

Holding Others Accountable

Leadership on campus often revolves around a group of people working together and depending on each other to follow through on their respective tasks and responsibilities. Holding yourself accountable is a challenge in and of itself. However, being part of a leadership team often requires you to hold others accountable too!

Find Common Ground: Mutual Expectations

One way to make holding each other accountable simple is to communicate expectations and responsibilities right off the bat.

Setting expectations is one of the most important steps in developing a team. When teams simply form and assume that everyone expects the same thing, it tends to lead to frustration and a lack of productivity. Consider how you will set mutually beneficial expectations as part of your organization team supreme!

As a group, identify what you expect from:

- ✓ Yourself
- ✓ Each Other
- ✓ Your Supervisor(s) or Advisor(s)

Brainstorm together and then come to consensus on the expectations you all have. Put them in writing and make sure everyone has a copy to refer to. You may even want everyone to sign it – almost like a contract that serves as a friendly reminder throughout the year.

Addressing Unmet Expectations and Responsibilities

Determine as a group how individuals and the team will respond to unmet expectations. As important as setting up mutual expectations is, it is equally important to come to consensus on how they will be addressed when not met.

Consider These 5 Simple Steps:

- 1) When addressing an individual, find a neutral location where you can speak one on one confidentially.
- 2) Use “I” statements when sharing your perspective.



...that you want to treat others the way you would want to be treated. If you are in a situation where you need to hold a peer leader accountable, consider how you would want to be approached if the tables were turned.

- 3) Refer to the agreed upon expectation(s) or responsibility(s) that was not met.
- 4) Determine a plan of action to resolve the unmet expectations or responsibilities, and consequences if an action plan is not completed by the determined timeline.
- 5) Set people up for success, not failure. Provide them with the tools and information that will help them meet the expectations outlined.

Accountability Starters

Sometimes holding people accountable can be tough, especially when you first begin a conversation. You don't want to begin with, “We need to talk” – that is just a killer statement! So consider these “accountability starters” when sharing feedback with others;

Holding someone accountable for not pulling his weight—“Marcus, you are a valued member of this team and we all benefit from your skills and talents when you are fully engaged and committed to our goals...”

Holding someone accountable for not meeting a deadline - “Jonah, at our last meeting we collaboratively determined a deadline for your report that you felt you could accomplish...”

Criticism of someone causing disruptions – “Ella, I enjoy having you as a part of our organization and I feel when you give your full attention to...”