

UNIT TWO

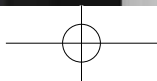
The Buck Stops Here!



Unit Objectives

After studying this unit, you are able to:

- grasp what accountability is at workplace
- understand the importance of accepting accountability and the methods to evaluate accountability in business
- recognize the irresponsible behaviors at work and figure out the ways for improvement





Warming-up

Task 1 Listen to the poem “Responsibility”, and fill in the blanks with the words you hear.



Responsibility

I am responsible
for all that I do,
from handing in homework
to 1. _____ too.

I choose if my room
will be 2. _____ or clean,
I make the choice
to be kind or 3. _____.

It is up to me
just how much I will learn,
the grades that I get
will be grades that I 4. _____.

I 5. _____ the choice
to be happy or sad,
to have a good day
or have one that is 6. _____.

So now I will 7. _____
what is best for me.

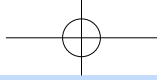
I am 8. _____

I hold the key!

Task 2 Read the following statements and decide whether it is True (1 point) or False (-1 point) about you. Add up the points to find out how well you take responsibility for yourself. Compare with your partner.

- 1. I am solely responsible for my actions which are the primary force in how I live my life.
- 2. When other people, events or circumstances affect my life, I am responsible for my reactions.
- 3. I am responsible for the companions I choose and the company I keep.
- 4. I am responsible for my own emotions.
- 5. My behavior with others is up to me.
- 6. I take responsibility for any choice in life and how I handle the results of my choices.
- 7. I accept responsibility for doing the right thing even though it may not always be the easiest path.
- 8. I am responsible for choosing the values by which I live.
- 9. Even being required to work a certain number of hours, how I spend my time is my responsibility.
- 10. Self-responsibility includes seeking solutions when having problems and asking for help when I need it.

My total points: _____



Reading

In the 1940s, a sign sat on President Truman's desk in the White House that read "the buck stops here". Unfortunately, over the last 60 years, this concept of personal accountability—especially in business—seems to have been lost.

Accountability is about getting things done—all the right things—accurately and on time, solving problems as they arise (or better still not allowing problems to develop) by taking responsibility, and being able to show your boss that you have done everything possible to achieve the goals set. Employers invest heavily in their employees, with hiring costs, benefits and payrolls, but how many are getting all they should in return? How often do employers hear excuses, such as "it's not my fault", "sales just wasn't able to close the deal" or "my partner dropped the ball"? Blaming and finger-pointing are all too easy when things go wrong and all too common in business today. Creating accountability has become increasingly important.

The concept of accepting responsibility for our own actions, while not new, at times seems almost unique in today's world. Companies are realizing that their success in areas such as customer service, employee retention, reliability and overall achievement is directly associated

with the level of accountability of their employees. Therefore, when employers struggle to reach their business objectives and are unable to identify why employee performance and productivity are not as successful as they should be, it may be time to consider investing in accountability training to help transform employees' behavior and attitude.

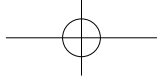
Furthermore, there should be a system for measuring employee accountability. Many large US companies are resorting to ranking systems to distinguish the employees who perform poorly—replacing them with more promising and motivated employees if they don't improve. These ranking systems also enable the companies to identify top performers and reward them. For example, General Electric Company identifies the top 20 percent, the middle 70 percent and the bottom 10 percent of its 100,000 managerial and professional employees, with the bottom rank given extra training and a brief time to improve.

Once employees begin to take ownership of their tasks and understand the need to be accountable for their work, stress will be lowered, productivity increased, job satisfaction gained and the organization propelled to achieve its goals.



Achieving Employee Accountability





Thinking Point

Think about the following questions while you read the passage.

- 01** Suppose you just started working in a new company, how would you behave yourself? And among these behaviors, which ones are accountable for your job? And why do you think so?
- 02** If the employers want to make sure all the staff are accountable for their work, what kind of regulations can be helpful? Discuss with your partner about it.



Notes

President Truman (杜鲁门总统): Harry S. Truman (May 8, 1884-Dec. 26, 1972) was the 33rd President of the United States (1945-1953). He approved the Marshall Plan, which was one of the most successful accomplishments in foreign relations in history.

The buck stops here (责任止于此): The saying means “do not pass the responsibility on to someone else”. In his farewell address to the American people given in January 1953, President Truman referred to this concept very specifically in asserting that, “The President—whoever he is—has to decide. He can’t pass the buck to anybody. No one else can make the decision for him. That’s his job”.

