

## Definition

### ACCOUNTABILITY

- The obligation of an individual or organization to account for its activities and accept responsibility for them.
- Taking or being assigned responsibility for something that you have done or something you are supposed to do.

### Story

On June 2, 2010, Armando Galarraga, a pitcher for the Detroit Tigers, was one out from pitching a perfect game; something that is rare in major league baseball. However, on the last out, the first base umpire, Jim Joyce, ruled the runner safe, putting an end to Galarraga's quest for a perfect game. Joyce believed he made the right call until he saw the replay for himself after the game. The replays showed the runner was clearly out and that Galarraga should have gotten credit for a perfect game. Joyce, the umpire, immediately went to the 28-year-old pitcher from Venezuela after the game and apologized for getting the call wrong.

Stop and think about that for a moment...the umpire, Joyce, went and apologized for getting the call wrong! That is a beautiful picture of accountability and responsibility.

And then Galarraga turned around and forgave him for blowing a call that cost him something he may never ever do in his career again; throw a perfect game. "He probably feels more bad than me," Galarraga said. "Nobody's perfect. Everybody's human. I understand. I give the guy a lot of credit for saying, 'I need to talk to you.' You don't see an umpire tell you that after a game. I gave him a hug."

It is a powerful thing when people take accountability...and just as powerful when people forgive. Whether it is kids, friends, umpires or leaders...watching people do the right thing because it is the right thing is always powerful. Taking accountability for one's actions builds huge trust dividends.

### Quotes

"Responsibility equals accountability equals ownership. And a sense of ownership is the most powerful weapon a team or organization can have." **Pat Summitt**

"He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else."

**Benjamin Franklin**

“Our tradition calls for a commitment to accountability. This is not an assumption – this is a promise that I will be there for you; and I can count on you being there for me.”

**Bob Ladouceur**, De La Salle High School Football Coach

## **Interaction**

1. What does it mean to be personally responsible to your team?
2. Who holds you accountable? Whom do you hold accountable?
3. Why is strong accountability important to your team's success?

## **Main idea**

Responsibility sometimes requires us to do things that are unpleasant, uncomfortable, or even frightening. It asks us to carry our own weight, prepare and set goals, and exercise the discipline to reach our aspirations.

Accountability is about empowering, encouraging, and "pushing" others to accomplish a task. It is a rare person that "enjoys" being held accountable. Who wants to be told they need to gain strength, work harder, commit more, improve their attitude, or communicate more effectively?

Being held accountable and taking responsibility is not easy. It's easier to make excuses! Excuses spread like a virus and make the entire team sick. Excuses never make you better. The only antidote for excuses is to **take** and **make**. Take full responsibility and make changes.

When we take responsibility, we exercise a spirit of humility and consider others better than ourselves. We assume ownership of both the problem and the solution. So don't get good at making excuses. Instead, take responsibility and make changes!

## **Take Away**

The right thing to do and the hard thing to do are usually the same thing.