AccountaCution™

**Accountability
Into
Execution**

Tools For Tough Talks, Teamwork, and Total Results

Ted L Garnett
www.AccountaCution.com

AccountaCution

Accountability
Into
Execution
Tools for Tough Talks, Teamwork, and Total Results

Table of Contents

RELATIONSHIP

TRUST

TIME

Total
Results

Get Outside Help

Downward

Ask, Tell, Choose

Peer to Peer

Clarify Present Request & FIT

Self Accountability

Pre Flight Checklist & Ownership & Criteria for Resolution

Formula For Speed

Planned Relationshlp Management
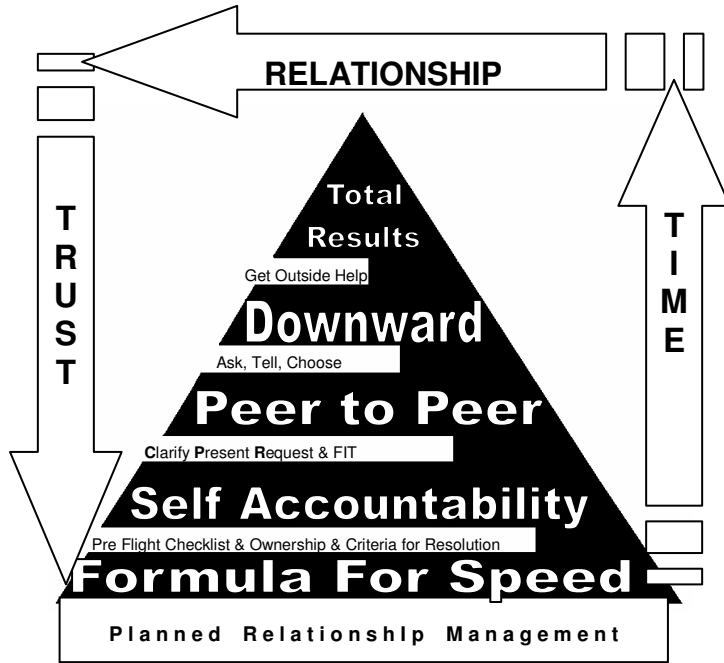
Chapter 1
The Need For AccountaCution

Not too long ago a bank president called me and asked me if I could develop some great customer service training for his tellers. With confidence I said, *"Sure, we've developed excellent customer service training for many organizations and one fortune 500 company even said our training resulted in a million dollar impact!"* I asked why he felt <u>training</u> was needed for the tellers. Our conversation went like this:

Bank President: "Because they are missing opportunities all over the place. They don't cross sell and just don't do what they are suppose to do to serve the customer. I see it happen all over and I'm very frustrated."

Ted: "Well, okay, we can develop some training, but as much as I'd enjoy training your people all the time, let's solve the root of the problem. Tell me Mr. President, why are you hiring tellers who don't have customer service skills knowledge…maybe we should revamp your hiring approach so you don't have to bring in training every couple of years."

Bank President: "That's ridiculous Ted, we already hire tellers with two to three years experience and find out about their customer service experience in the interview."

Ted: "Oh, I see. Okay. Well, since they already KNOW customer service, training may be a good refresher for them, but it's not going to get them to do their job. Let's get to the right root-solution. Send me all the performance reviews of the tellers, done by the teller supervisors, showing that supervisors have rated the tellers low for not performing what they KNOW how to do in the customer service part of their job."

Bank President: "Well, I could send' em to ya, but I've seen all the reviews in the bank and the reviews of the tellers by their supervisors are usually pretty good."

Ted: "Ah HA! So they are not doing their job but the supervisors are not sending that message. Well, let's get that solved."

Bank President: "YES! Fix them for me would you? Train the supervisor group."

Ted: "We can help. First I want to read the poor performance reviews of the supervisors by the managers indicating that the supervisors are not doing their job…not having the tough talks with tellers about lack of performance."

Bank President: "Well, all those manager reviews of the teller supervisors are good."

Ted: "Oh, well then send me the senior manager reviews of the managers telling them that they are bad managers and no raise, etc. for not accurately performance managing their managers."