New Words & Expressions

New Words

- accountability /əˌkaʊntəˈbɪlɪti/ *n.* 责任, 义务
 accurately /ˈækjʊrətli/ *ad.* 准确地, 精确地
 payroll /ˈpeɪrɒl/ *n.* 工资总额, 工资单
 retention /rɪˈtenʃən/ *n.* 保持, 保留
 distinguish /dɪsˈtɪŋɡwɪʃ/ *v.* 区分, 辨别
 motivated /ˈməʊtɪveɪtɪd/ *a.* 有积极性的, 有动机的
 identify /aɪˈdentɪfaɪ/ *v.* 识别; 确定
 managerial /ˌmænɪˈdʒɪəriəl/ *a.* 管理的
 propel /prəˈpel/ *v.* 推动; 推进

Phrases & Expressions

- invest in 投资, 出资
 in return 作为回报
 drop the ball 犯错误, 失职
 be associated with 与……有关
 resort to (doing sth.) 采取, 诉诸
 replace with 替换为
 take ownership of 获得……的所有权, 投入

Proper Name

General Electric Company 通用电气公司



Exercises

Task 1 Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F) according to the passage.

1. The concept of accountability is popular in the past 60 years, especially in the modern business.

2. Employers pay out lots of money to reassure the realization of employee accountability in the company.

3. The application of accountability training is to replace poor performers with top ones.

4. General Electric Company gives its 100,000 employees extra training to improve their accountability.

5. Provided that employees become accountable earlier, the stress will be less, the productivity improve and the company get closer to its goals.

◆ Employers should provide the 5. _____ and improve employee performance, when their business goals are hard to realize.

The approach to evaluating accountability

◆ 6. _____ are applied to distinguish employee accountability.

◆ Employees with poor performance are replaced with the ones who are more 7. _____.

◆ Top performers will receive 8. _____ while the bottom will be provided extra training and time to improve.

Task 3 Complete the following sentences with the words or phrase given in the box. Change the form if necessary.

accountability	accurately
retention	resort to
identify	distinguish
motivated	managerial
payroll	propel

Task 2 Read the passage again and fill in the blanks according to what you learn.

Achieving Employee Accountability

The definition of accountability:

- ◆ Having things done 1. _____ and on time.
- ◆ Solving problems by 2. _____.
- ◆ Showing your 3. _____ to achieve the goals.

The importance of creating accountability:

- ◆ Business success is directly connected with 4. _____ of accountability of the employees.

1. The Chief Manager's report of the project plan was _____ in details.

2. The twins were so much alike that it was impossible to _____ one from the other.

3. Mr. Lee's yearly _____ is \$1.2 million, with which he can afford his whole family easily.

4. He combines excellent _____ skills with a lifelong passion for his career.

5. I had to _____ violence to get my money back when polite requests failed.

6. We must develop industries with local advantages and _____ the development of key areas.



7. Companies must be _____ not just to shareholders but to consumers and employees.
8. He was a highly _____ employee who knew what he wanted.
9. The bonuses are _____ payments, which is a way to motivate employees.
10. The witness didn't want to be _____ for fear of getting involved in the trouble.

Task 4 Rewrite the following sentences after the given models.

Model 1: The concept of accepting responsibility for our own actions, while not new, sometimes seems almost unique in today's world.

— *The concept of accepting responsibility for our own actions, while not new, at times seems almost unique in today's world.*

1. He went to the countryside to spend the weekend with his family on occasion.
2. As the Secretary of the Sales Department, she has to work overtime occasionally.
3. As we drove along, the beautiful scenery now and then attracted our attention.
4. Now and again he would take his favorite book from the shelf and read to us.

Model 2: These ranking systems also make the companies able to identify top performers and reward them.

— *These ranking systems also enable the companies to identify top performers and reward them.*

1. The bird's large wings make it able to fly.
2. This dictionary will make you able to learn English well.
3. Vocational training will make you able to find a job easily.
4. The new test should make doctors able to detect the disease early.

Task 5 Translate the following Chinese into English.

1. 他送了份礼物给我作为我帮助他的回报。(in return)
2. 不要依赖他, 他定会犯错误。(drop the ball)
3. 工作的成败与你的态度有关。(be associated with)
4. 不吃早餐, 只吃零食, 不是什么好主意。(replace with)
5. 他父亲去世后, 他拥有了房子的所有权。(take ownership of)



Language Lab

Model 1: Once employees begin to take **ownership** of their tasks and understand the need to be accountable for their work...

The suffix “-ship” is often added to a noun to form a noun. It usually expresses the following meanings:

- (1) showing the career or status, such as professorship;
- (2) indicating the skills and ability, such as statesmanship;
- (3) expressing a group of people, such as readership;
- (4) referring to the time during which this lasts.

Model 2: ...stress will be lowered, productivity **increased**, job satisfaction gained and the organization propelled to achieve its goals.

Many words in English can be used both as verbs and nouns. The word “increase” is a verb in the sentence. Some examples are as follows:

- (1) He works for a travel agency./She achieved her goal by years of hard work.
- (2) Did you notice a subtle change in his manner?/It was Susan who brought the problem to our notice.

