



Fact Finder

HRA Services, Inc.

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“ . . . helping organizations find solutions to people-related problems”

THE AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Be careful what you wish for? While it's certainly not a new concept, accountability is one of the central bywords in today's management lexicon. "Authority," "Responsibility," and "Accountability" were fundamental to early investigations of management science and understanding how work gets done. Frederick Taylor, the father of management science, dissected work processes to optimize the effort and outcome. Today, after the Industrial Revolution and the Technology Revolution, we are still wrestling with working our way through the human dimension in the world of work.

Nearly everyone agrees that if you want something done right, you would be best advised to do it yourself. Unfortunately, as the magnitude of work increases, efficiency and effectiveness require engaging others who can divide the labor in rational ways and, unfortunately, sometimes in irrational ways. Operating enterprises recognize that to maintain efficacy they must regularly review how operations have changed and reorganize to accommodate changing work demands. The fact that organizations are indeed organic—that is, living and growing—mandates creativeness and agility in adapting to the needs of the organism itself. The challenge of leadership and management is to be insightful and foresighted enough to anticipate the change and plan for it rather than constantly be retrofitting to adapt to today's needs. Are leaders and managers leading the enterprise or simply rearranging pre-existing circumstances in new configurations to accommodate current organizational demands?

Creating a culture of accountability first and foremost requires organizational discipline—a word that many of us would prefer to avoid. Accountability is different from responsibility and can be discerned only when a sanction is imposed, a form of reward or punishment, for doing or not doing what is required by organizational and behavioral standards. It's always interesting to watch some leaders and managers fidget when true accountability is about to be imposed. You can immediately sense a rising level of discomfort, again

echoing that sentiment of "be careful what you wish for" and "could this also happen to me."

In keeping with the principle that "everything leaders say and don't say, do and don't do, sends a message," discipline—being committed to act based on principle even when it's uncomfortable and unnatural—is the key to creating a culture of accountability. The organization must be able to trust its leaders to keep their word and demonstrate consistent, predictable patterns that reflect fair and even-handed organizational standards. This, of course, does not mean unyielding, inhuman leadership. On the contrary, it means leadership that promotes organizational caring, trust, respect, and integrity.

HOW ARE YOUR POLICIES?

For many organizations, "writing or revising that policy" is at the very end of a long "to-do" list. And, of course, there are still a few around who would argue not to write anything down. That way you're home free if you're not in compliance. Enlightened organizations, however, have long since learned that good, clear communications are the bedrock of organizational effectiveness and are essential to having staff understand what is expected and what they can expect. Well written policies are important foundation stones to sound leadership and management.

Policies that are carefully written actually protect against false claims and allegations of inconsistency and favoritism. In addition, carefully written policies illustrate your commitment to a positive work environment and non-discriminatory employment practices. It is, of course, essential to be sure the written word reflects your organization's culture, values, and practices and that each of these is in compliance with the law. Be sure your materials are up-to-date in terms of COBRA, HIPAA, cyber policies, workplace violence, weapons, and other areas of current emphasis.

If you're trying your best to make your way down the "to-do" list, give us a call so that we can talk with you about alternatives that will meet your organization's needs in these vital areas.

BUILDING HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAMS AND UNDERSTANDING

High performing organizations understand the critical importance of developing skilled leaders for today and bench strength for tomorrow. Conventional and cutting-edge leadership writers, students, and practitioners emphasize the importance of leaders understanding their own individual behavioral tendencies or dispositions and how those tendencies affect the way they influence others and how others influence them.

With 30 years of proven reliability and over 40 million users, *DiSC® Classic* remains the most trusted learning instrument in the industry. It is used worldwide in dozens of training and coaching applications, including organizational development and performance improvement. Designed to complement and supplement existing training programs, *DiSC® Classic* can help improve communication, ease frustration and conflict, and develop effective managers and teams.

Set the standard for self-understanding. *DiSC® Classic* provides a non-judgmental language for exploring behavioral issues across four primary dimensions:

- **Dominance: Direct and Decisive.** D's are strong-willed, strong-minded people who like accepting challenges, taking action, and getting immediate results.
- **Influence: Optimistic and Outgoing.** i's are "people people" who like participating on teams, sharing ideas, and energizing and entertaining others.
- **Steadiness: Sympathetic and Cooperative.** S's are helpful people who like working behind the scenes, performing in consistent and predictable ways, and being good listeners.
- **Conscientiousness: Concerned and Correct.** C's are sticklers for quality and like planning ahead, employing systematic approaches, and checking and re-checking for accuracy.

Bring out the best in your team. *DiSC® Classic* can help employees at all levels:

- understand their own behavior
- learn how and when to adapt their behavior

- improve communication
- promote appreciation of differences
- enhance individual and team performance
- reduce conflict

HRA's approach to leading change and building teams combines key elements of understanding individual behavior and team performance, emotional intelligence, and leadership modeling that impacts your organization operationally today and strategically tomorrow.

FIT

Take the discomfort, guesswork, and worry out of your hiring decisions. Most bad hires failed way before the interview. Getting the recipe right and sticking with it when the candidates appear is the key to successful staffing. HRA Recruiting Support Services can save you time, money, and effort in clarifying your requirements, streamlining the process, and keeping you focused on the original objective.

If you are looking for qualified candidates and have limited time, resources, and selection expertise, we

- provide professional preliminary consulting support;
- develop and write position descriptions and specifications;
- compose and place ads;
- evaluate applicant responses;
- conduct in-depth interviews; and
- consult on the offer, references, selection, and placement.

You decide what you need. These professionally-managed, cost-effective services provide objectivity, speed, and reliability in getting the right person in the right job at the right time.

The *HRA Fact Finder* is published by HRA Services, Inc., to keep clients and business associates abreast of developments and trends in human resources and personnel management and is not intended to serve as professional advice on specific personnel and organizational issues.

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If you have questions or further interest in any of these subjects, please call.