Bank President (with emphasis now): "TED, all the Senior Manager reviews of the managers ARE GOOD!"

Ted (matching his emphasis): "Oh, well tell me then Mr. President, WHO REVIEWS THE SENIOR MANAGERS?"

He lowered his voice into a half joking and half serious tone...

Bank President: "Um, I don't like where this conversation is going..."

And we both chuckled out loud.

This is a huge concern in many organizations. Somebody wants to throw training at something, or money in some way at what they think is the problem. They often want to do this with little or no cause and effect evidence. The failure to focus on root cause issues (including the potential that the person at the top is potentially the root cause of the problem) produces frustrating results. Constantly focusing on symptoms without solving root causes of poor performance is my definition of "organizational insanity."

KEY POINT

Organizational Insanity: Failure to deal with root causes and allowing incompetent or unknowledgeable leaders to continue in decision making.

Organizational Mediocrity: Engaging in *problem solving* which remedies the pain and might address the root cause and the past issues…or might not.

Organizational AccountaCution: *Problem FIXING* whereby the painful outcomes (past and current) AND the root of the problem all go away replaced by total results.

Organizational insanity exists at such magnitude in most organizations that the simple focus on a proven accountability and execution approach can dramatically improve both individual performance and organizational outcomes. All you have to do to test for the potential opportunity is ask one simple question of anybody in the organization below the senior management team: "*What is happening, or not happening that if the shareholders knew they'd want it immediately fixed?*"

You'll get an answer from about every person you ask and almost always it's legitimate and not just emotion or personal bias.

One caveat, you need to ask this of people who are not in your own company. There's likely too much risk for them to speak the truth to their own senior managers. Ask it at a barbecue, ask your relatives, ask others about companies other than yours...then extrapolate...if there are that many things that could be fixed in other companies, then there are a similar amount in your area of your company!

What's worse than the legitimacy of organizational insanity is that it's almost always fixable. In fact, if people (especially managers) would do the job we hired them to do, that they said they could do and brought a resume full of evidence that they could do it, then the problem of organizational insanity would be largely resolved.

That's right, no big resources required to fix it...no huge capital investments in training or equipment, no major project management approach to implement to get it fixed. Simply get those of us in management positions to do what we already said we would do as managers. But then again, maybe that's not a simple thing to get done.

We've implemented our Voice Of the People GAP Metrics™ system with 33 metrics ranging from employee engagement, to process improvement, to teamwork, to accountability. We've got thousands of employee data points measuring organizations big and small over several years now and, unfailingly, the NUMBER ONE WORST METRIC of the 33 is accountability. When we do operational scans™ to dismiss the unrealistic and bias issues, we hear over and over concrete examples of how people are being paid money while NOT doing their job. It's happening at the senior level, the middle, and it's happening right down at the entry level of the company.

I call this Organizational Insanity because we are willfully facilitating exactly what our shareholders/stakeholders would dread. Organizational Insanity is rampant these days and has no demographic boundaries. What's worse, the employees will give us these examples of organizational insanity all over the place but have told us they will only directly tell their boss about 50% of the truth. Thus the boss always thinks things are better than they are because 50% of the stuff is not presented!

This book is aimed at the managers of any size organization that desire to rapidly improve teamwork, individual accountability and organizational performance. It is designed to equip you with a better approach than Organizational Insanity. This toolbox is also aimed at giving managers an understanding of what the rest of your organization wished they could show you but may not be comfortable showing you because of the inherent risk. If you are a manager or supervisor, good for you for looking hard at these issues! But if you are a senior leader, take stock. This is a peek under the water at a giant iceberg and you can use these tools to improve the course of your ship!

If we would have produced the customer service training, as requested by the CEO in our above story, the outcome would be fairly predictable, wouldn't it? I can hear it now rolling around in the president's, and participants' heads. *"Gee whiz I spent a lot on that darn training and yet the people still don't perform. Darn those stupid consultants!"* or *"Why am I at this training? I already KNOW how to do customer service. This is remedial and boring. I think I'll enjoy the doughnuts and a half day off work"* or worse yet, *"What a stupid management team! We have to spend money on consultants like this when we could use that money to give us all a raise!"*

If we would have delivered the training, none of the aforementioned probable results would have improved the poor customer service performance long term...because...none of them focused on the root cause of the problem which was a lack of accountability all the way up and down the organizational ladder. That lack of accountability translated into positive consequences for poor performance and a lack of negative consequences for poor performance. That's right, rewards for not doing a job and no penalty of any kind.