Task 1 Use the words in the box to form appropriate words with the suffix “-ship” to fill in the following sentences.

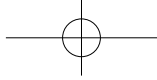
citizen member musician guardian
partner sportsman scholar king

1. As long as you obtain _____ in that club, you can go there anytime you want.
2. Yao Ming’s optimistic _____ wins him great popularity at home and abroad.
3. After 10 years in Canada, he has finally decided to apply for Canadian _____.
4. It was the superb (高超的) _____ of the band that made this a memorable show.
5. They wanted to keep the _____ with us, but we failed to reach an agreement.
6. She has been awarded a _____ to study at Harvard University.
7. In ancient China, _____ enjoys sublime power.
8. They do not have the right to exploit a parent’s right of _____ over children.

Task 2 Fill in the following sentences with the words from the box in appropriate forms and point out the part of speech for each word.

care place face meet
change pay reason damage

1. He _____ great emphasis on the importance of family life and ties. ()
2. The government has proposed major _____ in the laws relating to different social aspects. ()
3. In the _____ of great hardship, she managed to keep her sense of humor and optimism. ()
4. His work was the most unsatisfactory, so we _____ him off at the end of the week. ()
5. I don’t _____ about the car’s price, so long as the car is in good condition. ()
6. The flood caused serious _____ to the crops after three day’s continuous raining. ()
7. He decided not to accept the job in the capital city, but wouldn’t tell us his _____. ()
8. Our plant will increase production to _____ the needs of the developing conditions. ()



Writing

Responsibility at Life and Work

Being responsible for one's deed is essential to prove one's worth in today's competitive world. People should not only take the responsibility to raise their children and support their parents at home, but also be responsible for the tasks they take, for the team they work with, for the society they live in. Recognizing and fulfilling one's responsibility is generally regarded as an essential part of workplace ethics.

Task 1 Look at the following pictures and discuss what has happened within your group. Try to find out how to improve their behaviors.

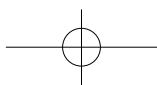
Task 2 Write a short passage about the irresponsibility, analyze its harm, and try to find out how to be a responsible person.



Your passage should include the following points:

1. the irresponsible behaviors of the staff at workplace;
2. the harm of irresponsibility;
3. the approach to cultivating the sense of responsibility.





Listening & Speaking

Task 1 Nancy is asking Tom to be a Division Leader in a new project. Listen to the conversation and choose the best answer to each question you hear.

- _____ 1. A. Because he is praised a lot by senior managers.
 B. Because his skills will be most appreciated in the new project.
 C. Because he is hard-working and talented.
 D. Because he wants to work in the project.
- _____ 2. A. Take more jobs.
 B. Organize the people and assign the workload.
 C. Look at the documents.
 D. Give of his intelligence.
- _____ 3. A. He is responsible and excellent.
 B. He is strict with people.
 C. He is nice and helpful.
 D. He is good at management.

Task 2 Tony and Lucy are discussing one of their colleagues, Roger. Listen to the conversation and decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F).

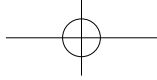
1. Roger is the new graduate working as a Fashion Designer.
2. Roger always shows up earliest and leaves latest in the company, but he is unwilling to help others.
3. Roger got promotion soon after his graduation because of his great talent.
4. It is his hard work and sense of responsibility that lead to Roger's quick promotion.
5. Roger has been promoted to be the Supervisor of the Design Division.

Task 3 Listen to the passage about "Corporate Social Responsibility" and fill in the table.

CSR: the responsibility that modern business organizations have for 1. _____ a healthy and prosperous society.	
Goods and Services	To meet customer 2. _____. To be provided in a(n) 3. _____ way.
Employees	To be given 4. _____ and 5. _____ to work with the organization in 6. _____ community projects.
Organization	To be involved in relevant 7. _____ and "corporate giving" activities that are 8. _____ to the community. To be involved in activities and 9. _____ that support the 10. _____ of the community.

Task 4 Listen to the passage and fill in the blanks with what you hear.

Being responsible means 1. _____, keeping promises, honoring our commitments and it also means developing our potential. Responsibility is accepting the consequences for what we say and do. People who are responsible don't 2. _____ for their actions or blame others when things go wrong. They think things through and use good judgment before they 3. _____. They behave in ways that encourage others to trust them. Furthermore, people who are responsible take charge of their



own lives. They make plans and set goals to nurture their 4. _____. They are strong in the face of adversity and smart in finding ways to 5. _____. They make decisions, taking into account obligations to families and communities. Individuals need to learn that being part of a family and a community involves 6. _____. When each of us acts responsibly, our families and communities are stronger.

