

YOUR BUSINESS

BY JACQUELYN LYNN

MANAGEMENT

Plan On Failing

When your employees screw up—and they will—how should you deal with it?

What happens when someone in your organization makes a mistake? Do people trip all over themselves trying to cast blame or do they fix the problem and move on? In *The Accountability Revolution: Achieve Breakthrough Results in Half the Time!* (IMPAQ Publishing), author Mark Samuel recommends “recovery planning”—concentrating on correcting problems rather than punishing culprits.

Samuel says you should create an environment of safety, not comfort. Comfortable workers are unlikely to be creative, take risks or try new things, because that would make them uncomfortable. By contrast, employees who feel safe can embrace change without fear of punishment if they make mistakes.

Many people operate with the belief that

being perfection-oriented optimizes performance, but that’s a myth, Samuel explains. The reality: Being recovery-oriented optimizes performance. Emphasizing perfection creates paralysis and delays action; and when a problem occurs, the organization isn’t equipped to handle it.

Outside the business world, recovery systems are standard procedure, says Samuel. Sports teams practice recovery plays for those inevitable times when players drop the ball. Theater companies have recovery systems in place in case someone forgets a line or the set malfunctions. Medical teams know what they’ll do if something goes wrong during a procedure.

Recovery systems lead to greater accountability, Samuel insists, because people feel safer taking action, and action keeps organizations growing and flourishing.



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Mark Samuel is a speaker and consultant on the subject of accountability. He is the author of the new book, *The Accountability Revolution: Achieving Breakthrough Results in Half the Time*. His concepts on accountability have transformed organizations like Chevron Corporation, Honda Corporation, Hewlett-Packard Company, Mervyn’s, Dura Pharmaceuticals, Innermountain Health Care, Lucent Technologies, Earthlink, UC Berkeley, Habitat for Humanities and The United States Navy. His company, IMPAQ, publishes an online newsletter that brings accountability to everyday workplace operations with practical tips and advice that can be implemented on a daily basis. This free newsletter can be subscribed to by visiting the website www.impaqcorp.com. IMPAQ is based in Los Angeles and can be reached at 800-332-2251.