



## Next Level Accountability Call (NLAC)

### *Participant's Guide*

The purpose of this instructional guide is intended for those of you who have just started your participation in the NLAC or are considering participation. I would like to provide some foundational background which will support and possibly confirm your decision to become involved in this vital leadership development activity.

From my thirty plus years of experience in the field of human growth and development, I believe that the free choice of accountability is one of the important keys to next level growth. I assume that if you're reading this, you're probably interested in achievement. Achievement involves new levels of performance. As a result, achievement requires change, and change is not a natural process.

Have you ever tried to change a bad habit? If so, I'm sure you've found that that experience can be frustrating and even difficult at times. The most often asked question I get about achievement is this: "What is the most important thing I should do to be successful?" My response is always the same -- choose accountability. In fact, the free choice of accountability is the first step in achievement. Here's why. In my book, *The Tripping Point in Leadership*, I discuss the issue of apathy, and I define apathy as, "a natural human instinct that consistently encourages us to seek a comfort zone in which nothing ever changes."

If that definition is accurate and I do believe it is, your natural human instincts fight against the very changes needed for your consistent and continuous achievement. What do you do? It seems that your achievement is going to be blocked by your own natural instincts unless you do something about it. That's where the free choice of accountability comes in. I'm not talking about a forced accountability where you're asked to do something you don't want to do or forced to report to a boss. No, the free choice of accountability is simply choosing to be accountable to your goals and participating with a group of like-minded peers who will all publicly report on their progress on a consistent weekly basis.

The choice of accountability is the strongest motivational force for next level growth I've ever experienced. When you publicly state that you will do something and then go do it, it begins to push you past your self-imposed limitations. Participating with a group of your peers who are striving for achievement just as you are serves as a support system along the way.

Doing what you say you're going to do is one of the most important behaviors of achievement. Unfortunately, we don't learn this behavior naturally in life. This behavior must be developed. The fastest way to develop it is in a group of like-minded people who are trying to develop the same behaviors.

The choice of accountability is not comfortable. Some people resist it and choose to achieve in private, so to speak. They rationalize that if no one is looking, I can slack up any time, and no one will know. Also, without the public choice of accountability, there is no commitment, and quitting is easy.

When you choose not to be publicly accountable for your goals, psychologically you've left the hypothetical "back door" open to run from the change that may be required to accomplish your goals. Here's an example of what I'm talking about. Because I have a goal of maintaining a high standard of fitness, I publicly announce my weight goals and body fat goals. Then I hire the best trainer I can find to hold me accountable.

Now, I've been an athlete all my life, and in my early years I coached football at the high school and collegiate levels. If anyone has the right to work out on their own at their own pace, it would be me. However, maintaining higher levels of fitness at my age will require pushing past my comfort zones, and I know that requires the choice of accountability.

Achievement requires that you push past your comfort zones, and that is exactly what the choice of accountability does. Remember, your decision to participate in this call is your free choice. No one will call and demand that you participate.

This must be your choice because accountability is a choice, not a crutch. It's a serious choice, and it's designed for those who are serious about their goals and future. I would like to cover four basics about your participation in this activity:

## **1. What should you expect?**

There will be one 10-to-15 minute call each week. The call will be facilitated by a designated leader. The leader's responsibility is to facilitate the call. Remember, the leader is not your boss. The leader is your facilitator of the call. Always remember that this call is for you, not the leader. The leader is there to facilitate the call and to help you grow.

In this weekly call you will report on certain key performance factors. These key performance indicators, or KPI's, measure the activity that has been proven to lead to positive results. You will be reporting on the key activities that lead to productive results. On the weekly call you will have an opportunity to report on three numbers under each KPI: (1) the number that refers to what you said you were going to do last week; (2) the number that refers to what you actually did; and (3) the number that reflects what you will do next week.

Remember, earlier I mentioned that the behavior of doing what you say you're going to do is the most important winning behavior in achievement. Also, I mentioned that this behavior is not something that you learn naturally. Next level growth requires the development of this behavior. There is no better place to learn it than in a group of like-minded people who are all committed and striving for the same achievement as you. It speeds up your progress and adds the element of consistent performance to your work.

## **2. How to participate in the call?**

Your perspective and attitude is the key to the effectiveness of the call for you. Consistently remind yourself of the reason for your participation. The why behind your behavior is always important. Don't focus on the leader; don't focus on anyone else. You're not doing this for anyone else but yourself. I don't mean that to be a selfish statement, but it is true that the call is for you.

Your participation is for your growth and development. The journey to your dreams and goals will depend on your ability to consistently do the right things over a sustained period of time. The call is designed to allow you to learn the consistent activities required to achieve your goals.

When you can honestly say that you consistently do what you say you're going to do and are in a position of sustained growth, you are well on your way to next level growth. That's the purpose of the call for you.

### 3. What are the standards of excellence for your participation?

The following represents a list of standards for you to follow in your participation.

- **Absolute consistency in your attendance.** If you must miss, confirm with the leader and make sure your missed attendance is not habitual. Remember, it's not about the numbers but your choice of accountability of your numbers with the group. Also, understand that missing the call must be a rare exception. If you can't be consistent on the call, you will be asked to withdraw from the group.
- **Be on time.** This call is probably the most important personal development activity of the week. It's important enough to be on time.
- **Report honestly.** It serves no purpose to inflate your numbers. Being honest with yourself pushes you past your self-imposed limitations and comfort zones. This is not a competition with the others in the group. Say what you will do, do what you say, and feel good about your accomplishment.
- **Strive to do what you say you're going to do.** The difference between what you say you're going to do and what you actually do is called your "performance gap." Your weekly objective is to always narrow your performance gap. You should strive to perform very close to what you say you're going to do. It serves no purpose to set high goals that you never reach; that's self-defeating and counterproductive. Learn to say what you're going to do and exceed it, or hit very close. Your confidence level will grow every time you hit close to what you say you're going to do. You set your goals. No one will ever be made to feel bad about their goals, no matter how small.
- **You must grow.** There are only two choices regarding your future, to grow or decline. You must grow to achieve. Push yourself to grow on a monthly basis. You become stagnant and lose momentum when you set the same goals month in and month out. Focus on growing every month, even if only a little bit.

The NLAC focuses on your growth by measuring the activity that leads to future positive results. This is not a training call. The call will be very quick by design; however, your leader will have an opportunity to follow up with individual coaching calls on a consistent basis. In these coaching calls the leader will give you ideas and encouragement on two things, closing your performance gap and consistently growing. By following these standards of excellence in the call, you will be assured of gaining the maximum benefits from your participation.

#### **4. What are the benefits for you?**

Simply stated, the benefits for you are your future growth and development. To achieve, you must grow. To grow, you must change. To change, you must develop the behaviors of achievement. The free choice of accountability applies to everyone at every level of achievement. You can choose not to participate, and that is certainly your choice. However, I lean on thirty plus years of experience and these recommendations for you. By following these basics and standards of excellence, your choice of accountability will be an effective choice for your future, one that you will never regret.

Another benefit to be gained is your preparation of becoming a future leader. If you aspire to become a leader or enhance your current leadership skills, your active participation in the NLAC is a perfect training ground for that growth and development. Until next time, I wish you well in your future growth and development, and I pray that your choice of accountability will become a dynamic force in your life, as it has in mine.

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