LEADING AND COACHING SUCCESS

Getting People To Take Responsibility and Demonstrate Ownership –the Essence of Agility

Special to Houston Agile Leadership Network

A LEADERSHIP GIFT™ WORKSHOP

First designed for Agile 2009

By Christopher Avery, ChristopherAvery.com
& Ashley Johnson, Gemba Systems LLC

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc.

Copyright © 2009, 2010 by Partnerwerks Inc. & Christopher Avery
P0 Box 1046, Comfort, TX 78013
www.ChristopherAvery.com

The following are trademarks of Partnerweks Inc.,Christopher Avery and/or Bill McCarley: Leadership Gift™, Responsibility Process™, Keys to Responsibility™, Power or Control Process™

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recorded, scanning, or otherwise, except as permitted under section 107 or 108 of the United States Copyright Act, without prior written permission of Partnerwerks Inc. Requests for permission should be sent to ca@ChristopherAvery.com or +1 830-995-4853.

Limit of Liability/Disclaimer of Warranty: while the author has used their best efforts in preparing this material, they make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this booklet and specifically disclaim any implied warranties or merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. No warranty may be created or extended by sales representatives or written sales materials, The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for your situation, You should consult a professional where appropriate. The author shall not be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential or other damages.

Readers should be aware that Internet websites offered as citations and/or sources for further information may have changed or disappeared between the time this was written and when it was read.

For additional copies or bulk purchases of this booklet, please contact Partnerwerks Inc.

Version 0.8 October 2010

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Objectives:

Understand the essential role of ownership behavior in agile product development – and for success in any pursuit.

Understand, observe, and validate your mind's internal responsibility process – how you take ownership (or not).

Understand why giving advice is the weakest tool available to you – and what you can do that's more effective.

Learn tools, activities, and exercises you can use to help those you coach or lead take responsibility and demonstrate ownership behavior.

Learn and apply the 3 Keys to Responsibility.

Learn the A-B-Cs of teaching responsibility to anyone - what is required and where the pitfalls are.

Participate in exercises to apply the subject matter and learn through experience.

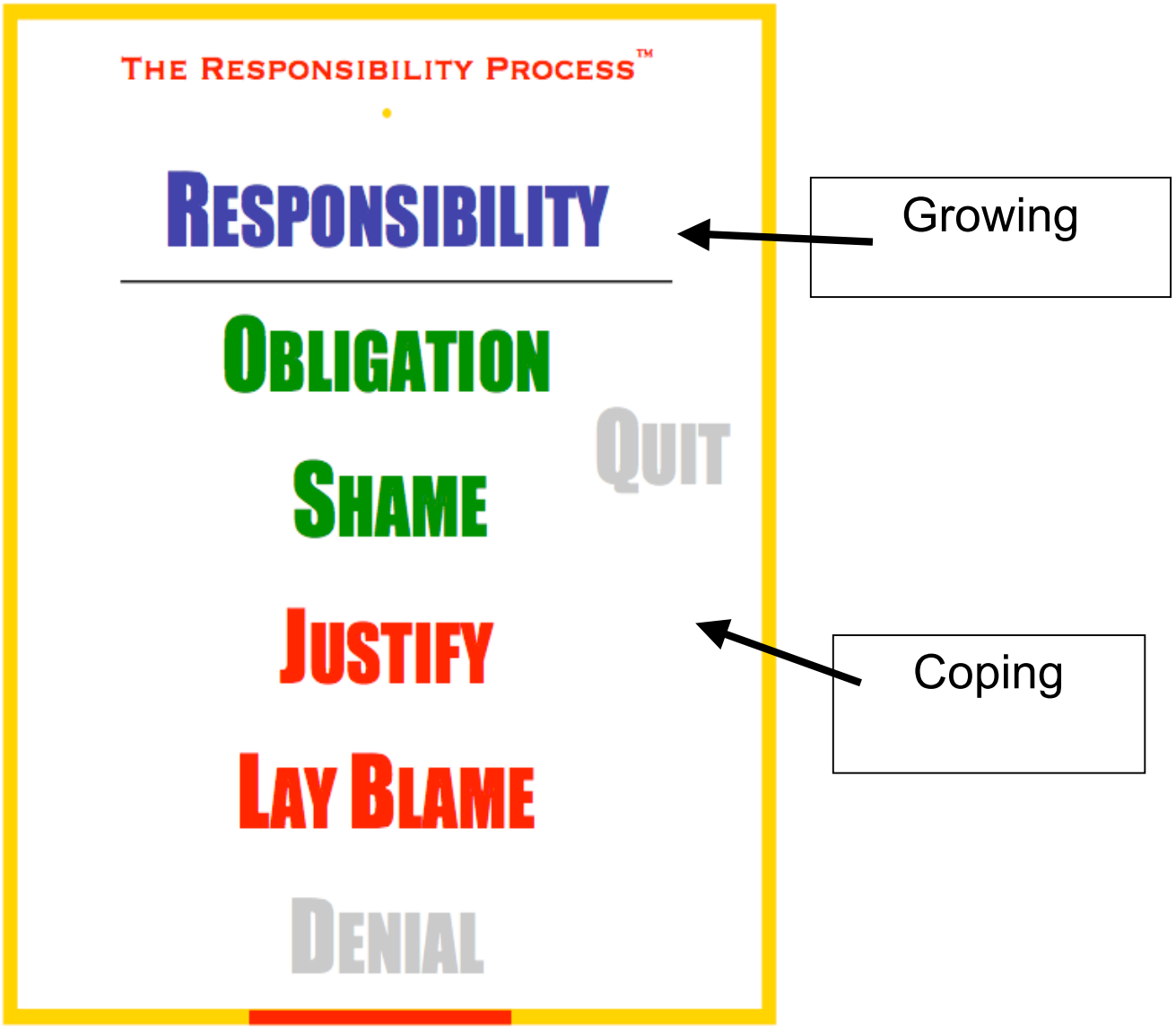
Take away barely sufficient documentation to conduct these exercises with your teams.

