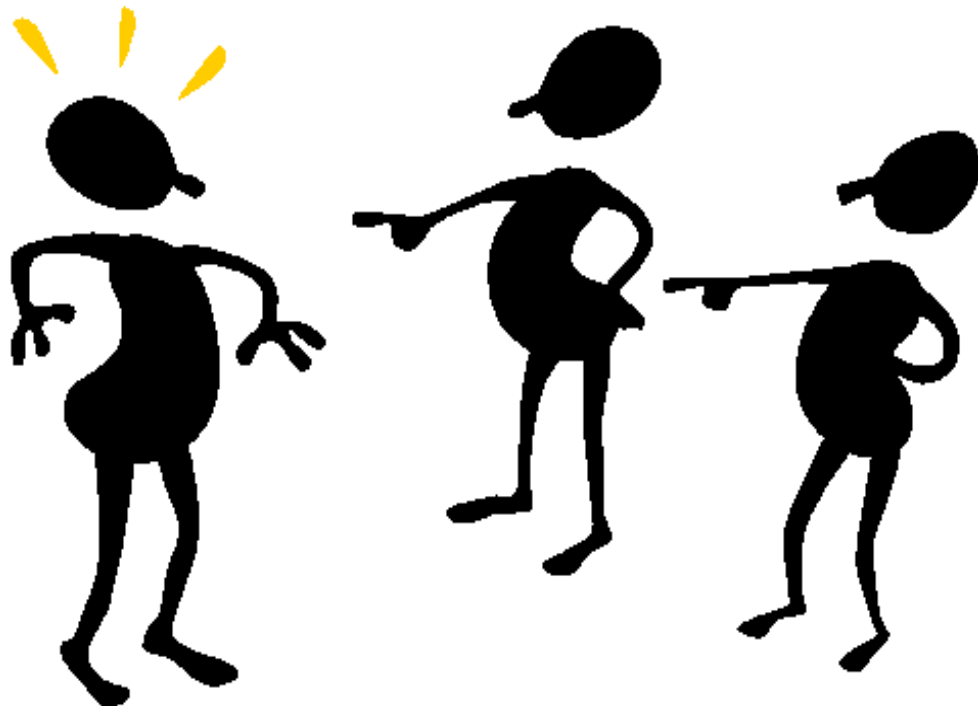




Positive Impact Workshops

Accountability and the Blame Game



Another Positive Impact Workshop

from

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Dedicated to helping
individuals and organizations
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Responsibility vs. Accountability

List below a responsibility you have at work. It could be a task, procedure, or project.

What makes you responsible?

Note below how you got that responsibility noted above. How did you come to be responsible for it?





Hot Tip: Responsibility is about _____. You own the _____ - whether or not the task is completed.



Food for Thought: Responsibility is about ownership and then about cause. The action or inaction has consequences. It might be said that you own the causal relationship between the actions and the outcomes. Some would say you therefore own the outcomes.

What makes you accountable?

Consider the responsibility you noted above. Are you also held accountable? How do you know? _____



Group Discussion Questions

Can you be responsible and not be accountable?

Can you be accountable and not be responsible? _____



More Group Discussion

What is the difference between being responsible and being accountable? _____



Hot Tip: Responsibility has more to do with _____ while accountability has more to do with _____.

Consider these examples. “That storm was responsible for a lot of damage.” “He was responsible for leaving the door open.”

Similarly: “He was held accountable for his part in the crime.” “She held herself accountable for the results.”



Group Exercise

Since accountability is about consequences, consider those things for which you are accountable and list below some of the consequences associated with being held accountable?

Productive vs. Counterproductive Consequences



Hot Tip: Productive consequences reward _____ or encourage positive change and _____.



Group Discussion

What are some examples of productive consequences?



Hot Tip: Counterproductive consequences injure _____, seed _____ and undermine self-confidence.



Group Discussion

What are some examples of counterproductive consequences?

(humiliation) (judgment) (shame) (guilt)



Food for Thought – The most productive consequences pull people in and _____ them _____. Counterproductive consequences push people away and _____ them _____.

The Blame Game

Why do we assign blame? What is its purpose?



Hot Tip: Blame _____ responsibility and _____ accountability.

Blame Shifting?

What is it? Why do people engage in it?



Hot Tips: Blame is often associated with counterproductive consequences. The more counterproductive a consequence is perceived to be the harder people will try to use avoidance.

So What Do We Do?

We must find a way to use encouragement rather than criticism.

C.W.'s #1 productive consequence - - Having to determine how the outcome can be improved and what to do different next time to achieve that improvement.





Encouragement over Criticism

Ask for What You Want!

Everyone has the potential and opportunity to improve. Everyone has gone through situations where they could have obtained better results or outcomes. When interacting with others we often see situations where it is helpful or even necessary to point out the need or desire for improvement.

How we approach folks in these situations may determine the impact we have on them and the willingness they have to improve. When people feel attacked, judged, criticized, or feel any implication of wrongness, it is their human nature to defend themselves. Common defenses include argument, excuses or blame shifting.

In order to have the most positive impact possible, we must try to encourage rather than criticize. We need to find ways to pull them in and lift them up rather than pushing them away and putting them down. One of the best ways to do this is to focus on the future rather than the past. Focus on what you want to see in the future rather than on their shortcomings. Simply put, ask for what you want!

1. Note the action or behavior that you found unacceptable. What did they do or fail to do?

2. Why was this action or inaction a problem for you (or others)? _____

3. What specific action would you like to see instead? _____

Now ask for what you want! You can use one of three approaches; simply ask, ask and explain, or explain and ask. The “ask” is asking for what you want to see in the future (#3 above). Explanations, if needed, can come from why you felt it was a problem (#2 above).



Hot Tip: This should be done with as few words as possible. One short sentence is enough for a simple ask and one additional sentence can offer adequate explanation.
