

Preparing for an Accountability Discussion

Reflective Questions for Effective Engagement

Objective Data

About the commitment itself:

- Who made the commitment?
- Do they have the power to consent or say no to the commitment?
- What specifically did they commit to do?
- What did I do to ensure that the outcome, goal, or purpose of the commitment was clear?
- When did they commit to do it by?
- What actions were discussed to achieve or succeed in this commitment?
- How did I validate that we were on the same page?
- How did we plan to recognize (and communicate about) progress?

With the other person:

“My understanding was that you were going to do [x] by [y] in order to get this outcome. That hasn’t happened, and I’m curious if you had a different understanding, and if so, what that was.”

If the above are all clear:

- What has happened since the commitment was made?
- When did I become aware of the commitment being at risk?
- What did I do when I found out?
- What support have I offered?
- What other data do I have? ...do they have?
- Do we have a regular space for these kinds of conversations so it’s not an “uh-oh” when I bring this up?

Reflective

- How is the current situation impacting me?
- What is the source of the pressure I'm feeling?
- What is most frustrating about the situation?

Interpretive Questions:

- What do I believe to be the underlying source of this situation?
- What have I seen other people do in this situation?
- What is the most important outcome of the discussion?
- What's the worst possible outcome of the discussion?
- What about our system makes this situation common?
- If I do nothing, what's the likely outcome?
- How likely is this to happen again? Is this a pattern or a one-off?
- What would I guess is this person's most likely reactive tendency that might show up in this conversation?

Decisional

- Given this reflection, do we even need a conversation?
- What might I change about my own leadership to get a better outcome?
- How will I frame the discussion?
- What will I do if I start to drift towards reactive?
- What creative competency(ies) will I "channel" in the discussion?
- What ORID steps will I start with as my gameplan?