



APPLICATION GUIDE – August 2020

Responsibility vs. Authority

BOTTOM LINE:

In a healthy organization, your responsibility will always exceed your authority.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

As a leader, you want your people to feel like owners, not just employees.

Regardless of the position of authority you hold, you should feel responsibility for other areas of the organization.

If your sense of responsibility ends with your authority, you're ultimately a danger to the organization because that posture is contagious.

Creating a Culture of Responsibility

- “Take it personally” by having an owner mindset instead of an employee mindset.
- Remain open-handed, not defensive when ideas are presented to “make it better.”
- Reward people for taking initiative and responsibility. What's rewarded is repeated.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION OR TEAM DISCUSSION:

1. In your organization, do you feel comfortable to take responsibility for things outside of your authority?
2. Do you find yourself feeling defensive or close-minded when someone outside your area brings you an idea of how to make something you're working on better? How can you remain open-handed the next time you're in this situation?