

Responsible vs Accountable... — *which Manager are You?*

I have always maintained that one of the inherent strengths of our company is our team. People at Claris are hardworking and committed, and do their work with the best of intentions.

Yet, many a times, it so happens that the results we achieve fall far short of the time or effort that goes in.

My analysis says that we fail because managers are not “accountable.” Let us say I receive a quality complaint from a doctor in the market. I call the business head and ask him to resolve it to the doctor’s satisfaction. A month later, I find



that the complaint remains unresolved, and the customer’s dissatisfaction has gone up manifold.

When I call the business head to find out why, he is as surprised and agitated as I am...what happens? Generally, either one of these scenarios...

- The business head calls one of his team members. He briefs him about the problem, asks the person to resolve it, and promptly forgets about the whole issue himself, satisfied that he has taken action.
- The business head sends an email to QC, asking them to resolve it, and once again promptly forgets about the issue.

In both cases, the business head needs to understand that, while somebody else may have to actually fix the problem, he needs to ensure that the

problem is fixed correctly and within the time frame and other parameters stipulated..

The terms "responsibility" and "accountability" are near synonyms, but there is a subtle yet critical difference between the two. The key to success is to remember this matrix ...

Role	Manager (You)	Subordinate/Other Team
Function	Accountable	Responsible
Ownership	Problem & Outcome	Solution Methodology & Implementation
Gets Credit for	Getting Task Done	Doing Task

Most managers are highly "responsible", but slip when it comes to "accountability." The managers who succeed are the ones who correctly understand and bridge this difference.

With Best Regards,



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