

Excerpts from...

THE ACCOUNTABLE LEADER



***How to Achieve Targeted Results and
Trust through Positive Accountability***

A Business Parable by Tom Blaisse

Albert Levitomie is now a leader. This morning, Al's boss gave him the good news: Al has been promoted from *Individual Contributor* to *Manager* of another department. Al is honored and excited about his career move. But, over the years, he has heard that his new department has not produced the results everyone was hoping for. The former and now-retired Department Manager was very *laissez-faire*. His passive personality had pretty much allowed his people to wander through each month, unfocused and unmotivated.

Al doesn't know where to begin. But he guesses that his biggest challenge will be to gain the trust of his subordinates.



At lunch in the company's cafeteria, the company's HR Director, Chip, invites Al to sit with him as they both come out with their lunch trays. Chip enthusiastically congratulates Al, and then Al asks Chip for some advice for helping his team improve their results. "Well," says Chip slowly and thoughtfully, "you'll need to change the way your people think and act if you want to affect their results. Think of it as helping your people climb **The Ladder of Success**. Our experiences in life drive our beliefs, which influence how we act, which contributes to our results. If people hold unproductive beliefs, they will most assuredly manifest unproductive behaviors, which will produce undesired results."

Later that evening at home, Al and his wife Ruth talk about workplace behaviors. "Some people," says Ruth, "tend to play the proverbial blame game. I call it '**blamestorming**' when people refuse to take personal accountability for their commitments. It's like a baseball player just sitting on the bench during the entire game, watching, and then complaining that others are blowing it: missing the ball, striking out — as opposed to just stepping up to the plate, getting engaged in the game, and helping the team score runs."

Benchwarming Behaviors:

1. Complaining about a situation
 2. Avoiding, denying or minimizing the issues
 3. Blaming others, finger pointing
 4. CYA — Covering your ass
 5. Procrastinating (waiting to see what happens)
 6. Passing the buck
-

The next day, as Al is driving to work, he wonders aloud, "How do I help them to 'get off the bench' and score a 'run' or at least get a hit?"

As Al turns onto the expressway, he turns his radio on, to listen to a local podcast. Professor Justin is explaining to Toby, the podcast host, the problem-solving model he uses to achieve a targeted goal:

- 1. Know About It**
- 2. Care About It**
- 3. Figure It Out**
- 4. Make It Happen**



The next day, at the meeting, Al summarizes by reminding his team that:

- People at every level tend to externalize the need to change.
- It is not wrong to temporarily get stuck "on the bench." It is entirely ineffective to stay there.
- The absence of clearly defined results gives people permission to become anchored in the blame game.
- When results are clearly defined, people are more apt to ask, "What else can I do to achieve the desired result?"