

THE ALL-IN ACCOUNTABILITY™



BLUEPRINT

→ Ensuring Team Accountability Success Every Time ←

Accountability is often hailed as the cornerstone of team success, yet it risks becoming a buzzword that everyone soon starts to tune out. The concept is used ad nauseam, sometimes even to beat people up over perceived shortcomings, rather than to foster true team achievement.

According to Merriam-Webster, accountability is “an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions.” However, for teams, this definition falls short.

What we need is **All-In Accountability™**—a new way of looking at accountability in teams that leads to the highest levels of organizational achievement.

The most overlooked aspect of All-In Accountability™ is collective accountability. Collective accountability means that team members hold themselves and each other to high standards, regardless of whether the boss is present. The big idea is that championship teams challenge one another and strive for excellence together, independent of their leader’s oversight.

But collective accountability alone is not enough. Only when teams combine self-accountability, leader accountability, North Star PGS accountability, and collective accountability can they reach their full potential—and achieve All-In Accountability™.

Whether you're leading a large organization or working closely with just one other person, the principles of All-In Accountability™ apply.

DIAGNOSE & RESOLVE: THE ALL-IN TEAM ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL

Understanding where your team currently stands is the first step to achieving All-In Accountability™. Our All-In Team Accountability Model helps identify the different types of accountability present within teams. By diagnosing your team's current type, you can better understand the specific dynamics at play and the areas that need improvement.



No Accountability – Fractured Team

Teams with no accountability are characterized by unclear roles and responsibilities, leading to a fractured team. Team members often use words like “try” and “as soon as I can” to avoid commitment and accountability. This lack of clarity and direction results in low achievement. A Harvard Business Review study found that teams with unclear roles and responsibilities experienced a 25% decrease in productivity and a 30% increase in project delays.



Self-Accountability – Siloed Team

In teams focused on self-accountability, members prioritize commitments within their own areas, often leading to silos. While individuals may perform well independently, the lack of collective responsibility hinders overall team success. When other team members make mistakes or drop the ball, no one says anything. There's even an unspoken promise: “I won't challenge you in your area, if you don't challenge me in mine.” McKinsey & Company revealed that organizations with siloed teams saw a 20% reduction in innovation and a 15% decrease in overall performance compared to more collaborative teams.



Leader Accountability – Dependent Team

Teams with leader accountability rely heavily on their leader for direction and decision-making. While this can drive medium achievement, it often limits the team's potential for innovation and collective success, as team members rely too much on the leader. They will often cite the leader's name as the reason why they take certain actions and not others.

When dependent teams are confronted with different ideas

ALL-IN TEAM ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL

ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL	ACCOUNTABILITY TYPE	TYPE OF TEAM
High Achievement	Collective Accountability	Unified Team
Medium Achievement	North Star PGS Accountability	Future-Forward Team
Medium Achievement	Leader Accountability	Dependent Team
Low Achievement	Self-Accountability	Siloed Team
Low Achievement	No Accountability	Fractured Team

Achievement Level:
Consistent High Achievement

Accountability Type:
All-In Accountability

Type of Team:
CHAT Team



or directions, they often state that they are doing things aligned with the leader's directives and will not change unless instructed by the leader. Gallup found that teams overly dependent on their leaders had 30% lower engagement and 25% higher turnover rates.



North Star PGS Accountability – Future-Forward Team

A team with North Star PGS accountability knows their Purpose, Goals, and Strategy. Members set aside personal agendas and work collaboratively for the greater good, often motivated by an inspiring vision. This

results in team members stepping in to help whenever needed to ensure the organization's success.

A purpose-driven, future-forward approach fosters a sense of accountability towards the company's broader mission. For example, when Indra Nooyi became CEO of PepsiCo, she introduced "Performance with Purpose," which aimed to deliver sustainable growth by investing in a healthier future for people and the planet. This clear, purpose-driven approach led to a cultural transformation within PepsiCo, fostering a sense of accountability towards the company's broader mission. Under her leadership, PepsiCo's revenue grew by 80%, and the company became a leader in sustainability and health initiatives. (Source: Harvard Business Review)

However, North Star PGS Accountability isn't enough on its own. Challenges arise when members perceive differences of whether issues will impact the overall mission, leading to potential silence instead of addressing the problem. This can hinder the team from becoming a Consistently High-Achieving Team (CHAT®).



Collective Accountability – United Team

Collective accountability means that team members hold each other accountable even when the boss isn't around. Holding peers accountable is crucial because, regardless of whether it's explicitly part of the

mission or stated by leaders, everyone is in it together. It's about being a united front.

Breaking down silos in this way encourages cross-functional teamwork and the sharing of diverse perspectives, leading to better solutions and higher achievement. This enhances innovation and overall team performance. That's the impact of collective accountability—it breaks down barriers and fosters a culture of collaboration and excellence.

Collective accountability transforms teams into high-achieving units. On purpose, we're making the distinction between high-achieving and high-performing teams. The word "performing" can often be confused with just working hard, whereas "achieving" makes it clear that we're talking about accomplishing results.