Behavior science has long since proven that "any behavior that is followed by a positive consequence will tend to be repeated." I often kid about this with

clients by saying it this way, "*People are like water and electricity and kids, they will flow to the path of least resistance!*" My paraphrase on it is not exactly accurate but you understand what I mean. It often holds true even when you see people going to exhaustive and painful lengths. I've seen family relationships where two people are not talking to each other for years and years, and they would rather put 10 times the effort into continuing to maintain that stance rather than the 1/10th effort it would take to simply make up. However, the pride involved and the emotional scars have made the other 9/10ths emotional effort worth 100 times that much to them...thus...the path of least resistance for both the required effort, and PRIDE/EMOTIONAL effort, is to force themselves to win the silent treatment game. The path of least resistance is to WIN, rather than to fix the problem.

So how do we take the behavior science concept of "any behavior that is followed by a positive consequence will tend to be repeated" and turn that into organizational results?

AccountaCution is the combination of Accountability that, when implemented, drives Execution.

KEY POINT
Reward <u>positive</u> behavior it will increase. Reward <u>negative</u> behavior it will increase.

QUESTION: Which behavior do we reward when we hold up a meeting to wait for late people?
Who do we punish?

AccountaCution would suggest we start on time.

Accountability INTO Execution.

AccountaCution =
Accountability → Execution!

Organizations that want to gain competitive, long term advantages over their competition must insure that their results are better than their starting point. They must go from point A average to point B better.

If an organization goes from point A to point A, the approach was less than useless, it was a NEGATIVE impact on the finances, energy, resources, time and productivity of the organization. Not neutral, or a waste of money, but much worse!

Hard on the Process, Easy on the People?

Organizations need to get this type of point A to point B performance to remain competitive in the future of a people and services centered economy. I'm sure you have experienced the opposite of AccountaCution whether at work or in your personal life. I'm sure you have experienced implementing non-results-oriented training only to see the negative performance continue. I'm sure you've seen people transferred that were problem employees, only to hand the headache off to another department.

While your department may show gains because of the transfer, the other department shows losses and the net impact of the organization is point A to point A.

I have a long standing joke with a fellow consultant who focuses on project management process and is fond of saying "*Be hard on the process and easy on the people.*" His statement is right on when process is un-clarified, broken or unproven…however, I always make him laugh when I say "*But what about the person who takes the 15 proven to work processes in a row and then slows it down, doesn't do it, or otherwise finds a way to screw it up? What about the lineman on a football team who knows how to block, knows who he is suppose to block, but that guy is a 275 pound monster all star linebacker who is going to hurt*

him so the lineman runs to the water cooler the minute the ball is snapped...how do you get hard on the process there? Do you give that lineman more blocking training, do you re-teach him the blocking scheme for the 500th time since you go over it 30 times a day in practice?" It's a joke, it's not the process that is the problem MOST of the time.

In fact, it's not that the lineman in my example doesn't know what to do. The problem is he knows EXACTLY what he is supposed to do! It's not what he doesn't know, or the process that doesn't work, it's what he DOES KNOW that's causing the problem. He doesn't want to do a hard part of his job, so he's going to do something else. I'm sure you've been around kids that caused slow downs in the check out line with negative behavior. If that behavior never worked before, they'd never use it, but because they know it has worked, they will use it and push it relentlessly until they get it to work again. Behavior rewarded will continue or increase.

The application of AccountaCution is focused on maximizing limited resources. It's about changing the way we LEAD people so that they are more interested in driving the organization forward than they are in finding ways to take a break or stretch 4 hours of work into 8 hours of time. The application of AccountaCution is about improving energy, not draining it. It's about separating managers who don't really want to lead people or aren't competent from the real people-leaders.

