



MANAGEMENT CONSULTING SERVICES

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Introduction to EntreArchitect Academy Expert Training Session

A Culture of Accountability

March 31, 2016

I believe most people learn the things they later on in life embrace as their core values and principles from their parents and/or grandparents. Once we have entered the business world, we may be fortunate to learn even more from our employers and fellow colleagues, as mentors. That's certainly been true for me.

The quintessential thing I learned from my grandmother, and to this day is still the one character trait that allows me to feel good about myself, is being willing to take responsibility for my actions, for what I say and for my work ethic. Obviously, I am not batting 1,000 in any of these areas. However, when I have messed up and made mistakes, I have chosen to openly admit what I have said or done that was wrong or inappropriate and apologize accordingly. I have used these situations to help me learn from my mistakes and to avoid repeating them. Being willing to accept responsibility for what I do and say has made my life far more simple, meaningful, and fulfilling.

For me, the operative words above are: 'being willing'. I believe that being willing to take responsibility makes it easier to being willing to be held accountable. In most companies, bad behavior is not tolerated for very long before the offending individual is called in to the boss's office and given an ultimatum: "Clean up your act or pack up your things and leave". In our industry, the absence or lack of accountability for poor performance is more likely to be the issue that needs to be confronted, but seems too often ignored.

In the general business environment there are numerous companies who have embraced a **Culture of Accountability** for their respective daily operations; notably, Google , Zappos, etc. As gratified as I am about those companies, I am more concerned about a lack of such focus and commitment in our profession of architecture.

I have always made it known to my clients that I am willing to be held accountable for and answerable to them for any issues arising from the services I provide. I also encourage each client to consider the inclusion of accountability in their existing operational culture and work with them to make that possible.

With more than 80,000 architects and likely twice as many engineers in the U.S., I am inclined to believe that there are other professional design firms who have embraced such a culture for their firms. Nevertheless, these firms and my clients are certainly in the minority. With this awareness and concern, I have developed a passion for assisting my professional colleagues in learning more about the subject of this presentation.

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Recognizing that the majority of our industry consists of mostly small firms and many sole practitioners, this presentation will hopefully provide reasons for those of you who are firm leaders to seriously consider how a **Culture of Accountability** might be integrated into your respective firm's operations.

I can personally attest to a significant enhancement of a firm's long-term results once these principles become a part of the foundation of your business operations culture.

The learning objectives of this presentation are:

1. To introduce a new concept that can be integrated into any firm's existing operations culture or become the foundation of a start-up firm's new culture.
2. How the concepts of accountability and self-management can reinforce a firm's vision and goals.
3. How this new concept can create an environment that empowers all members of the firm to achieve their full potential.
4. How this new concept can enhance a firm's effectiveness, efficiency and profitability.

Thank you for joining Mark and me in this presentation and discussion.

Respectfully,

Steve L. Wintner, AIA Emeritus