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Exercise: Challenge Game

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

When Things Go Wrong We Can Cope or Grow



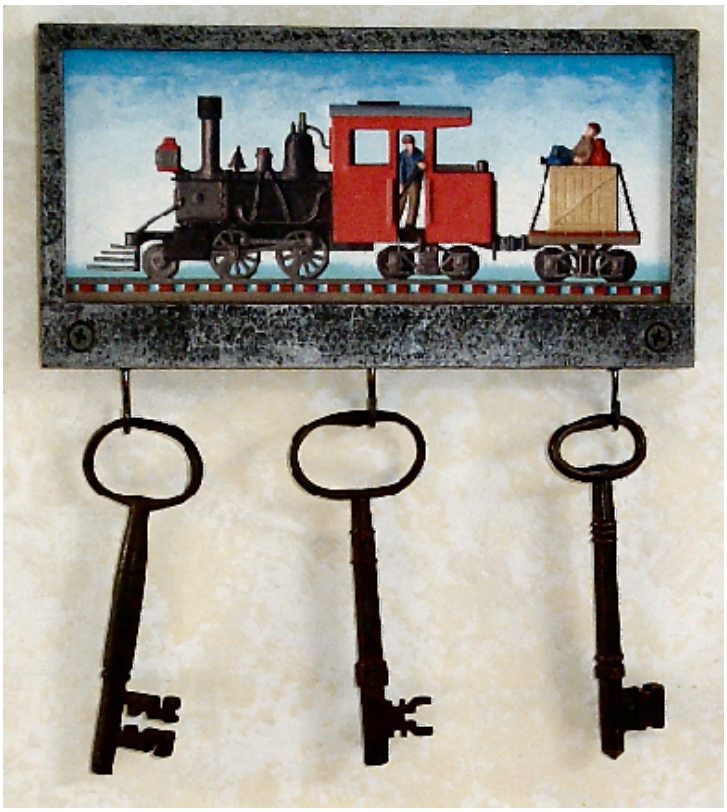
© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Exercise: Awareness

Responsibility	
Quit	
Obligation	
Shame	
Justify	
Lay Blame	
Denial	

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

3 Keys to Responsibility



INTENTION

AWARENESS

CONFRONT

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Exercise: Intention

Write a letter to yourself declaring your intention to operate from a mental position of Responsibility when things go wrong in your life. For best results be clear, specific, and passionate.

Dear

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Exercise: Confront

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

You must confront to grow…

Confront: The ability to face.

