

How to Have an Accountability Discussion

With whom do you need to have an accountability discussion?

1. Be clear, calm, and curious

Be clear about “who’s here”

- What do you know about the other person: communication style, background, work style, motivations, personal situation?

Be calm

- | | |
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| ☐ Be rested | ☐ Scan your body for tension then relax |
| ☐ Take a break | ☐ Exhale fully |
| ☐ Relax your eyes & jaw | ☐ Imagine a calm place |
| ☐ Count to 10 | ☐ Other |
| ☐ Visualize tension draining away | |
| ☐ Breathe deeply | |

Be curious (not certain)

What do you need to do to bring an attitude of curiosity?

- ☐ Are you willing to see them and the situation differently?
- ☐ What input can you get from a neutral person.
- ☐ Brainstorm other interpretations for the situation.

2. Identify behavior

What is the specific behavior at issue? Are you willing to remove the label?

Behavior	Labels

3. State perception

- What is your perception of the situation/person? What is the story you're telling yourself?

- What will you say?
 - *It is my perception that...*
 - *My interpretation is...*
 - *My understanding is...*
 - *I feel...*

- Ask for *their* perception of the situation.
 - *I'm curious to know your perception.*
 - *Tell me how you see this situation.*
 - *Help me understand your view of this situation.*

4. Engage in dialog

Use reflective listening

- *"Let me repeat that back to you."*
- *"What I hear you saying is...."*
- *"Do I understand correctly that..."*
- *"Say that again with different words"*
- *"Say more about that."*
- *"Tell me more."*
- *"Help me understand."*

5. Define next steps

- Request the desired behavior
- Decide together
- Ask them to repeat back their understanding and next steps.

Discussion Template

When you do **(behavior)**.

My perception is **(your interpretation)**.

What's your perception? **(curiosity)**

Discuss **openly (reflective listening)**

I request **(desired behavior)**

Decide together

Example:

Behavior: *I noticed that the last several reports were late.*

Perception: *When that happens, my perception is that perhaps you don't know how to do it or you are not attentive to deadlines.*

Curiosity: *Tell me how you see this.*

Discuss: Use reflective listening skills.

Request: *In the future I request that you clarify priorities, make every effort to meet deadlines, and let me know in advance if there are problems.*

Decide: *Tell me how you plan to approach this in the future.*