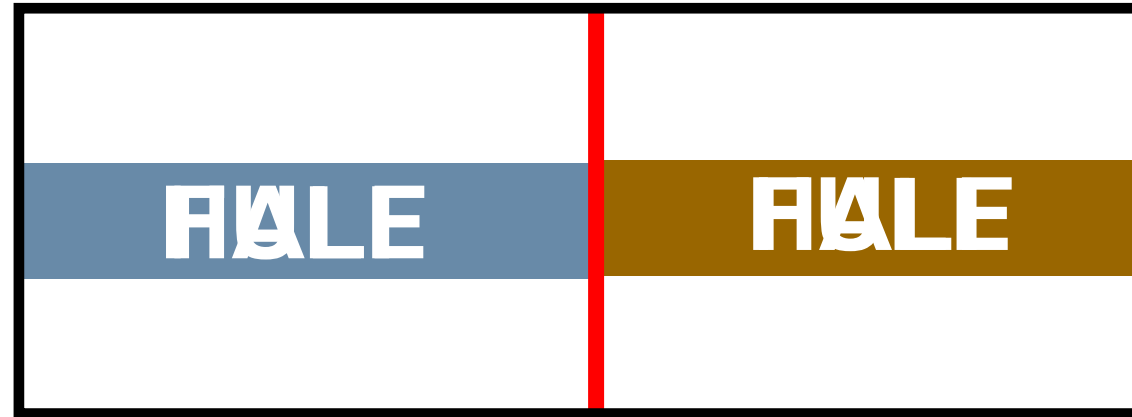


Over-function

Under-function



# UNDERLYING BELIEFS IN RELATIONSHIPS



Can't cross this line

# REQUIREMENT FOR FULLY FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP

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# Effective Management Strategies



Create Clarity



Embrace  
Accountability



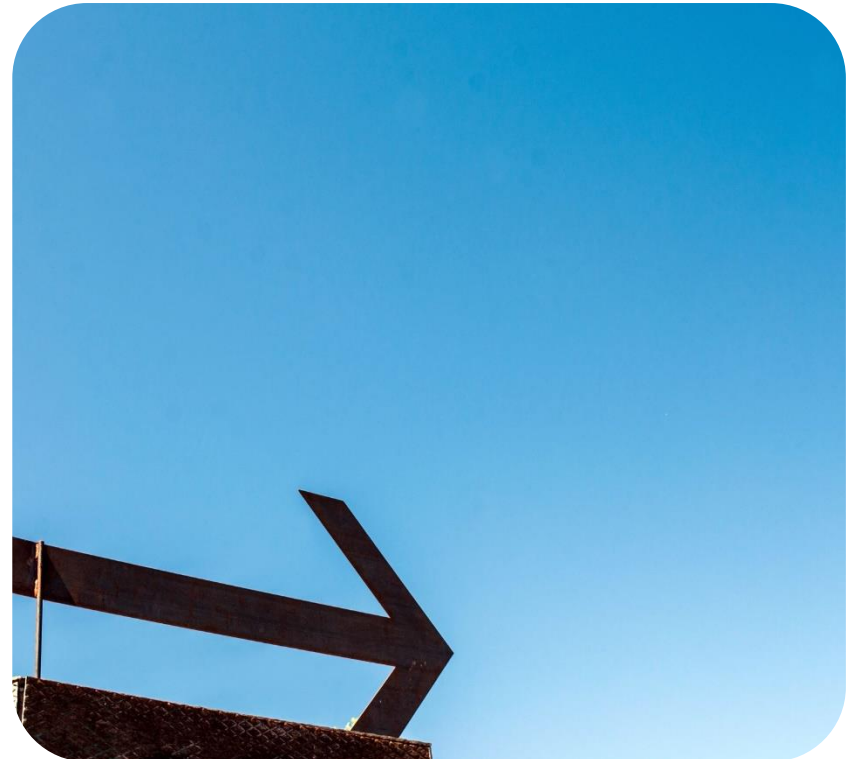
Provide  
Effective  
Feedback

# Create Clarity – Clear Expectations

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*“People can’t live up to the expectations they don’t know have been set for them.”*