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Confront

"When you confront a problem you begin to solve it."
– Rudy Giuliani

"We only really face up to ourselves when we are afraid"
– Thomas Bernhard

"All of the great leaders have had one characteristic in common: it was the willingness to confront unequivocally the major anxiety of their people in their time. This, and not much else, is the essence of leadership." – John Kenneth Galbraith

"Confront your fears, list them, get to know them, and only then will you be able to put them aside and move ahead." – Jerry Gillies

"Learning happens in no time. It's not learning that takes time."
– Marshall Thurber

"All things found in the world and beyond
Are illusions created by one's own concepts.
Grasping at them but further distorts perception.
Give up grasping and see things AS THEY ARE."
– 7th Dalai Lama

"The ultimate cause of suffering is ignorance, the failure to see things as they really are."
– Buddha (The Four Noble Truths, The truth of arising)

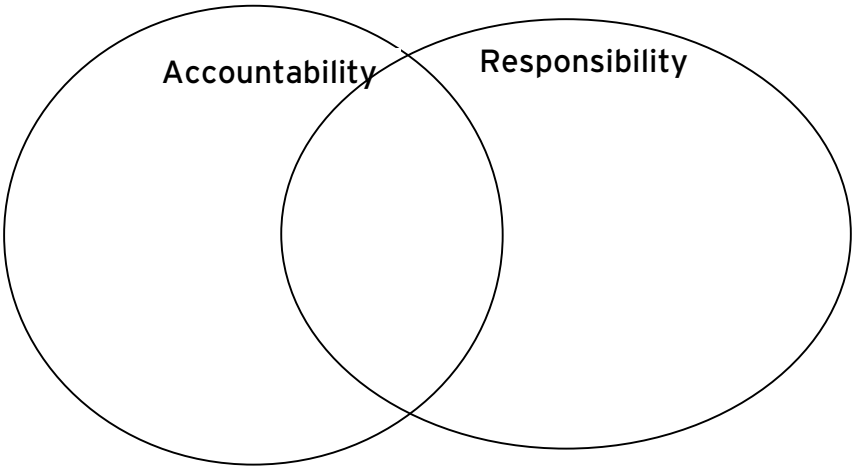
"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
– John 8:32

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

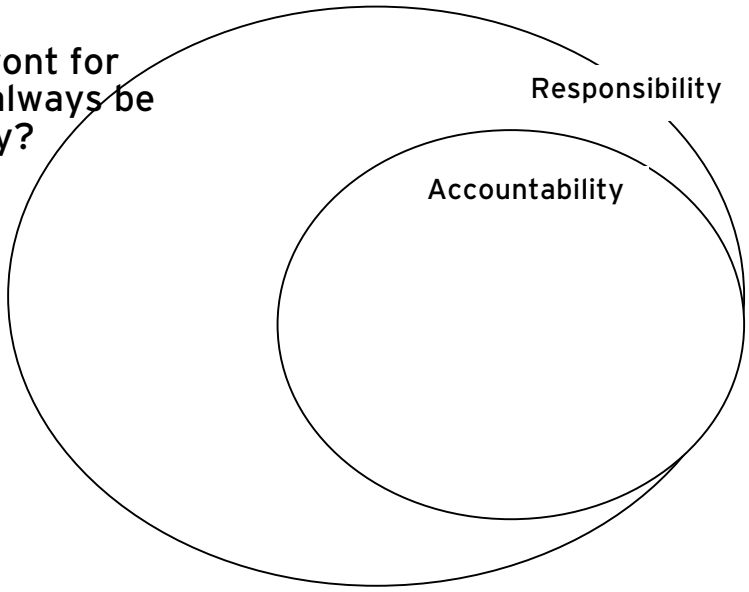
Exercise: Responsibility & Accountability

1. Where in your life, work, and relationships are you not taking full responsibility for your accountabilities?

Hint: Look for areas of your life, work, and relationships where you are struggling, where you aren't getting what you want, or where you are getting results you don't want.



2. What would you have to confront for your sense of responsibility to always be greater than your accountability?



© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

The essence of agile development is ...

O_____ B_____

Why is this true?

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Exercise: Where's the bottleneck?

1. Project name / brief description:
2. Project length / size:
3. What if....?
4. What percentage?
5. To what do you attribute that improvement?

_____ is the bottleneck in software development.

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Agile methods require feedback.

What feedback points do you have?

1.

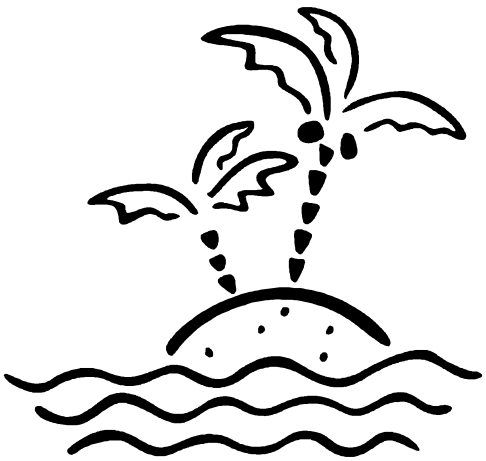
2.

