

# HOW LEADERS CREATE BUY-IN, ACCOUNTABILITY & A HIGH PERFORMING WORK ENVIRONMENT

BY BILL HOGG

*This is the fifth in our 6-part organizational change [leadership speaker](#) series of articles that looks at stimulating change for passion & profits.*

Change is never easy, but it is necessary. As a leader, you are accountable for making change happen. If leaders want their employees to buy in and be accountable for their actions, they need to display effective leadership behaviours.

In my experience as a [leadership change consultant](#), and as I have discussed in [How to Get Your Team to Buy into Organizational Change](#), “Even if change is positive and will benefit the organization, it is difficult for people to accept because it represents a disruption to the status quo. People like consistency, and change creates uncertainty that makes people uneasy. Transformative leaders understand how to [frame organizational change](#) effectively.”

## Accountability Starts with Leadership

Part of framing change effectively and in a way that makes change seem less intimidating is by exhibiting the right behaviour yourself. There is a lot to be said by leading by example, especially when change is on the horizon.

This means demonstrating the desired behaviours you want to see modeled by others and holding yourself accountable to organizational changes – effectively proving you are onboard through your behaviour. This is the first step to creating buy-in and accountability internally.

**ONE AND DONE NEVER WORKS -- ESPECIALLY WHEN TRYING TO DRIVE CHANGE. CRITICAL MESSAGES MUST BE REPEATED OFTEN AND WITH CONSISTENCY**

## How to Establish Accountability and Create a High Performance Environment

As I have previously stated in [Five Actions You Can Implement Today to Build a High Performance Work Environment](#), “Success starts and ends with the people in your organization. When your team is managed effectively and clearly understands their role and what is expected of them, good things happen. Good leadership shapes behaviour and increases an individual’s level of engagement.”

So, how do you get people to be accountable and achieve your goal of creating a high performance environment?

- **Clearly and consistently communicate your vision:** One and done never works –especially when trying to drive change. It is almost impossible for a company to over communicate. Critical messages must be repeated often – and repeated by senior leadership with consistency.
- **Have clear and detailed job descriptions:** For employees, being accountable starts with a clear understanding of one’s job. Vague job descriptions can lead to a vague understanding of an employee’s role. It also makes it more difficult for them to understand what they are accountable for and how leaders hold them accountable. Write detailed job descriptions and include roles, responsibilities, as well as accountabilities.

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- **Have clear performance measurements:** Measuring performance is one of the most clear and universal ways to hold people accountable. For example, when your team members know the goal is to close 5 deals per week, they have a clear idea of what is expected of them.
- **Make accountability clear:** Make it clear that team members will be held accountable if they don't comply with change. More importantly, clearly communicate how you will be accountable for leading change.
- **Have an action plan:** Having an action or change management plan not only helps your team understand the direction of the company, it also is an opportunity for leaders to outline who is accountable for what, and the repercussions for not following through with their responsibilities.
- **Improve the effectiveness of meetings:** Something as simple as having team members take notes during meetings can do a lot to improve accountability. Use meetings as an accountability session by ensuring team members are clear on expectations. Use the end of meetings to create actionable next steps with specific ownership and timelines to hold people accountable for what was discussed during the meeting.

When leaders demonstrate accountability, it helps employees believe that they will be accountable in all things. Are you demonstrating accountability or letting things slip because they are “just small things”? Set the right example, display appropriate leadership behavior when going through change, and hold everyone accountable, including yourself. This will set the tone for all leaders to more effectively command accountability from your team.

*The next article in our 6-part organizational change [leadership speaker](#) series will examine how leaders make change stick and drive employee engagement.*

For more information about this topic or to book Bill for a [leadership speaking](#) engagement, [contact Bill Hogg](#) or visit us online at [www.BillHogg.ca](http://www.BillHogg.ca) where you can [sign up to receive an article](#) like this each month.

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*Bill provides world class executive consulting, dynamic keynote presentations and transformative workshops for clients that include; Adecco, Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, Pita Pit, Thompson Abern, Toronto International Film Festival and ServiceOntario.*

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