

Small Business Board of Advisors

Business Coaching



By Chris Naylor

B. Better Business Coaching

One of the biggest challenges facing business owners trying to grow their businesses is how to hold people accountable without being the bad guy. It's stressful. You set and assign goals. Easy enough. Your employees say they will get it done... and then it doesn't seem to happen.

You can't possibly spur on each individual person in your organization to stay on task. You can only do that by building a culture of accountability.

If you have that culture in place, there is a framework. Without it, there is chaos and inconsistency. One week all is well and then the next week it just falls apart.

We've all seen it before in other endeavors. You attend a seminar on time management, for example, and come back on fire, eager to take control of your life. Then you return to the real world and old habits return. Without some accountability mechanism, your new time management skills can't survive outside of the hotel meeting room where they were learned.

Accountability thrives in the right culture. You can't achieve it by nagging, which only creates conflict and bad feelings.

The culture will help your people resist the distractions that are the enemy of accomplishing goals. "Extenuating circumstances," the king of excuses, loses its power to knock them off the right path. The urge to make changes on their own, or postpone following up with a client diminishes.

They have clear instructions and the work environment supports following them.

These are the challenges I've helped business owners conquer for more than 20 years as a business coach and certified EOS Implementer. My mission is to help them create and sustain successful enterprises.

So, here is What Every Small Business Should Know about building a culture of accountability.

1) Accountability chart. It all starts with creating clarity around what the major functions of the organization are and who is accountable for what. In the EOS system, we use an accountability chart that illustrates the major functions of an organization and identifies the primary roles and responsibilities in each seat.

Whether there is a customer service problem or there is no toilet paper in the facility, you'll save time and energy if employees aren't forced to guess who owns the problem. The key is only one owner for each function. Because if everyone is responsible, then no one is responsible.

2) Establish core values around a clearly stated mission. Everybody in your organization has to know what the standards of behavior are. If employees are not excited by the mission, they will be less inspired. No one wants to be a cog in the wheel. Employees want to be part of something bigger and they want to find meaning in their work. Yes, they are still interested in great pay and benefits, but they also want to change the world.

According to Jim Stengel, author of "Grow: How Ideals Power Growth and Profit at the World's Greatest Companies," companies with a strong mission statement and employee buy-in grow 400 percent faster than those without a strong mission statement.

3) Systems and Processes. If your organization has poor processes, it leads to frustration that can negate whatever you have planned. Establish core processes that are the best and most efficient ways to operate.

For example, in the finance area, how many days do you wait before making a collection call? You need to keep the cash flow flowing and can't have it sitting out there at 120 days. Have a goal of fewer than 30 days and specified follow-up routines. When employees know the metrics, they become accountable.

If everyone is doing their own thing and they see others not following the process, they start thinking, "Why bother?"

To establish your process, start with a high-level checklist of how to accomplish tasks in a certain area. In Human Resources, for example, start by asking how you onboard, recruit and review employees.

All parts of the business need this attention to detail. For a construction company, think of a project manager and describe the best

Chris Naylor, Certified EOS Implementer (Entrepreneurial Operating System), is founder of B.Better Business Coaching & owner of OECS, a workplace safety company. She facilitates a powerful business growth system that uses a holistic, self-sustaining approach to building a great company. She is also on the NAWBO board, helping promote women-owned businesses throughout the Twin Cities. She can be reached at (612) 802-9137 or chris@b-betternow.com www.b-betternow.com

way to engage with and respond to clients.

Core process is a big thing in the EOS (Entrepreneurial Operating System) model. They are the foundational pieces in building a healthy company.

I work with my clients to define and document the core process. We start with a couple of main areas each quarter, like sales and marketing. We identify what they do and how they do it. The next quarter we might tackle operations, financing or HR. You don't want to do everything at once since that might hobble the company. Stage by stage is best. By the end of the year, we will have covered all areas of the company.

It is essential that the employees be involved in defining the best way to do their job. They have insights the owner may not have. And being involved creates buy-in to the process. The owner and leadership team has to drive it.

Employees love being involved in defining the processes they have to live with. They see inconsistencies and wasted effort that should be eliminated and appreciate tweaks that will save them time and energy.

Process improvements can be a powerful tool. Yet the deep dive analysis behind them can cause owners to hem and haw. At first, they don't like drilling down. Once they begin, they can see the possibility to improve their departments, their day-to-day life. Aggressive goals then seem more doable.

When we're finished, from top to bottom everyone in the company is on the same page.

Once the structure is in place by the end of the first year, the focus shifts to continuously improving the processes. You will see the improvement to the bottom line, in individuals and organizational efficiency.

4) Meetings. To make everything work and provide oversight and accountability, regular meetings are critical. There should be weekly pulse meetings, about 90 minutes long, to review issues that need to be addressed and progress toward goals. At EOS we call that the Level 10 Weekly Meeting.

5) Delegation.

For my clients, I use the Delegate to Elevate chart to help them sharpen their delegation skills. What should you offload and out-source? Anything that doesn't use your highest level, most productive skills.

Look at what the tasks you do and then assign them to one of four categories.

1. What you love to do and are great at.
2. What you like to do and are good at.
3. What you don't like to do, but are good at.
4. What you don't like to do and aren't good at.

When you've completed the chart, you should have a pretty good idea of where you should be spending your time.

Have your team leaders and employees fill out the Delegate to Elevate chart as well. Do what you can to align tasks that keep people working at the highest level of the chart.

The next step is to set goals, starting with the most critical departments. In the first or second quarter, have budget goals for sales, marketing and other departments to achieve. Assign a leader in each department who is responsible and accountable for those goals. The business owner needs to work with each department to create a high-level checklist.

6) Goals. Once you are organized to achieve your highest performance level, you are equipped to pursue your strategic goals.

To help my clients spell out their strategic goals, I make use of the Vision Traction Organizer. This has clear goals for the next quarter, one year and five years.

These goals will determine the course of your business and define the clear mission for each of your team leaders to achieve.

Once you have all the pieces assembled from leadership to accountability to goals, it's amazing what can be accomplished.

— *NBM Business Advisor*

Call to Action

To learn more about EOS and how B.Better Business Coaching can help you, reach out to Chris at (612) 802-9137 or chris@b-betternow.com.

Click on these links for the following charts:

[Accountability Chart](#)

[Delegate and Elevate Chart](#)

[The Vision/Traction Organizer Chart](#)

The screenshot shows the homepage of b.better business coaching. At the top left is the logo with the tagline "business coaching for better results". A navigation menu includes SERVICES, ABOUT, RESOURCES, BLOG, and CONTACT. A phone number (612) 802-9137 and social media icons for Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter are displayed. The main headline reads "Coaching to empower your business growth" with a "Schedule a Free Consultation" button. A testimonial from Mark Schechter of Schechter Wealth Strategies is featured. At the bottom, three circular icons represent "Certified EOS Implementer™", "Business Coach", and "Employee Rollout".

www.b-betternow.com