

# Bridgeway to Success™

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**CONVEY THAT  
CHANGE IS  
MANDATORY, NOT  
OPTIONAL.**

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## The Overlooked yet Essential Leadership Skill – Part II

Last month I made the case for *why* you must hold your people accountable. This month, let's deal with *how*. Here is a roadmap for the accountability conversation:

### **1. Establish the Common Purpose**

Emphasize that you and the employee are *allies not adversaries*. Let the employee know that you have a stake in their success. Make clear how their success and the organization's success are aligned.

### **2. Confront Reality**

Get the facts *before* you have the conversation. Facts that relate to the employee's behaviors, performance or results. Stay away from discussing attitudes and intentions. Deal with the observable.

### **3. Take Responsibility**

Offer support. Ask, "What do you need from me to help you succeed?" This changes the dynamic of the conversation from attack-and-defend to achieving the common purpose. Don't feel compelled to meet so-called needs that you feel are unwarranted. Still, it demonstrates leadership integrity when you are open to how your actions might impact their success.

### **4. State Specific Expectations**

Fuzzy expectations lead to fuzzy outcomes. State specifically what behaviors, performance or results you expect by when. Be clear and concise. Have the employee confirm their understanding of your expectations

### **5. Rigorously Follow-Up**

Many leaders drop the ball after the initial conversation. Don't let yourself off the hook. Schedule follow-up meetings to monitor progress. This lets the employee know that change is mandatory, not optional.

Following this roadmap typically leads to one of two outcomes. Either things get better and everyone is happy or things don't get better, the heat gets turned up and the employee decides they need a change. Either outcome can be a good outcome.

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