



Reliability and Accountability Journal

Reliability and Accountability: Individuals can use their understanding of commitment, time management, and follow through to ensure that a professional team functions properly and meets collective goals.

In this journal you will find tools and activities to help you understand what being reliable and accountable mean. Through self-reflection, activities, examples, and questioning, you will develop a better sense of why being reliable and accountable are necessary in the workplace and how you can demonstrate those qualities to the best of your ability. You will be able to see your own growth by completing a self-check at the beginning and end of the process.

Self-Check

A. Consider This....

A reliable and accountable person has consistent attendance at work. They are fully engaged while at work and participate in tasks and projects from beginning to end to the best of their ability. They can follow written and verbal directions and will seek clarification when needed. They can keep calm and maintain self-control in stressful situations and have strategies for dealing with such situations. A reliable and accountable person is responsible for their own work and is mindful of the rest of the team and their role in a project.

B. Self-Reflection Questions (consider your own experiences—classroom, work, or activities—and answer the following)

1. What are three ways to show you are reliable?
2. What are three ways to show unreliability?
3. What are three ways someone demonstrates accountability?
4. Why are reliability and accountability important skills in the workplace?

Recorded Lesson and Employer Interview

Watch this recorded lesson for a quick overview on the importance of reliability and accountability in the workplace. Learn from an employer how to demonstrate these skills:

- **Recorded Lesson and Employer Interview:** <https://youtu.be/IQJI9oWsJR4>

Case Study

Carefully read the Case Study, then answer the reflection questions based on what you read.

Reliability and Accountability

Amir works for a national bakery chain. In the past, he has been the cashier, helped make the product, stocked supplies for the customers, cleaned the front end as well as the dining room, and helped with opening and closing routines. Recently, he has taken on the added responsibility of taking and filling catering orders.

An online order has come in requesting a large number of bagels, doughnuts, croissants, Danishes, juice, coffee, and condiments. The order is requested for two days from now, which is a quicker turnaround than he has had before. Amir manages to fill the order in time. However, when the customer comes to pick it up, she is upset because the amount of each item is wrong. She received lemonade instead of orange juice and no cream cheese was included.

Amir is called to the front end to talk to the upset customer. While he is the one ultimately responsible for the order, there were other people who worked on filling it as well. Some of the daytime bakers, a cashier, and an overnight baker all were involved. While he is listening to the customer's rant, he wants to inform her of everyone else who was at fault, even though he called in sick yesterday so he could attend a friend's birthday party. He has not been in this type of stressful situation before. He is not sure how to handle the customer.

Reflection Questions

1. What is the first thing Amir should say to the customer?
2. What could Amir have done differently leading up to the pickup time?
3. Should Amir call out his team? Why or why not?
4. With whom should Amir discuss the situation in order to resolve the issue?
5. How should Amir resolve the issue?
6. What follow-up steps should Amir take in order to ensure that this type of situation does not happen again?

Activity – Stress Management Techniques

Learning how to appropriately handle stress is an important skill. Read the list below for calming techniques. Reflect on situations in which each technique would be appropriate to use. Not all techniques are appropriate for all situations. Next to each calming technique, write down a situation where this technique would be helpful to you in your life. If the technique would not be helpful to you, write N/A.

- Take several deep breaths, exhaling each slowly.
- Prioritize the tasks and begin working through the list.
- Keep a squishy ball or fidget toy in your pocket to use.
- Look at or picture in your mind a calming image.
- If possible, walk away from the stressful situation and come back to it later.
- Think of a smell that brings back happy memories (cinnamon, pine, sea air, lilacs, etc.).
Close your eyes and try to bring that smell to mind.
- Care for a small green plant on your desk or in a communal area.
- Listen to meditative music.
- Do some yoga stretching or other similar exercise during your lunch break.
- Ask for assistance or delegate responsibility.
- Eat a healthy snack.
- Take a walk outdoors.

Reflection Questions

1. Which technique works the best for you? Why?
2. How can taking a moment to calm down help diffuse a stressful situation?
3. What are some things you can do to prevent stress from occurring at home, school, or on the job?
4. How might you help others remain calm in stressful situations?

Activity – Participation Log

In this activity, you will keep track of how you use your time throughout a one-week period. Use the Participation Log sample listed below and see the sample listings. Add rows as needed to the log. You are to document how you are spending large chunks of time and some of the resulting outcomes. You should identify if you do the activity consistently, which is daily or most days. Or, if the activity is sporadic, meaning occasionally. Pay close attention to your level of commitment and attendance record reflected in the log entries. Record any outcomes, thoughts, or reflections on spending the time doing this activity.

Date	Time duration	Activity	Engagement Level Consistent (C) or Sporadic (S)	Outcome Thoughts and Reflections
3.3.2020	2 hours	Studied plant identification	S	Had to ask less questions on my landscaping job
3.4.2020	8 hours	On the job	C	Completed a full day of work, boss happy
3.20.2020	3 hours	Gaming with friends	S	Felt relaxed, but didn't get any laundry done

Reflection Questions

1. What was your biggest take-away of the activity?
2. Did anything about the log surprise you?
3. How do you normally keep track of your activities and tasks during the week?
4. For scheduling activities, do you use an electronic calendar, master planner, white board, or others?
5. How did the Outcome, Thoughts, and Reflections relate to the other aspects of the log?

