

In the Christian World, Accountability Trumps Acceptability

"Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one."— Matthew 5:37

Help your men move from *acceptability* to *accountability*. Many groups have men set goals, fail to meet them, come up with an excuse, and then receive reaffirming pats on the back and assurances that "you'll do better next time."

Instead, inject some consequences into the process. Here's how it works:

1. Set **concrete** goals. Instead of saying, "Read my Bible more," say, "Read the Bible five days each week by following the XYZ Bible Reading Plan."
2. Set goals that are **achievable**. If you don't exercise at all, don't set a goal of going to the gym 5 days a week for 90 minutes each time.
3. A goal may also be something you want to **stop** doing. For instance, working too many hours or losing your temper with your kids. But it still needs to be concrete and measurable.
4. Put a definitive **deadline** on the goal—when must it be accomplished by?
5. What is the **value** of the goal? If your goal is to watch less TV, and you decide to cancel your cable, what is the value of that? *And here's the key to making it "real"...*
6. Set a **penalty** for not achieving the goal. Make it painful and meaningful. It could be washing your accountability partner's car or giving \$100 to charity.

For accountability partners, it is essential that you **don't**

let your brother off the hook if he does not achieve his goals. He's a big boy. He made his own goals. He set the deadline and penalty. He can handle the consequences!

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