

# Developing Accountability

Accountability is the acceptance of responsibility for one's own actions. It implies a willingness to be transparent, allowing others to observe and evaluate one's performance.

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1. Holding yourself accountable can be challenging.
  2. Holding others to high standards is even more demanding. Confronting people may cause discomfort.
  3. However, growth doesn't occur when individuals are in their comfort zones.
  4. We cannot inspire people to become better players and individuals while remaining in a place of comfort.
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When you are accountable...

1. You don't get to blame, complain, or defend.
  2. You don't get to blow up emotionally on people.
  3. You have to be the example.
  4. You have to take ownership for everything.
  5. You have to be the one they can look to when times are tough.
  6. That's the responsibility of leadership.
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A quick way for the coach to lose respect of their team is by not being demanding enough, failing to emphasize a higher standard, and avoiding the stressful, passionate investment that entails the risk of losing popularity. While they may win the popularity contest, they sacrifice respect, resulting in lowered standards."

**Anson Dorrance, UNC Women's Soccer Coach**

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## Methodology

When we setup our charter/manifesto/player principles we go through a 4 stage process with the players:

1. Set clear vision and values – players do this with coaches facilitating
2. Identify expectations and behaviours for supporting the standards
3. Identify how we (the team and finally the coaches) warn of transgressions prior to consequences
4. Agree on consequences as a team

### ***The steps we take are:***

1. Co-create standards with your team at the beginning of the season:
  1. What do we need to do to ensure success?
  2. What are our standards or non-negotiables?
  3. How should we behave in times of success of failure?
  4. Etc
2. Identify and document the behaviours we expect AND do not expect
3. Assist the players in deciding how to warn each other of any transgressions
4. Agree upon the consequences of not meeting the standards:
  1. What happens ...if we are late
  2. What happens if we cannot control our response with the umpire
  3. What should we do when someone is not putting in 100%
  4. What do we do when we win – OR lose

In addition we as coaches can also use instant feedback to hold them accountable: “I am holding you accountable because

we have established high standards. I have confidence in your ability to achieve them, and we are relying on you.”

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One quick caveat – Always ask the question – “Are they capable of doing this, even if it’s very hard?” as you may have to adjust your expectations.

If the answer is yes, it is crucial to hold them accountable, while providing them with encouragement and coaching.

**SIDENOTE:** A significant factor contributing to the fragility of Gen Z is the absence of accountability in their homes, schools, and sports environments.

Another insight on this topic from a Basketball NCAA coach about shielding your child from accountability