RORY VADEN



# Clear Expectation Topics

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Timeliness (Shift presence & reporting times)

Meeting Deadlines (Reports, processes or projects)

Communication Across Departments/Teams (impacts of a new process, regulations, or other changes)

# Creating Clear Expectations

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## Understood

**Why** does this expectation matter to the individual, team or org?

**What** specific behaviors and outcomes are expected?

## Measurable

**How** will success be measured?

**What** are the consequences if it is not met?

**What** is the deadline?

## Agreed Upon

Ask the question so you know everyone explicitly agreed (verbally or in writing ) to meet this expectation?

# Articulating Clear Expectations

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## Understood:

***Why:*** “This new regulation is something that needs to be fully adopted by December 15.”

***What:*** “Every team needs to meet the milestones as outlined in the plan on time with no exceptions.”

# Articulating Clear Expectations

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## Measurable:

**Outline Implications:** *“If you have an obstacle, notify me in advance as it will impact the larger team and put us in a position of being out of compliance”*

**Highlight Rewards:** *“Getting it done by December 15 allows all of us to enjoy the holidays.”*

# Articulating Clear Expectations

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## Agreed upon:

*“Are you and your team on board with making this happen?”*

*“What do you need from me or the team to help meet these milestones?”*

# Creating Clear Expectations

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*“You need to be more professional and not talk out of turn during meetings”*

## **Understood**

- Include the Why
- Specific behavior and outcomes

*“Everyone needs to be trained on this new system by October 31”*

## **Measurable**

- What does it mean to meet it and what does it mean to not meet it?
- Deadlines and time frame

*“You’re always so good at getting people on board. Would you talk to them about this?”*

## **Agreed Upon/ Buy-in**

- Individual understands
- Individual commits to meeting the expectation

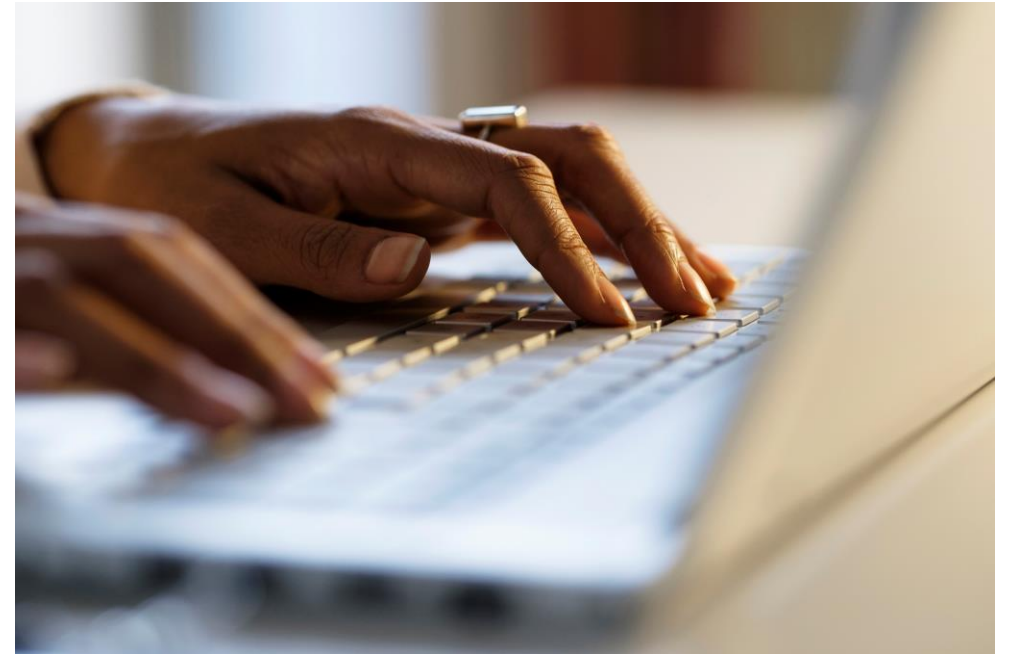


# Articulating Clear Expectations

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Can you create clear expectations via email?