The Mayo Clinic's team-based approach to patient care

exemplifies this philosophy. Their collective accountability has driven a patient satisfaction rate of 94%, far surpassing the national average of 72%. This culture of responsibility and teamwork has consistently placed Mayo Clinic among the top hospitals in the United States (Source: U.S. News & World Report, Press Ganey).



All-In Accountability™ - CHAT (Consistently High-Achieving Team)

All-In Accountability™ creates a team that's consistently championship level. Everyone on the team is accountable to themselves, as well as to the leader and to

the North Star PGS. Team members are also collectively accountable to each other, fostering a CHAT®.

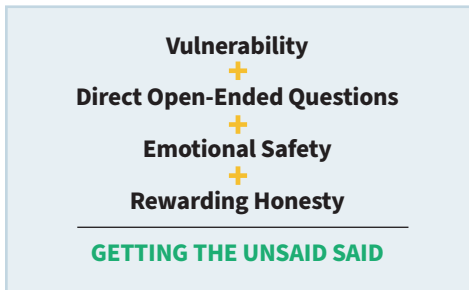
In CHATS®, members are proactive in offering their perspectives, ideas, and assistance, recognizing that everyone has blind spots, regardless of experience. This culture of mutual challenge and support persists whether the leader is present or not, embodying collective accountability. The sentiment that "We're in this boat together" prevails, emphasizing that individual failures are shared by all. This philosophy, captured in the phrase "It's Not You, It's We"™, creates a family-like atmosphere where everyone is confident that their teammates will support them in any situation.

The synergy within CHATS® leads to consistently high-quality solutions, ensuring the team always performs at its best.

5 KEYS TO FOSTERING ALL-IN ACCOUNTABILITY™ IN ANY TEAM

- 1. Bring to Light**
 Make your team aware of the different levels of accountability. People cannot change something they're not aware of. Awareness is always the first step to successful change. Share this article with your team members; ask what they think, and get their input on what needs to be done to improve things.
- 2. Reduce the Gray Area**
 Avoid the pitfalls of no accountability by ensuring everyone knows their part in achieving collective success. Make sure the team is clear on the North Star PGS (if needed, contact us for a tool to accomplish this.) Clear roles and responsibilities are critical. You can't hold people accountable if they're not aware of what they're being held accountable for.
- 3. Enable Proactive Honesty**
 Create a culture where the unsaid gets said. Often, people communicate issues to the leader but not to each other. Encouraging open communication and resolving issues directly within the team elevates performance from

mediocre to consistently great. It's about proactively addressing issues and ideas, as well as fostering transparency. Here's an equation to use:



- *Vulnerability*: Being open about our needs, issues, and ideas.
- *Direct Open-Ended Questions*: Asking clear and purposeful questions. Fuzzy questions produce fuzzy answers, while direct questions prime the pump to get the unsaid said.
- *Emotional Safety*: Creating an environment where people feel safe to bring things up.
- *Rewarding Honesty*: Implementing measures that make people feel it's worthwhile to bring issues and ideas forward.

By fostering vulnerability, asking direct questions, ensuring emotional safety, and rewarding honesty, teams can ensure that important thoughts, concerns, and ideas are openly shared, leading to enhanced team cohesion and achievement.

4. Don't Negotiate What's Non-Negotiable

If accountability is non-negotiable, make sure you say so. Teams suffer when we negotiate on things that should remain steadfast. For example, if a team member is not willing to be accountable and keep commitments, it must be addressed.

I was working with another part of an organization when I witnessed a team where the executive allowed the CIO, who was managing a critical technical infrastructure project, to repeatedly miss deadlines, speak in vague generalities, and become defensive when

challenged. The executive rationalized letting it continue, trying to be understanding, despite the team's suffering. Ultimately, the president stepped in, frustrated, and fired both the executive and the CIO. As someone once said, "If you can't change the people, change the people."

Often, we know individuals aren't in the right job, but we hesitate to make the necessary changes. When personnel changes are finally made, it becomes clear that the situation had persisted too long and was worse than initially thought. To foster All-In Accountability, leaders need to resolve these issues in a timely manner rather than work around them, letting the problems fester.

5. Repeat Until Repeated

The principles of All-In Accountability are not just one-time statements or posters placed around the office. Important messages need to be repeated so frequently that people anticipate them and can recite them back to us. Repetition reinforces the significance and embeds these principles into the team's daily practices.

With these 5 keys, you can achieve All-In Accountability™ and transform any team or organization into a consistently high-achieving unit where mutual support and shared responsibility drive exceptional results. **sg**



Steven Gaffney is a leading expert on creating Consistently High Achieving Organizations (CHAO)™ with nearly 30 years of experience working with thousands of teams across diverse industry sectors. Specializing in change leadership, honest communication, and high-achieving teams, Steven brings fresh, innovative, and consistently successful approaches by leveraging cross-discipline solutions and best practices from other industries. He works directly with top leaders from Fortune 500 companies, associations, as well as the U.S. government and military. Steven is also an accomplished author, keynote speaker, and trusted advisor to many of the world's most influential organizations.