3.

4.

5.

What happens when someone notices that something has gone wrong?



© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Agile methods expose problems...

... and many organizations are unprepared or unwilling to see their problems, to face the truth, so they can improve.

"Scrum doesn't solve your problems, it exposes them."
- Ken Schwaber

"Scrum makes these [bad] habits and the consequences of them transparent. My belief was that the transparency would be met with determined effort to change, to improve, and to make ours the great profession that it started to be and could become again. Imagine my surprise when, instead of improvement, many users of scrum instead 'customized' or 'modified' scrum so that these habits and their consequences would no longer be visible."
- Flaccid Scrum, by Ken Schwaber, 5/1/2009

" 'Do you have a mother-in-law?' Ken asks one of the men at the session. 'Of course,' the man laughs. 'Now imagine that your mother-in-law believed her daughter could do better,' Ken proposes. 'And then imagine that she moved in with you. That's what Scrum is like.' " - Ken Schwaber, speaking at an APLN meeting, as reported on thehackerchickblog.com

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Help your group take responsibility…

1. The fastest way to elevate responsibility in a group: _____ it _____.

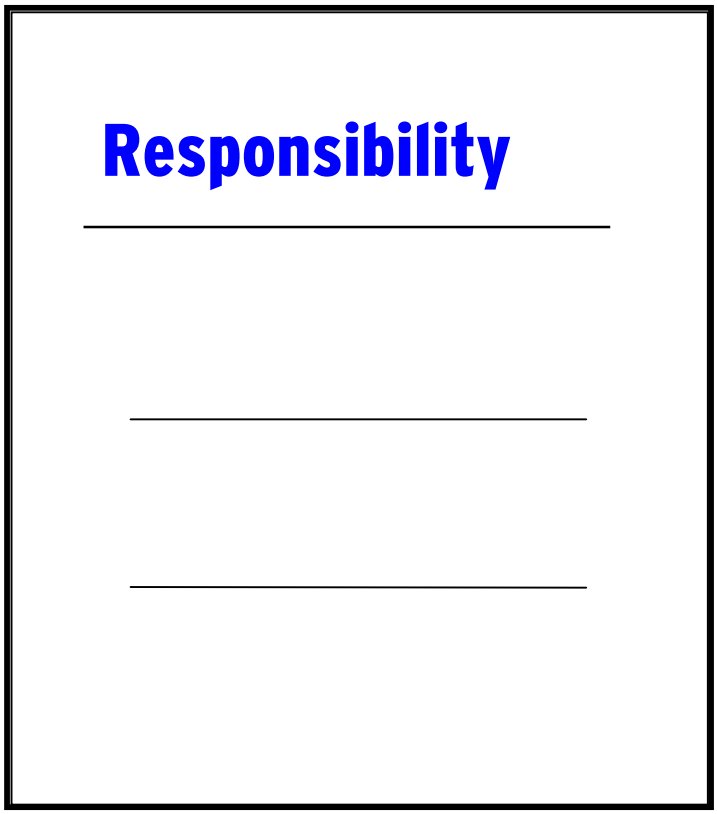
2. Teach the concept and get agreement.

3. As a coach, be willing to intervene and learn how to do so effectively.

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Teach responsibility in 5 minutes

First, _____ the behavior.



© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

How to Intervene

Don't go into _____

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Intervene Responsibly

First, check, where are you coming from?

Advice is not effective because it…

If you insist on giving advice, even though it's not effective, give at least _____ _____

Help group acknowledge _____ _____…

then invite them to figure out what to do _____

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

How to Practice

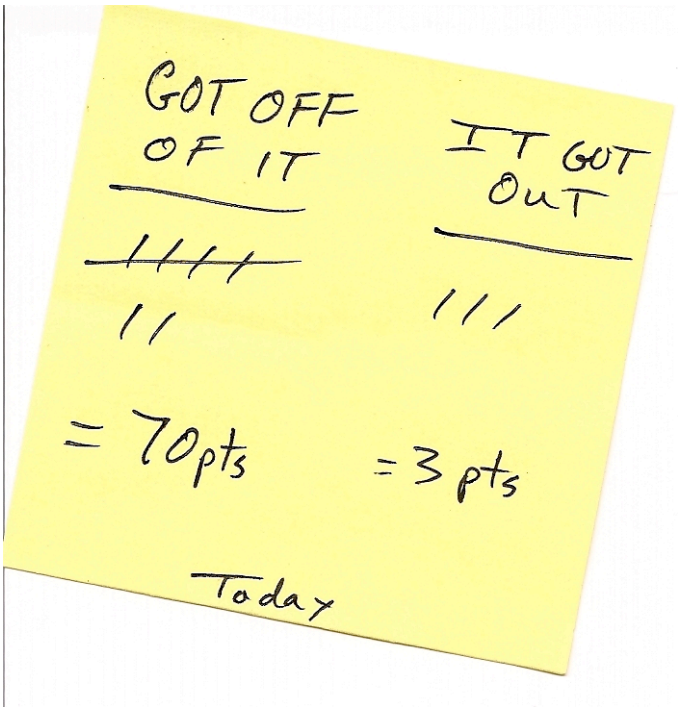
The fastest way to elevate responsibility in a group is to practice it yourself. So how you do you practice?