How do you get buy-in?



# Willing and Able

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## Willing

The individual has a genuine desire and makes the choice to meet the expectation

## Able

The individual has recently and successfully met the expectation

# Willing and Able

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## Willing

What are the indicators there is a genuine desire and will to meet the expectation?

## Able

Have they recently and successfully met the expectation? If not, how will you verify they have demonstrated the ability?

# Asking for Accountability



# Embrace Accountability

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*“Accountability is the glue that holds commitment to the result”*

Bob Proctor



# Embrace Accountability

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**Accountability is a  
Conversation**





# Accountability Conversation

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## Conversation requires Listening

### Makes the person feel:

- Important
- Understood
- Appreciated
- Respected

### Helps you:

- Prevent misunderstandings
- Know what is important



# Accountability Conversation

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*“If I were to summarize in one sentence the single most important principle I have learned in the field of interpersonal relations, it would be this: **Seek first to understand, then to be understood.**”*

— Stephen R. Covey



# Accountability Conversation

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**Listen with the intent to understand, rather than respond**

**Give Full Attention (no interruptions)**

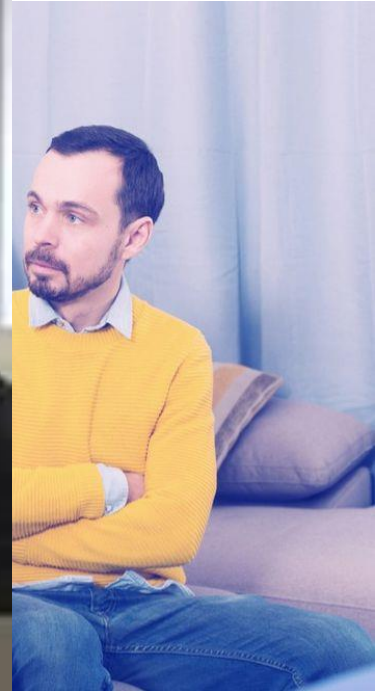
**Mirror & Reflect or Paraphrase**

Repeat the last words

Short summary in your own words

Sounds like, What I am hearing you say....

# Accountability Conversation



# Active Listening

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## Give Full Attention

- ✓ Listen with curiosity, not judgment
- ✓ Avoid assumptions and premature conclusions
- ✓ Interrupt cautiously

## Check Your Face!

Your non-verbal cues impact the conversation

**Mirror** – repeat the last 1 to 3 words heard

## Reflect & Paraphrase

- ✓ "What I think I heard you say is..."
- ✓ "It sounds like you are saying..."
- ✓ Confirm: "Is that right?" "Am I understanding correctly?"

# Listening – mirror

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Simply repeat the last **one to three words**

I didn't know I was supposed to be there **at 3pm.**

No one else turned the reports in on time, so **I didn't think it was important.**

# Listening – reflect & paraphrase

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1. Summarize in your own words

2. Start out with

“What I think I heard you say....”

“It sounds like you are saying.....”

3. Confirm understanding

“Is that correct?”

“Am I getting that right?”

