



# PETRA PROCESS

**3 STEPS TO FOSTER POSITIVE ACCOUNTABILITY IN  
YOUR BUSINESS**



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### LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

#### **HOLDING PEOPLE ACCOUNTABLE SHOULDN'T AMOUNT TO PUNISHMENT – IT'S AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE IN A TRANSPARENT WAY.**

Accountability. What do you envision when you hear the word? Standing before a stern judge, being held accountable for crimes and misdemeanors? Being called to the carpet in the boardroom for less-than-stellar earnings? If so, you're not alone: "Accountability" has gotten a bad rap in recent years, but it shouldn't be that way.

The best business leaders foster a **company culture where accountability is celebrated** and plays a crucial role in moving the team—and the enterprise as a whole—forward in positive ways. After all, if you're going to set individual and company goals and expect full participation in achieving them, then everyone from the top down must be **accountable for completing specific tasks**.

You see, the essence of accountability isn't about punishing mistakes. It's about giving everyone the opportunity to set goals and find success in a transparent way and with the support (and motivation) of your entire team. **Being held accountable** is a gift—an opportunity to shine as an individual while contributing to a larger effort. Unfortunately, as a business coach, I've seen too many leaders who make accountability a negative proposition, resulting in team members who are tentative, afraid to fail and don't bring their best ideas and energy to their work.

Effective business leaders incorporate positive accountability as part of their daily practice. When done right, it fosters a culture where individuals help each other perform better, while **building trust and loyalty**.

Here are three ways to make positive accountability a part of your company culture:

## 1. MAKE ROOM FOR FAILURE.

Henry Ford, one of America's greatest entrepreneurs, said, "Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently." The bottom line: **Failure is inevitable** in business. If you're not failing, **you're not taking enough risk** in growing your company. You can only discover your true potential by **entering the discomfort zone**, taking a risk and accepting responsibility for the outcome—which includes the occasional failure.

Business leaders should encourage the same attitude and action from team members. Acknowledge mistakes, but celebrate risk and encourage your employees to keep giving their all. Creating a positive attitude toward failing will help everyone on the team to take more chances.

**Learning to fail the right way** also provides valuable feedback, so your team is better prepared to handle future challenges. Position failures in a way that helps your team discover more about their true talents and where the company's focus should be.

Michael Jordan summed it up: "I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

## 2. SET SMART GOALS.

Businesses run into trouble when leaders set goals but don't clearly communicate them to the team. Without everyone on board, goals will not be reached, and the business will suffer. When team members know their goals and what they're accountable for, they will drive the company forward.

Setting—and agreeing on—SMART goals (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) is a key aspect of accountability. In our organization, it's a priority to make sure all team members know their goals and how they affect the company. Additionally, each associate has at least three key performance indicators (KPIs) by which outcomes are measured. This keeps everyone on track to achieve the desired results.

Success in business is the direct result of small activities—including the KPIs each person is responsible for completing—that are consistently executed over time. Giving everyone the ability to gauge their progress accurately and know what needs to happen next keeps the team moving steadily and in the right direction.

### 3. EMPOWER YOUR TEAM.

Accountability and expectations go hand-in-hand. Micromanagement—hovering over team members or telling them how to do their jobs—can derail the entire process.

**Micromanaging doesn't work.** It monopolizes precious time that you should spend working on your business instead of working in your business. When you're in the weeds with day-to-day operations, you become reactive rather than proactive, and you will never move your business forward.

Trust your team. You hired great people, so step back and let them do the jobs you pay them to do. **Empower them to step up and take initiative.** Then, your team members will hold themselves accountable for their results and who knows? They may even do the job better than you.

Building a company culture where accountability is embraced in a positive way isn't easy. It requires business leaders to bake it into every facet of company operations. It means ensuring that goals are clearly communicated, and team members know what's expected of them, and it means providing the resources they need to succeed. Done right, accountability will help your team—and your business—thrive.

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# THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

**The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.**

## **Looking to change your business life - forever?**

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

*Andy Bailey is lead entrepreneur coach with business coaching firm Petra and serves as the Entrepreneur Organization's global membership director. Visit his blog at [www.petracoach.com](http://www.petracoach.com) for more business and leadership insight.*

### **PETRA COACH**

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