



# How To Build A Culture Of Employee Accountability

Rachelle Smerhy · Sep 19, 2019 · 6 min read

No matter what your industry, your employees have a strong impact on your business. Make them happy and your business will be characterized by a strong sense of employee accountability that will shine through.

In strong customer service, efficiency and a cooperative environment. We all know business owners and managers that seem to have it all. Contented staff that work so hard the place practically manages itself.

But we've also seen ventures where employees couldn't care less about their jobs. And it shows in every single interaction. With customers, with other staff. And with owners and managers.

So what makes the difference?

## What Managers Want

As managers, we all want employees who show up on time, treat our customers like gold and who are willing to put in whatever it takes to get the job done right. Yet so often the reality is that without constant supervision our employees put in the bare minimum, and their presence at work is halfhearted.

It's easy to put it down to other people's flaws.

Managers are busy, with deadlines to meet and budgets to uphold, so we often demand performance without really analyzing our part in the situation.

Yet the hard truth is that team performance begins with management. It is possible to motivate staff and increase employee accountability; it just takes time and effort. The problem is that those are resources that many managers just don't have enough of.

It's the single most important thing you can do for your organization; instead of looking at ourselves as being there to keep operations moving, what if we looked at ourselves as experts in the art of motivating people?

## **What Makes An Inspiring Manager**

Whether we're business managers or employees, we all have expectations for ourselves. Those of us who set the bar high often have much invested. If you own a business, you have more to lose than your staff, because they can go out and get similar positions should you close your doors.

So how do you motivate employees to work as conscientiously as you do?

I remember my first real job, at sixteen years old, in a pizza parlor in town.

As a kid, I found the work to be tough. The kitchen was hot, the hours long. I even had to work until 2 a.m. some weekends!

Being new to the world of work, it was a bit of a shock.

It was a family-owned business, and my boss, Sophie, was in her early thirties.

Sophie was the hardest worker I'd ever met. She worked every day at 4 p.m. She'd work until midnight during the week and 2 a.m. on weekends, then commute an hour home.

Late one Saturday night I was asked to take a break from the kitchen and clean.

As I worked, Sophie came over to show me how to wipe tables. Now, we've all wiped a table before, but Sophie liked it done a certain way.

She folded the cloth into a neat square.

"See?" she asked. "This way, you cover more table, it's cleaner for the customers."

Then we went into the kitchen where she showed me the precise mix of bleach and water to clean the cutlery.

“Customers don’t like spots,” she said, filling the sink.

During that conversation, Sophie had made two things clear. The way she liked things done and why; because we weren’t just cleaning tables and silverware.

We were crafting a great customer experience.

## **Inspiration and Employee Accountability**

Sophie’s communication inspired my best work. Going forward, no matter how late it was or how demanding the work, I was always striving to please her.

But it wasn’t just me.

Everyone else on staff was the same way; inspired to achieve excellence, and we did, on a regular basis.

Part of it was her communication style. It was firm and direct, without scolding. Sophie was patient and would explain something over and over if needed, without getting upset.

She also had a great way of putting herself in the shoes of whichever team member she was talking to, and acknowledging their feelings toward the work.

Sophie often told us something that has stayed with me.

She said, “I will never ask you to do anything that I don’t do myself.”

And of course, it was true. I could see that just by working with her.

It was a powerful bonding element that has influenced me for the rest of my work life. And I believe Sophie’s ability to bond with her staff was a big part of the reason that her business was one of the most successful in town.

## **Setting the Stage for Excellence**

So how does a truly excellent leader set the stage for excellence in their organization? As with excellence in any skill, it all comes down to focus. Those who are able to inspire their staff to take responsibility are able to do so because they recognize and focus on the importance of employees.

Sound daunting? Perhaps it is, for some of us.

Most managers are under constant pressure; they’re busy filling shifts, watching the bottom line, communicating with the leadership team, managing the

day-to-day operations and doling out discipline here and there.

It's completely understandable; after all, if you roll into work each morning to find a to-do list as long as your arm and you're accountable for each and every task, you're focused on ticking boxes.

Yet there's a conundrum there; if managers were to take a step back and connect with employees, if they were to learn how to inspire, the to-do list would get done faster with employees owning (and loving) their roles.

The problem is that with so much work at hand, that step back can be the scariest step of your career.

The good news is that with practice, you can ease into a more employee-focused mindset. Setting the stage for employee accountability right out of the gate, during the on-boarding process and offering positivity-based feedback are to great ways to create a shift.

Top it all off by building the right culture and you have the potential for massive positive change.

## **Make Expectations Clear During On-Boarding**

Setting out clear expectations during on-boarding helps employees adjust their self-expectations from the start. Making your requirements known from the outset and continuing to reiterate those expectations is imperative to building accountability culture.

As such, it's important to have a well-defined on-boarding process so that new employees always understand what is expected of them.

Start by building an on-boarding plan with formal milestones; perhaps at thirty, sixty and ninety days to evaluate overall performance. Provide clear and detailed training from the outset to help set the bar.

Need help developing the right training program?

Chat with employees that have been around a while, enlist their help as far as what should be included and how to make things clear.

It also helps when developing a training and onboarding program to consider the stress and insecurity a new employee may feel when taking on a new position.

Viewing the training from the perspective of a new employee often helps to make it easier to integrate a new member of the team.

And always remember to make a new hire feel included; as long as you're focused on motivating people to stay accountable, this is a great place to start.

## **Offer Frequent and Positive Feedback**

Be sure to offer feedback very early in the game, both formally and informally. Besides formal sessions, start with outlining an employee review routine; short yet focused informal sit-downs where you provide feedback and answer questions.

The double bonus offered by these informal sit-downs is the chance to get to know your employees better. Remember, we're working toward becoming experts in motivating people and in order to do that it's vital to understand your staff and what makes them tick on an individual level.

To care about them on an individual basis.

Which means your feedback sessions should be:

Actionable, with specific things they can change to improve; remember, no one likes a moving target when getting used to a new job

Focused on positive aspects of their performance while providing clarity on what should be improved upon.

Two-sided communication, with employees being able to ask questions and gain understanding into your expectations.

## **Build an Empowering Culture**

One of the most important ways of inspiring excellence is to build an empowering culture where employees feel as though their contribution matters.

By establishing clear communication guidelines, consequences and rewards and motivating values and objectives, your employees will have all the information they need to get the job done right.

And always remember to be authentic. After all, building an empowering culture is actually about empowering people. It's not just another way to improve the bottom line.

If that's your motivation, your employees will see that from the outset.

Authenticity is key, taking a genuine interest in employee needs and creating a work environment where they can flourish. From scheduling to communication and making them feel like an essential part of the team.

Creating an environment where employees feel empowered by their own contributions is a surefire way to instill a sense of employee accountability.

Have you built a culture where your employees excel? Is your business a great example of clear employee accountability? Tell us how!

To find out more about how HeroChat can help you improve employee accountability and communication, check out our short HeroChat demo!

[Employee Culture](#)

[Book a Demo Today](#)

(800) 209-6052

[www.iapotheca.com](http://www.iapotheca.com) 