# Embrace Accountability

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Embrace Accountability

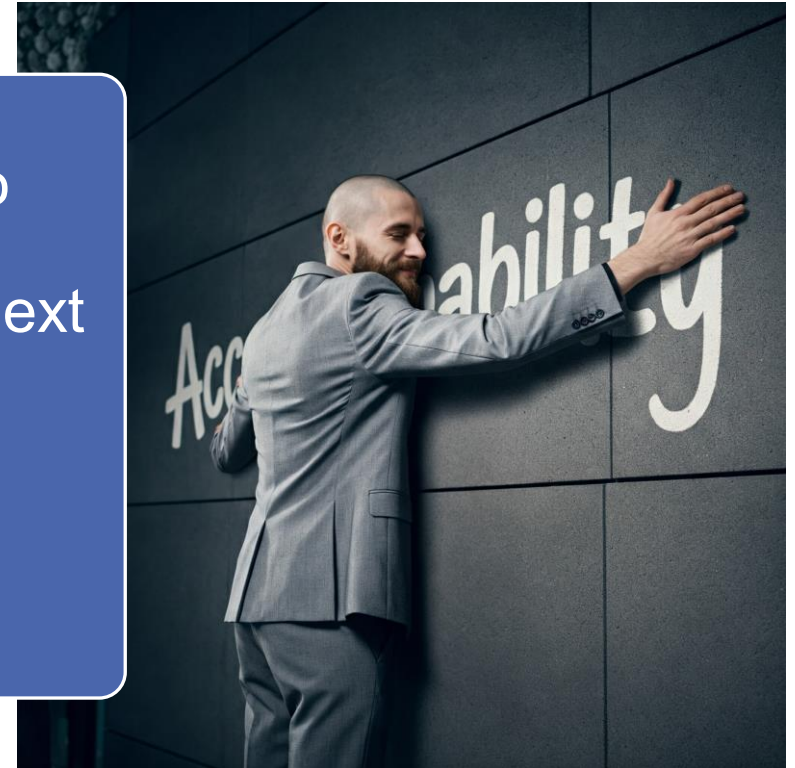
1. Frame the Conversation

Embrace Accountability

2. Ask for Accountability

Embrace Accountability

3. Listen, question to clarify and agree on next steps



# Embrace Accountability

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Embrace Accountability

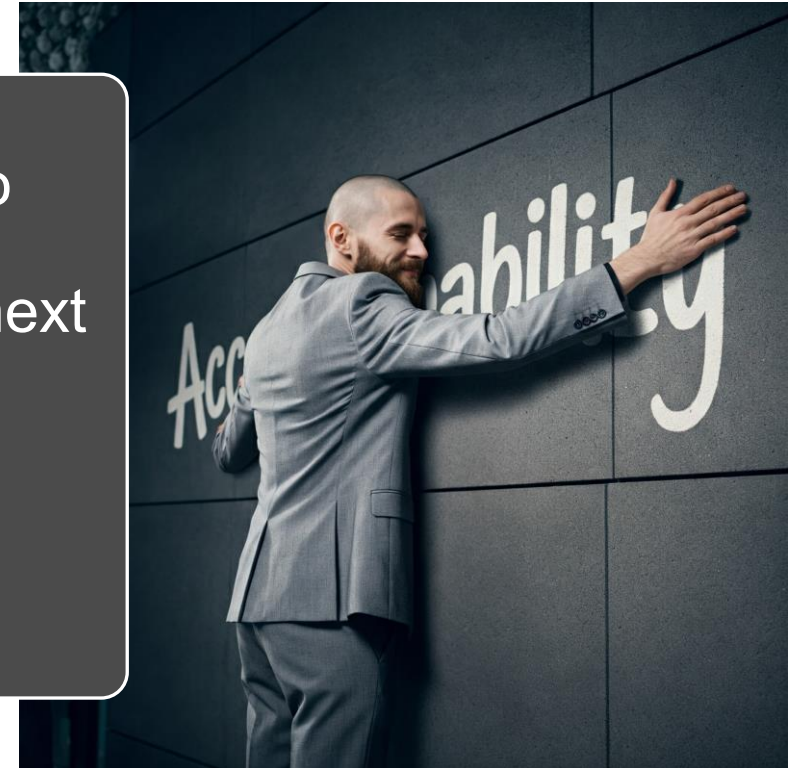
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# Frame the Conversation

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**I would like to have a conversation about.....**