Video and Article Links

Watch at least two of the following videos and read at least two of the listed articles. Based on what you saw and read, answer the reflection questions listed below.

Videos

- Recorded Lesson and Employer Interview: <https://youtu.be/IQJI9oWsJR4>

- P-20 Network Blog & Virtual Trailheads - Elizabeth Stanley, Broadway star, talks about the importance of showing up on time and being overly prepared for auditions and productions.
<https://p20network.niu.edu/career-pathways-virtual-trailheads-elizabeth-stanley-broadway-star/>
- P-20 Network Blog & Virtual Trailheads - Desiree Smith, Media Relations, discusses the value of follow through/reliability with media and being consistent.
<https://p20network.niu.edu/career-pathways-virtual-trailheads-desiree-battaglia-communications-media-relations/>
- P-20 Network Blog & Virtual Trailheads - Jim Daly, Chemist, stresses the importance of consistent hard work over a long period of time as a key to success in any career.
<https://p20network.niu.edu/career-pathways-virtual-trailheads-jim-daly-floralife/>
- Dot Foods, Inc. talk about how they value a strong work ethic in their employees. They explain how reliability and accountability can help their employees earn a higher salary.
<https://youtu.be/-ALROU3duN0>
- P-20 Network Blog & Virtual Trailheads - Jeff Carter, Electrician, stresses the importance work ethic and a desire to learn. Arriving early and asking questions are two key examples of this.
<https://p20network.niu.edu/career-pathways-virtual-trailheads-jeff-carter-electrician/>

Articles

- LinkedIn: "Responsibility and Accountability should work together REALLY!"
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/responsibility-accountability-should-work-together-really-abu-ghosh-5993785093456408576/>
- "How Accountability Leads to Success"
<https://www.geteverwise.com/leadership/how-accountability-leads-to-success/>
- "Why Accountability Matters at Work"
<https://talentculture.com/why-accountability-in-the-workplace-matters/>
- Brene Brown on "Daring Leadership in the Workplace"
<https://risepeople.com/blog/daring-leadership-in-the-workplace/>
- "8 Ways to Become the Most Reliable Person in the Room"
<https://www.inc.com/lee-colan/8-ways-to-become-the-most-reliable-person-in-the-room.html>
- Career Development: "The Ultimate Guide to Professionalism"
<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/the-ultimate-guide-to-professionalism>

Reflection Questions

1. Please give an example from the resources that was particularly noteworthy to you as a positive example of reliability or accountability.
2. Please give an example from the resources that was particularly noteworthy to you as an example of poor reliability or accountability.
3. How have you demonstrated reliability and/or accountability in your work or personal life?
4. After watching the videos and reading the articles what would you have done differently?
5. What are some ideas that you can apply to your own work experiences?

Career Development Activity

Over 50 different employers came together to develop GPEAK. They agreed that reliability and accountability skills are in the top 10 essential skills desired by employers. They identified certain behaviors on the job that indicate good reliability and accountability skills. Our GPEAK employers described these behaviors as:

- Participates fully in task or project from initiation to completion
- Follows written and verbal directions
- Remains calm and self-controlled under stressful situations
- Is engaged and consistent in attendance
- Acts responsibly with the interests of the larger team in mind

Resume Bullets Activity

In this Career Development exercise, you will describe your past experiences where you demonstrated or developed reliability and accountability skills. For many positions, it will be important to note these skills on your job application materials and resume.

Think back on some of your past experiences (classes, jobs, activities, sports, and volunteer positions). Are you proud of certain moments where you demonstrated or developed your reliability and accountability skills? If you were interviewing for a job tomorrow, which story would you tell to demonstrate that you have experience with this important workplace skill?

Focusing on your past experiences, write six bulleted statements about your reliability and accountability skills. A resume bullet should start with an action verb (past tense or present) and be concise. You will want to write the bullets without the use of personal pronouns (refrain from using me, my, or I in the statement). These bulleted statements can be used on a resume, application form, or for interview prep. Here are a few examples:

- Participated in a GPEAK training session to advance reliability and accountability skills for the workplace
- Achieved flawless attendance record and arrived on time for shifts
- Coordinated a large project from initiation to completion
- Recognized by employer as a reliable worker and received Employee of the Month Award
- Manage customer service situations with grace
- Remain calm while working in a fast-paced environment
- Contribute to a departmental calendar and ensure tasks are completed on time

Now it is your turn. Think about your experiences and write six resume bullets that highlight your reliability and accountability skills.

Post Self-Check

Now that you have a better understanding of what employers are looking for in reliability and accountability skills, answer the questions below:

1. What is something that you can do in 3 months, 6 months, and 1 year to further develop your reliability/accountability skills?
2. What is your interest level in this competency (reliability and accountability)? Are you drawn to projects or work that require this skill?
3. Would you say that you have natural abilities around this skill or is it something you have to work at?
4. In the future, would you apply to a job in your field that asked for a high level of reliability and accountability skill?