

# The Ladder of Accountability



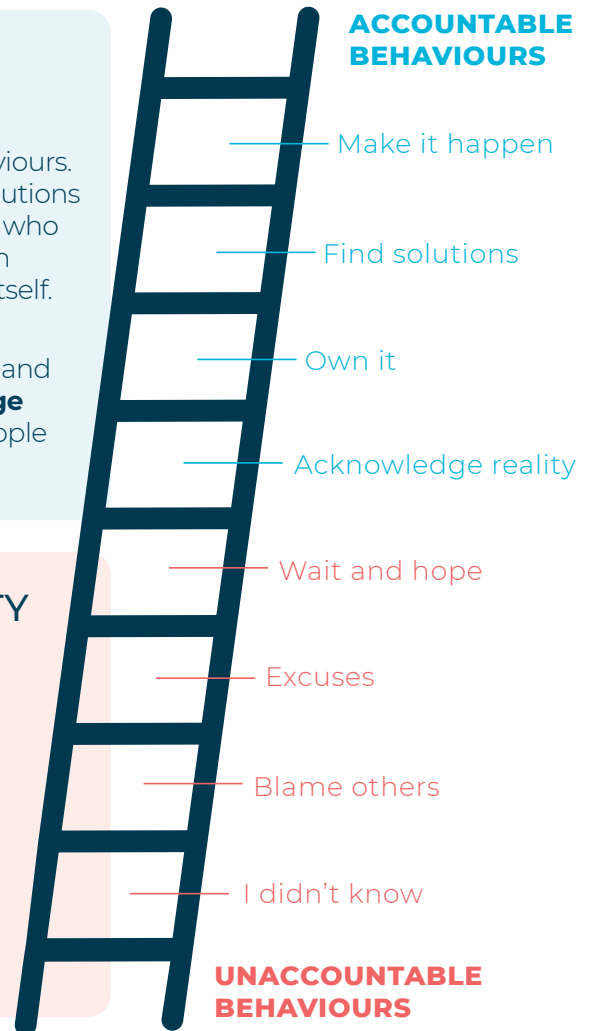
The ladder of accountability describes the eight levels of accountable behaviour, spanning from below the line behaviours to above the line behaviours. A leader can use the model to recognise the levels of accountability in themselves or others, and then figure out how to 'move up' the ladder.



## UNDERSTANDING THE LADDER OF ACCOUNTABILITY

The bottom four behaviours are known as **below the line** behaviours. These are things team members say or do that don't provide solutions or result in actions. The lowest level begins with team members who **didn't know** there was a problem, before they move up through **blame, excuses**, and **waiting and hoping** the problem will fix itself.

Above this are **above the line** behaviours, which are solutions-focused behaviours that help team members own their actions and make a change. Here, team members may start to **acknowledge their reality** and **own their actions and results**. Above this, people then begin to **find solutions** and **make things happen**.



## USING THE LADDER OF ACCOUNTABILITY

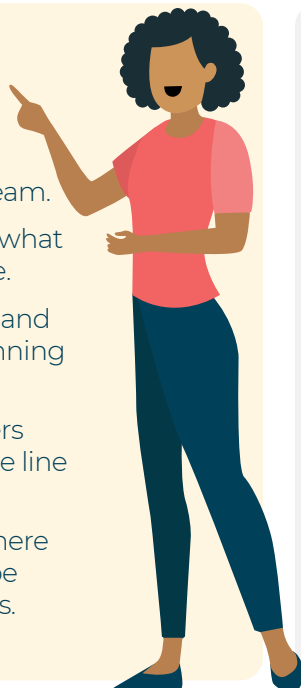
You can use the ladder of accountability to recognise those moments when your team or an individual team member falls 'below the line'. Ask yourself:

- Do you have a team member who shifts blame onto others?
- Do you have a team member who admits to problems only after they've been called out?
- Is a team member not meeting their responsibilities?

When you identify these below the line behaviours, you can then implement strategies to help drive accountability and move team members back up the ladder.

## 5 TIPS FOR DRIVING ACCOUNTABILITY

- 1 Set up peer-to-peer accountability within your team.
- 2 Refocus team members on what they can control or influence.
- 3 Establish clear expectations and goals, especially at the beginning of projects.
- 4 Call out those team members who are displaying below the line behaviours.
- 5 Build a safe environment where people feel encouraged to be accountable and own results.



## REFLECTIONS

Do you have a team or team member who displays 'below the line' behaviours?

What level of accountability are they sitting at?

What three strategies can you use to help drive accountability and above the line behaviours?