Practice Awareness

Post poster as reminder

Daily scorecard game

Bring poster into meetings



Practice Confront

At meetings, at the dinner table, on an airplane, visiting someone in the hospital –face someone, really be with them, notice what comes up for you, and own your responses.

What might you be avoiding because it feels uncomfortable to confront? Let go of avoiding and face it.

Accelerate your practice

Share the model with your team or family. Then invite them to call you on it.

Participate in a Mastery group.

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

So, *What Are You Going To Do* About It?

Vision: See poster hanging…

For Anything To Change

First,

____ _____ _____

What Could You Do?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What Will You Do? When?

1.

2.

3.

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Appendix

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Directions for A Challenge Game

Thanks to Susan Smith, agile coach in Topeka, Kansas for inventing this game as a way to introduce the Responsibility Process.

The purpose of the Challenge Game is to

- create tension and anxiety in groups so
- people will vocalize that anxiety and
- you can capture their words and phrases to
- later show the positions on the Responsibility Process chart.

Directions for facilitators

1. Choose a short competitive challenge that pits one or more small groups against each other. Generally we devise a short exercise each group can complete in 5-10 minutes and then be graded or compared to the other groups. We've used each of the following:
   - Build a house from 1 package of 100 index cards and 1 roll of tape. It will be graded on total height. Opposing teams may blow on your tower but may not touch them.
   - Build a tower of Jenga blocks. It will be graded on total height after any one block – as chosen by opposing teams – is removed.
   - Build a tower of balloons and tape. It will be graded on total height. Opposing teams may blow on your tower but may not touch them.
2. Divide your larger group into small groups with 2, 3, or 4 in a group. Some games may use larger groups if there are enough roles (balloon blower-uppers for instance). If you have a small group, like 10 or less, then you will have all Players and no Observers. You will play the Observer role. If you have larger groups you can have both Players and Observers. Consider having fewer Observers than Players.
3. Give each group the appropriate materials for the challenge and a place for them to work.
4. Explain the challenge, timeframe (keep it short), any other rules, and say "Go."
5. During Play…
   - If you are the only Observer, then listen to groups and capture their statements of Denial, Lay Blame, Justify, Shame, Obligation, Quit, and Responsibility. You may want to write these on one or more flip charts that none of the groups can see.
   - If you have Observers, then quickly meet with them and tell them what to listen for and help them get started. You can give them written instructions (below)
   - Your job is also to keep time and to facilitate the forward progress of the game as necessary.
6. Call time.
7. Complete the grading part of the challenge and declare a winner. (You can continue observing and capturing statements during this time as well)
8. Segue into your debrief about how we respond when things aren't going our way. Teach the Responsibility Process by using the Players own statements as examples for each of the positions in the model.

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Directions for observers

Your role is to observe by listening to the Players and capture *ver batim* on flip charts certain types of statements spoken by any of the players. The statements you are listening for are statements of

Denial	*I can't believe I'm doing this*
Lay Blame	*They didn't give us enough time*
Justify/Excuse	*No one could complete this in time*
Shame/Self-pity	*We suck*
Obligation	*I don't care how good it is, just get it done*
Quit	*Screw this. I'm not doing any more.*
Responsibility	*This isn't working, let's fix it this way*

Do
Be supportive and interested.
Feel free to walk around to different groups.
Capture on flip charts statements made by Players
Have fun

Do not
Interfere with the Players
Interact with the Players
Tell the Players what you are observing

Directions for Another Challenge Game

Find the MarshMallow Challenge by Tom Wujec at:
www.MarshmallowChallenge.com

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.

Responsibility	
Quit	
Obligation	
Shame	
Justify	
Lay Blame	
Denial	

© 2009-2010, Partnerwerks Inc. All rights reserved.