Task 5 Work in pairs. Discuss with your partner about the irresponsible behaviors in your life and study and suggest the corresponding improvement.

Irresponsibility in Life and Study	Ways of Improvement

Task 6 Work in pairs. Role-play the following situation with your partner.

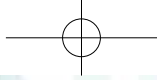
The Manager of the R&D Department is talking with the Chief Engineer about some points for attention in a project which is under way.



Manager	Chief Engineer
☆ Inquire about the working progress of the program.	☆ Talk about the present situation of the program.
☆ State the requirements of the project.	☆ Explain the difficulties, esp. in the management of the team players
☆ Give suggestions on the management of the team.	☆ Accept the suggestions.
☆ Remind the deadline.	☆ Promise to finish the task on time.
☆ Give some encouragement.	☆ Show confidence and close the conversation.

Task 7 Work in groups. Discuss the following question and explain the reasons.

Is responsibility the most important workplace ethics for the success of one's career?



Further Study

When you “own” your job, you are prepared to do whatever needs to be done. You accept full responsibility for the work and while you are happy to share credit with your team, you accept the blame for any failures that are your responsibility. Anyone in a team can make the difference between success and failure.

When an Executive has a team of people who “own” their work, the results will be incredible. He

knows, without question, that he’ll get their best efforts—and that they’ll never let him down.

As a young manager 20 years ago, I ran the order-processing operations in a greeting-card company. One midnight, I received a call: The automated process that created the next day’s packing slips had crashed. I had to get 1,000 packing slips ready for pulling and packing the next day, or hundreds of people in our distribution center would be idle. This was about three weeks before Christmas on a freezing night in Chicago.

I drove my car and headed for work—and found the place in chaos. Even the overnight security guard was helping to prepare orders. I called a key team member, my data-entry supervisor. “I’m sorry to wake you up, but we need you in here,” I said. “We’ll never be ready for the courier at 6 a.m. without more help.”

She said OK, and then hung up. But she didn’t show. That morning at 8, she came to work as usual and said, “I thought about your call. I realized that if the orders weren’t ready at 6, the packers would have enough work to keep busy, and we could send another courier later in the day. So I went back to sleep.” Obviously, she was passing the buck.

That was a tough day for me as an inexperienced manager. What an ownership breakdown! I had no choice but to relieve the woman of her supervisory role. She was lucky not to be fired but the event offered an excellent lesson: the acceptance of ownership of a job—accepting true responsibility, the instinct and drive to do everything possible is an inherent quality that makes the difference between success and failure at all levels.

Heed Wake-up Calls





Vocabulary

heed /hi:d/ *v.* 注意, 留心

incredible /ɪn'kredɪbəl/ *a.* 难以置信的;
极好的

packing slip 包装标签, 装箱单

in chaos 混乱, 纷乱

courier /'kʊəriə/ *n.* 快递员, 通讯员

pass the buck 推卸责任

relieve /rɪ'li:v/ *v.* 解除, 减轻

instinct /'ɪnstɪŋkt/ *n.* 直觉, 本能

inherent /ɪn'hɪərənt/ *a.* 与生俱来的, 固有的

Task 1 Put the following sentences in the correct order according to the passage.

- A. The key team member came to work as usual the next day and passed the buck with some excuses.
- B. When I hurried for the work I found the place in chaos.
- C. It happened when I was a young manager responsible for order-processing in a greeting-card company.
- D. I made a phone call to a key team member for asking her to help get the packing slips ready together. But she did not appear that night.
- E. I had the trouble that the automated process crashed three weeks before Christmas on a freezing night.
- F. As a result, I had to relieve the woman of her supervisor role and taught her a lesson.

① _____ → ② _____ → ③ _____ →

④ _____ → ⑤ _____ → ⑥ _____

Task 2 Unexpected events and difficult issues are inevitable at work. How are you going to handle the following situations? Discuss with your group members about your solutions, talk about whether your behaviors are responsible and explain your reasons.

1. When you are about to get off work, your customer comes to discuss his order with you.
Solution: _____
Reason: _____
2. You received a notice to attend an emergency meeting during your holiday.
Solution: _____
Reason: _____
3. The production line of your factory has just broken down and the time of delivery is drawing near.
Solution: _____
Reason: _____



Learn by Heart

- ★ Action springs not from thought, but from a readiness for responsibility.
- ★ You take on the responsibility for making your dream a reality.
- ★ Our responsibility as privileged human beings is to pay back for the opportunities we've received.
- ★ Responsibility must be shouldered; you cannot carry it under your arms.
- ★ The price of greatness is responsibility.
- ★ Responsibility walks hand in hand with capacity and power.
- ★ You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.
- ★ To know what is right and not do it is the worst cowardice.