An AccountaCution Executive Sums It Up:
"I see AccountaCution as positioning people for success and then rewarding that progress aggressively. You then simply identify those not taking advantage of the success opportunities and coach them to execute or make up for not executing, or be executed! To get people to be self-accountable they need to understand the team's success is both individually and collectively owned. Their relationships and attitudes are as important as their technical results. Then you live it."

You may think we are trying to squeeze people. We're not. People actually get more energy out of being fully engaged! Your top performers crave accountability. They crave meaningful, productive, progressive work. The only folks who might be de-energized by AccountaCution are poor performers or managers who don't want to do the real job of leading people. If we can improve accountability we can improve engagement and productivity making significant team gains.

Addressing The Dirty Word

I ask groups all the time what nickname they hear others call the police? I heard "fuzz, cops, pigs." PIG? I hear that one every single time.

Awhile ago my oldest son came upstairs complaining about one of his brothers not sharing a game.   One of his grandmas was there and when she heard the complaint replied, "*Now Zach, don't be a TATTLE TALE!*" With as much respect as possible for this phrase I said, "G*randma, shut up!*" Tattle tale. Do you know who invented that name . . . a criminal!

If his brother was breaking the law (by not sharing) and Zach had given him every chance to do things right, then he absolutely should come seek help, justice and support. It's only a criminal that wants to get away with something that tries to make the one doing right, bringing them to justice, out to the BAD GUY!

Seems accountability has become a dirty word. Why? Why is it when the public safety officers try to do their job and keep everyone safe, they get called pigs? After all, I'm the one speeding, I broke the law, and I deserve the accountability of a ticket to keep myself and everyone else safe. I agreed to obey the law. I know driving is a privilege not a right. So why would a police officer get such a label? Or maybe more importantly, when somebody does use that label, why doesn't anybody else speak up to defend them?

Ah, here is one for you. Unforgiving. What happens if you agree to something with another person? That agreement often is based on commitments to be made and kept by both of you. So you go off and put your resources into it, you work on your end, counting on the expectation that they will also. Then they don't follow through. They want to all of the sudden change things up for whatever reasons and do their own thing (selfish)…but you've already done your part. They might say, "*I'm sorry, but I need to do X for myself instead of Y for you because (fill in the excuse) reasons so please be nice and let me do this.*" So if you don't let them you are MEAN?

What about a work relationship? Or a supervisor? If your co-worker or employee doesn't follow through on things, then you may decide to bring some type of negative consequence to them. You may try to work with them less or give them a negative rating on your peer review form for lack of follow through. In the case of supervision you may have to fire them or require them to pay back damages or even sue them for breaking the law. You will be tagged with the label "UNFORGIVING." Wow, unforgiveness, that's a sin for sure.

All you did was keep your end of the deal. You did what was right then told the truth about somebody else's negative behavior and gave them an appropriate consequence. For doing the right thing you are a BAD, MEAN, UNFORGIVING, TATTLE TALE-SINNING, PIG! Now all the other person did was something "wrong" but for some reason they are the victim and the good guy.

What DOESN'T AccountaCution Look Like?

In order to finish this book, for which I've been developing the content over ten years, I left the mainland. I did this to retreat from a busy life of 4 children in activities, client calls and engagements, and the otherwise hectic pace of normal life so that I could come to an inspiring ocean view cottage in the Caribbean. The culture here is laid back, very peaceful. It has lots of strengths if you are looking to hang loose and write.

However, I went to the drive thru of a local fast food chain restaurant to get some lunch. When I pulled up there were two cars in front of me. Not a problem right? About 20 minutes later, I finally arrived at my turn at the order menu and had three cars behind me now so I couldn't leave. I was trapped. I sat for at least 10 minutes and then they took my order and I pulled around. The same two cars that were in front of me were now still in front of me at the food window. Finally, I arrived at the window. I could see my bag sitting right there on the counter and watched with awe as the girl took a cell phone call from what appeared to be her boyfriend. I could hear most of the conversation. She made no effort to end the call or get my bag and hand it to me.

