

Execution *focus*

The success of an organization depends on its ability to convert its plans into reality. One of the important component of optimal execution is ability of its leaders to execute optimally. As a series of checklists, our effort is to cover 7 essential leadership responsibilities for strategy implementation and execution.

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Leadership responsibility #1 Role clarity & accountability

Every leader must see accountability as a foundation to build a healthy, performance driven and sustainable culture.

“Accountability” is known to most people. One should also know that there is more to it than just writing job descriptions and if incomplete can reduce the chances of implementing your organisation goals by 75%. Accountability should be used as a tool to inspire people to unlock their potential.

Accountabilities are dynamic and constantly require scrutiny and realignment. It should be treated as a relationship building exercise between its people.

The word “**Objective**” has been extensively used in this document, to imply that all responsibilities and accountability should come with utmost clarity and should contain numbers and timelines.

Accountability should fall to one (and only one) “person” per task, even if the task requires input and contributions from others. Making sure that the “person” understands his accountability, in all and specific situations, that are critical across the organisation.

We have put down important aspects to be well thought-out to ensure accountability for a leader and his team. We have presented it as a checklist to make sure you address all aspects while arriving at accountability.



- **Clear & objective “understanding” of goals**

Organisation goals and metrics - Defining performance criteria

- I have clear and measurable (Objective) understanding of the organisation goals
- I have clear and measurable (Objective) understanding of my goals (Performance Criteria)
- I have ensured, through collaborative communication, the goals are very clearly understood by all my immediate stakeholders and team members.
- I enable my immediate stakeholders and team members to align and arrive at their individual measurable goals (Performance criteria).
- I have ensured that all team members across functions/departments understand how their jobs are aligned and impact organisation/department goals

- **“Objective” understanding of customer needs (Internal and external)**

Customer experience is everyone’s accountability. Understand the customer’s needs and expectations objectively and incorporating this in everyone accountability will go a long way in delighting customers and achieving goals.

- I objectively understand the needs (Service levels / time lines, etc.) of my customers
- I have made sure that all my immediate stakeholders and team members objectively understand their customer needs (Service levels / time lines, etc.)
- I have ensured that all team members across functions/departments understand how their jobs impact customers

- **Making a list of key Initiatives (Strategy) to achieve your goal**

Planning and defining objectively the key initiatives you would pursue is the foundation on which the accountabilities should be built on.

- I am clear and understand objectively the key initiatives (Important) that I need to do to achieve goals and satisfy customer needs (Service levels / time lines, etc)
- I have had open and clear communication, with the intention of discussing and finalising, my key initiatives (strategy) with key stake holders and team members.
- I encourage immediate stakeholders and team members to come up with key measurable initiatives that they would peruse to achieve functional / organisational goals and satisfy customer needs (Service levels / time lines, etc)
- I have checked to see if the key initiatives of my team members and key stakeholders are aligned to my key initiatives.

- **Planning activities/actions to support the key initiatives (Strategy).**

Creating and documenting the list of all activities/actions to complete on a day to day basis to execute the key initiatives.

- I have made a detailed “to do list” to execute each of my planned activities.
- I encourage team members to come up with a detailed “to do list” to execute their initiatives.
- I have checked to see if the day to day activities / actions planned by my key stakeholders and team members support achievement of their and my key initiatives.
- I have made sure that my key stakeholders and team members to go through the key initiatives, and activities frequently to differentiate between urgent and important things at work.

- **Capability check to execute activities/actions**

Contextual capability building is an important part of individual’s responsibility and takes care of agile capability requirements.

- I have checked to see if I have the required capability to achieve each of my day to day activities effectively.
- I have made an objective plan and list of activities that I will do to build my capability.
- I encourage my key stakeholders and team members to identify the capability requirement to execute their day to day activities.
- I encourage my key stake holders to make an objective plan and a list of activities that they will do to build their capability.

- **Identify and manage risks that could hinder execution of activities/actions**

Risk mitigation should be a part of everyone's accountability and a key responsibility.

- I have made a detailed list of possible risks that may hinder me achieving my strategy.
- I have made a detailed list of possible risks that may hinder my day to day activities.
- I have made an objective plan and an objective list of activities to mitigate risks.
- I have risk mitigation discussion with all my immediate stakeholders and team members.
- I encourage my key stakeholders and team members to identify risks that may come in the way of them achieving their key initiatives and day to day activities.
- I encourage my key stake holders and team members to make an objective plan and a list of activities that they will do to mitigate the identified risks.

- **Identify requirements of/from collaborators to get work done**

Working efficiently with collaborators is an integral part of an individual's responsibility. Objectively establish what is expected of me and what I require from others.

Superior-subordinate & Peer to peer collaboration

- I have an organisation chart that clearly defines the reporting and relationship structure between team members. I also re-visit the organisation structure regularly to re-align and make changes based on the needs of the business.
- I have clearly and objectively understood what is expected of me by my immediate supervisors. Based on this I have made a list of activities that I need to do (What they need at what time for them to complete their work).
- I have clearly and objectively understood the work expected of me to support my team members. Based on this I have made a list of activities that I need to do (What they need at what time for them to complete their work).
- I have clearly and objectively expressed my expectations from my immediate superiors. Based on this I have made a list of things I need from my superiors and communicated clearly and objectively (What I need and at what time for them to complete my work).
- I have clearly and objectively expressed my expectations from my team members. Based on this I have made a list of things I need from my team members and communicated clearly and objectively (What I need at what time for them to complete my work).
- I have involved my key stake holders and team members to get complete clarity on who can give orders to whom and on what matters.
- I have involved my key stake holders and team members to finalise who can make decisions and when (Circumstances)
- I have involved my key stake holders and team members to get complete clarity on who can advise whom and on what matters

Partner's collaboration

- I have clearly and objectively expressed my expectations from all my vendors and partners. Based on this I have made a list of activities that I need to do (What I need, at what time, for me to complete my work).
- I have clearly and objectively understood the work expected of me to support Vendors and partners. Based on this I have made a list of activities that I need to do (What they need, at what time, for them to complete their work).

- **My Responsibilities for results**

Taking responsibility to achieve strategies and goals is the uber responsibility of all individuals.

- I accept ultimate responsibility for results as a leader
- I will lead by example on two counts - Discipline and accountability
- I conduct bi-monthly / monthly re-evaluation of goals and tasks and in control through information gathering
- I review “cause and effect” of strategies and realign if required
- I review “cause and effect” of tasks and realign if required
- I enable performance of the team rather than review performance
- I have an objective plan to store knowledge that I accumulate and transfer it to my key stake holders and team members on a regular basis.
- I have enabled my key stakeholders and key team members to store and transfer knowledge across the organisation.
- I meet my team on role clarity and accountability every month to realign
- I have clearly defined and communicated the values that need to be exhibited while executing their responsibility.

Metis has developed an **online assessment tool** to assess leaders on 20 essential execution skills. The assessment tool is based on situational judgement inventories and direct questioning techniques. This tool can be customised to your specific requirement and can be used to assess and develop execution skills in incumbent/potential leaders and also used while recruiting leaders. Do write in to us on rajesh@metisindia.com or enquiry@metisindia.com for more details or call us on **9535566588**.