

# The Four Skills Needed to Be an Accountability Partner

☒ Men who are growing spiritually, emotionally and relationally know the importance of having other men in their lives who can hold them accountable. They also recognize the value of helping other men. Proverbs 27:17 says it well: “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another” (NIV). We need one another in order to be sharp. We also need to realize that every man is sharpened differently.

Accountability is not about asking a list of questions. It's about being involved in another man's life. It's coming alongside other men. Godly men know they need to be accountable, but they don't always know what that looks like. I've been in good accountability relationships and bad ones. I've noticed that the accountability partner has four key responsibilities.

Each job is a skill that must be developed and used at the right time in order to be make the relationship work.

## **Cheer**

The man who makes himself accountable needs to know he is not alone. He needs to feel that someone is on his side. He needs someone to root for him, but not from the sidelines. An accountability partner is

right on  
the field with him.

A  
cheerleader encourages and should always be genuine in his  
encouragement. He shouldn't say "good job" if it's not  
merited. Good  
accountability partners don't lie or give fake cheers just to  
boost  
morale. The right type of cheering always says: "You can get  
there.  
Hang in there. With God's help, you can do it!"

### **Challenge**

A man plateaus at times and settles into a comfortable level.  
This is  
when the accountability partner needs to challenge. He needs  
to help  
his friend stay focused on the big picture, the vision and the  
mission.  
The accountability partner needs to help his friend see beyond  
his  
current circumstances. This is a good stage at which to talk  
about the  
kingdom of God, the gospel and eternal matters.

An  
accountability partner should also challenge his friend when  
it is time  
for the next step. A man needs courage to go into new  
territory. He  
needs to know that taking a leap of faith and plowing new  
ground is  
important to his growth as a man of God. Sometimes an  
accountability  
partner will help a man see further than where he is and  
challenge him  
to shoot higher.

## **Confront**

Confronting a brother in Christ is the hardest job of an accountability partner. No one likes to confront, but when a man is willfully sinning, it is important that we step in and be "our brother's keeper."

### Confrontation

is needed when there is negative momentum. When sin and failures occur they need to be addressed. When a man is hardening his heart or not willing to take the next step, he needs to be confronted over his choices. When a man's behavior is hurting others, it must be confronted. Confession and repentance are the right responses to confrontation.

## **Comfort**

Every man experiences hurts, wounds, disappointments and failures. But it takes a man a long time to start talking about them. As your relationship grows, your friend will begin to trust you with the deeper things. He will slowly expose the hurts of his heart and his feelings about them. This will require that you learn to comfort and be a caring friend.

A good accountability partner knows that a man needs a close friend when times are tough. He shows comfort by understanding his friend and being willing to pray for him, cry with him and demonstrate

commitment to  
him.

### **The Right Time**

Each of the  
four roles has its time and place. The worst accountability  
relationships are ones in which the accountability partner  
doesn't know  
what to do, or does what's needed at the wrong time. For  
example, when  
a man is hurting and needs comfort, that is not the time to  
confront  
him or challenge him; when a man is willfully sinning, that is  
not the  
time to sympathize with him or be his cheerleader.

Most  
of us are better at some of these roles than we are at other  
ones.  
That's OK. Practice listening to the men you are working with.  
When a  
man starts sharing how his week is going, ask yourself, "Does  
this man  
need cheer, challenge, confrontation or comfort?"

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