**Is now a good time?**

**Are you open to discussing?**



# Embrace Accountability

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Embrace Accountability

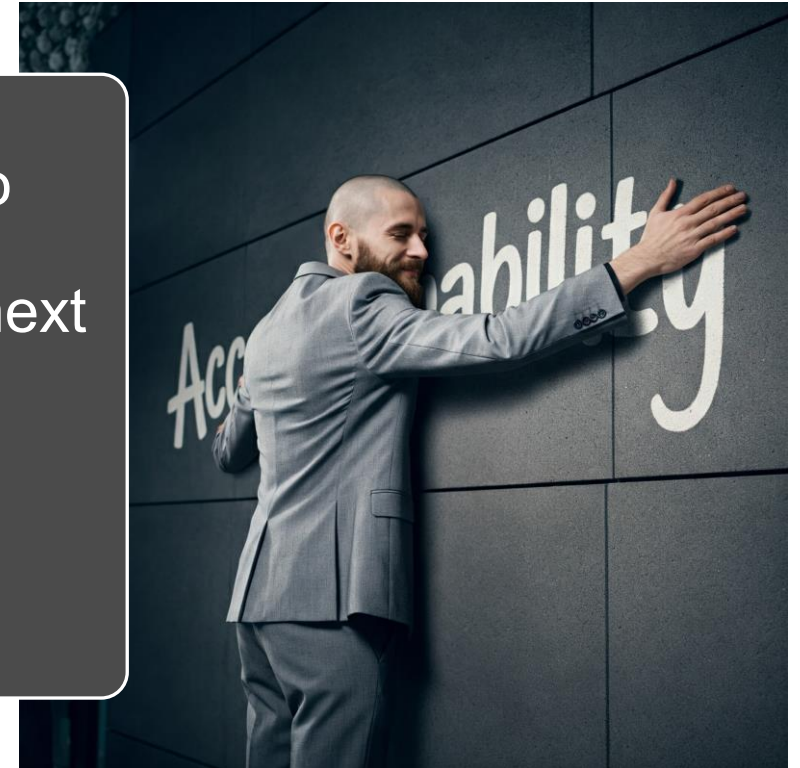
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# Ask for Accountability

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## **1.Start with “I”**

- State how you feel (curious, concerned, confused), then pause

## **2.Briefly explain WHY you feel this way**

- What was expected vs. what is happening?

## **3.Use neutral language**

- Avoid "you" statements that may cause defensiveness.
- Use first or third-person references.

## **4.Ask for clarification**

- Ask: “Help me understand...”
- Stay calm: Relaxed muscles, volume at a “3.”
- Leave a way out with dignity (W.O.W.D)

# Ask for Accountability

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1. I
2. Am confused
3. The report was delivered today and we had agreed the deadline for this report was October 6 which was two days ago.
4. Help me understand?

# Embrace Accountability

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Embrace Accountability

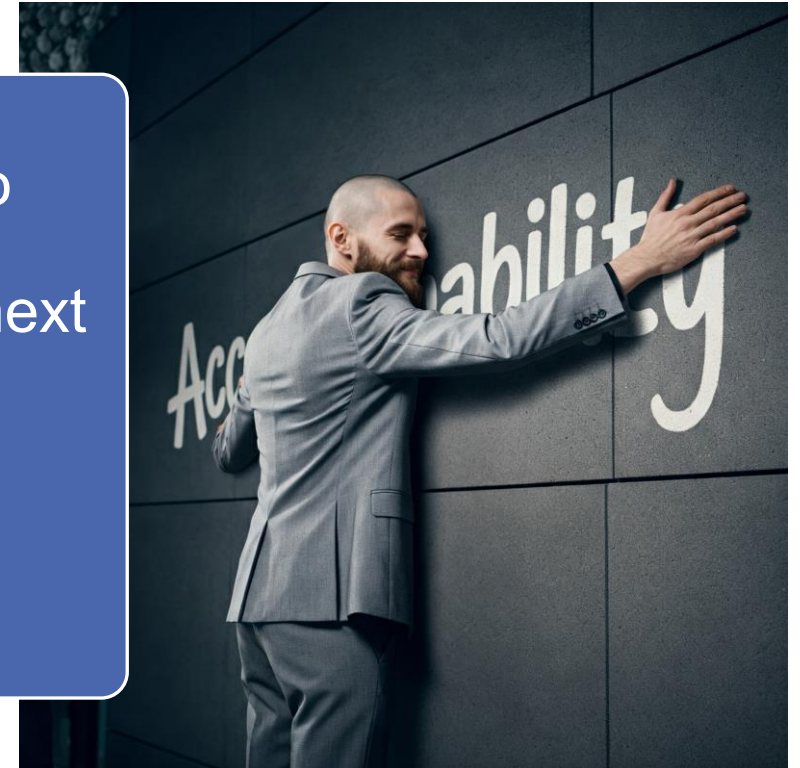
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# Listen, Question to Clarify, Agree