I kept telling myself, *"Relax, it's the islands 'mon!"* After about 10 minutes the call ended and I thought, *"Great, here comes my food!"* Nope, she made another call (yep, MADE a call, not took one coming in). The supervisor walked up, *"Finally,"* I thought, *"I will get my meal now. I'm starving."* The supervisor asked the girl how her boyfriend was, then walked away! I got my cold meal about 1 hour after I arrived in line with only two cars in front of me. Maybe they were short staffed? Maybe it was call-your-friends day at work? I don't know, but 3 cars per hour in the drive thru is what AccountaCution is NOT! However, it's exactly what failing to focus on culture and leading people can produce.

At the end of the day I asked the question to some locals about what the deal was with the fast food situation. They laughed and said, *"We don't have FAST food ANYWHERE on this island!"* So why doesn't somebody fix it, I inquired? The processes are clearly in place all over the world at the exact same restaurant chain! Why doesn't some project management consultant come fix this? The answer is because it's not as easy as just fixing a system or firing a non-performer and hiring a new employee. The system is fine and the same as others with eons shorter cycle times. If you fire and rehire, you'll likely get the exact same cell-phone-toting type out of the pool of available candidates due to the island wide work ethic. So what's the answer? They told me and I'm in total agreement. You'd have to change the culture of the whole island.

Fortunately, we don't have to change the culture of the entire population of a country or even a city, but we can change that culture within an organization!

Leading results through people is active. It's something that has to start at the top. Your Human Resources Department probably won't do it for you. Most of HR has historically been ineffective at measurement of the culture or anything

other than compliance tasks. Your Supervisors and Managers will only do it if the Leadership above them is there setting the expectation.

Chapter 1 IN-ACTION:

1) Go ask people outside your company this weekend or at social events the following question: *"Is there anything going on in their view of the company they work for…either that's happening* (like 4 hours of work for 8 hours of pay) *or that's not happening* (like we should be having routine maintenance regularly or strategic planning once a year but we skip it and thus have no road map or goals or performance reviews) *that if the shareholders/owners knew about it they'd want it fixed?"*

Another way of asking this is…*"What's going on at your organization that is below the table or above the table but not being dealt with? Behavior that's either intentionally hidden from leadership or is in the open and nothing is done except constant complaining?"* See what you find out. Be aware that if you ask people without much relationship, they may be weary of your motives. Thus you may need to pry and assure them you are doing some research, not trying to spy for their boss! Be transparent as to why you're asking and some will open up and tell you what they won't even tell their own company.

Keep this information documented as we'll combine it with the IN-ACTION from chapters 2 and 3 to use in subsequent chapters to implement the AccountaCution approach.

More tools at www.AccountaCution.com.

Conclusion on the Concept, Illustration & Application of AccountaCution

The bottom line on AccountaCution is simply where accountability goes, Execution and therefore operational results will follow. Now this assumes that people have the appropriate clear expectations in place with organizational goals fed by departmental goals fed by individual performance expectations.

This is the single biggest thing I am working on with almost every client out there. The skills and tools for AccountaCution are readily available and outlined in the following chapters.

The bottom line is...we have seen in our data that an improvement in accountability within an organization will have a DIRECT and positive impact on business outcomes. Seems logical, but then why have most companies out there not even worked on it? Certainly a focus on this one area can provide results and payback beyond any possible costs of implementing it. We've seen it happen in many diverse operational environments. It's not just a theory or a concept. This accountability thing is the real deal.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Ted Garnett holds many credentials, certifications and is a highly acclaimed national speaker, author, trainer and executive coach. Ted is the only consultant in the world certified as a six sigma black belt, return on investment profressional and a professional in Human Resources! However, Ted considers his most important work to be the role of being a Christian husband and father. Out of those strong values comes the commitment to assisting organizations in their pursuit of performance improvement. Only when clients succeed at improved results does Ted feel he has had an impact and provided value. Ted's passion is helping organizations to HELP THEMSELVES towards maximized results for every stakeholder. More can be found on Ted's bio at www.accountacution.com.

<div align="center">

OTHER RESOURCES:
www.8minuteAgame.com
Subscribe to a bi-monthly tips and coaching video on bringing accountability and improved performance.

www.resourcezone.net
Find out more about Performance Resources Consulting LLC as an organization and the services we offer.

</div>