

Cliff Notes

Redefining Accountability by Sam Silverstein

3 GEMS THAT APPLY TO YOUR CPA PRACTICE

1. Who are you accountable to? Who are you accountable for?

When you're accountable *to* someone, they are responsible for some aspect of your wellbeing and they impact your life beyond a surface level. For example, you're accountable to your employees and their performance is going to impact your life. It's the difference between ownership and stewardship. Let's use an example of your assets. If you make a bad investment and you blow some money, it was your decision; You can't do that with someone else's resources. There's no margin of error there. It's a higher level at that point. When you're accountable *for*, you're also accountable *to*. Re-definition of accountability: **Accountability is not a way of doing. Accountability is a way of thinking.** It's how we as leaders think about our people. Accountability is not leaders trying to manipulate their people to do more. Accountability is leaders accepting the responsibility that they are *first* accountable to create an environment that inspires their people to be accountable. And to be their very best.

2. Designing Your Work Culture by Design.

Regardless of the number of people in your firm, you have a culture in your organization; It's what's repeated and accepted. There's two types of cultures; a culture by design and by default. If you've taken the time to think about what you want your culture to be and you've determined certain things such as the values of the organization and those values are being lived, then that's a culture by design. But if you're not doing any of that stuff. It's just, whatever goes, goes and people show up when they want to show up. People get their work done when they want to get their work done. If it's done on time once and not on time another time; well you know, that's the way we do it here, yeah, you know. It's what's accepted, it's what's repeated. You want a culture by design, not a culture by default.

3. Establish a Winning Work Culture Through Values.

One of the major commitments is the values of the organization. and you define the culture through the values. We have individual values and an organization has organizational values. Your organizational culture is in a great part defined by the organizational values. It defines the culture in the organization that either inspires or doesn't inspire others to be accountable. When your culture is set up like that, you attract the best; you keep the best. Once you define your values, you can define your culture that models your values, and from there you live those values. You protect your practice by making sure that no-one can exist in the culture that doesn't live by the firm's values and you celebrate the culture. You celebrate it all the time. You walk into your team members cubicle and say, "Great job! I love the way you made that decision with that client. It falls in line with what we say we believe here. That's a celebration."