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## **Listen actively**

Mirroring & paraphrase

## **Question to clarify**

Tell me more, how, what..

## **Agree on next steps**

How would you like to proceed?,  
What support can I provide?



# Listen, Question to Clarify, Agree

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**What I am hearing you say is that you had conflicts which you believe made it impossible for you to meet the deadline. Tell me about those conflicts.... Or... How you think that may have impacted the rest of the team.**

**Going forward, can we agree that you will let me know at least 2 days in advance of a deadline if you are at risk of missing it?**

# Provide Effective Feedback

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*“Direct and personal feedback really is the simplest and most effective way of motivation”*

Patrick  
Lencioni



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# What's the Difference Between **Accountability** and **Feedback?**



## Accountability

- Hold to a standard or expectation
- Ensure ownership and responsibility
- Future commitments and consequences

## Feedback

- Informational
- Builds upon strengths **or** opportunities
- Improve performance
- Offer insights

Both Build:  
Transparency  
Trust  
Respect

# Feedback

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## When is the best time to provide feedback?

As soon as possible after an achievement or issue

During regularly scheduled meetings



When the person is ready to receive it

When you can give your full attention

# Provide Feedback

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Provide Feedback

1. Frame the Conversation

Provide Feedback

2. Provide Feedback

Observe & prepare

Deliver with clarity & care

Provide Feedback

3. Listen, question to clarify and agree on next steps



# Frame the Conversation

---

**I would like to have a conversation about.....**

**Is now a good time?**

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# Provide Feedback

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Provide Feedback

1. Frame the Conversation

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Observe & prepare

Deliver with clarity & care

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3. Listen, question to clarify and agree on next steps



# Provide Feedback

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## **1. Observe and prepare**

You want to provide feedback about someone being “too direct”

Review examples – email and in-person

## **2. Deliver with clarity & care**

State what you observed

Explain the impact

Ask for their perspective – what do you think?

# Provide Feedback

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## 1. Observe and prepare

Identify the specific behavior

Gather examples to share

## 2. Deliver with clarity & care

**State what you observed** – You are really efficient in your communication and get to the point quickly

**Explain the impact** – Sometimes that can be perceived as being abrupt and not caring

**Ask for their perspective** – what do you think?

# Provide Feedback

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Provide Feedback

1. Frame the Conversation

Provide Feedback

2. Provide Feedback

Observe & prepare

Deliver with clarity & care

Provide Feedback

3. Listen, question to clarify and agree on next steps





# Provide Feedback

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**Listen, Question to Clarify, Agree on moving forward**

**Positive** – reinforce what to keep doing

**Constructive** – collaborate on action plan or improvement

**Offer support** and resources for success

# Effective Management Strategies



Create Clarity



Embrace  
Accountability



Provide  
Effective  
Feedback



# Recap & Next Steps

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How will you **create clear expectations** with your teams?

How will you encourage team members to **ask for accountability** from one another?



# HLEADERSHIP

*Thriving leaders and teams*

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