



CREATING A CULTURE OF

# ACCOUNTABILITY ENGAGEMENT

*A business operating system that gets results*

With

**POST**  
Business Operating System

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## A story of engagement

When I was launching a brand new university in Africa, everyone asked me, “Where are you finding your people?”

If you think it’s hard to find good people in your industry, think how hard it would be to find them in a third-world country where the vast majority of the population never finished high school, never touched a computer, and grew up in a society where corruption was the norm. The best talent had been lured away to international jobs or were otherwise unaffordable.

“

*The truth is, we did not have the luxury of recruiting the best people. Instead, we had to accomplish an extraordinary task with the most ordinary people.*

”

What made them different was their engagement with our vision and mission, and their willingness to be held accountable for better results than anyone else was getting.

For example, at every other university in the country, students would not receive their actual diplomas for 6-9 months after graduation. During that time, they could not get jobs, because employers demanded proof of education. Our faculty and administration accepted the challenge to do what no other institution was doing—even though it would require cooperation and accountability on multiple levels to get it done. No one wanted to be the weak link in the chain, and we set a new standard of service and execution.

Stop for a moment and consider what can happen when the majority of people in a company refuse to blame someone else or duck accountability. What becomes possible when they are so engaged in pursuing the company’s goal that they feel personal responsibility for achieving it?

In this eBook, I’ll share what I’ve learned about creating top-performing cultures both in Africa and in the US. But here’s a spoiler—successful culture is not just about casting an inspirational vision. It’s about the way you operate and communicate, from planning to execution to review.



# TODAY'S CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENGAGEMENT

**WHERE  
ARE WE  
TODAY?**

ONLY  
**33%**

of U.S. employees are  
engaged at work

## WHAT ARE WE FACING?

- ✓ Failure to follow procedures
- ✓ Failure to follow through and complete tasks
- ✓ Failure to meet deadlines
- ✓ Lack of attention to details
- ✓ Excessive absences
- ✓ Tardiness

**WHAT  
COULD  
IT BE?**

**67%**

of employees at Gallup's  
Best Performing Companies  
are engaged at work

Statistics provided from Gallup's 2022 State  
of the Global Workplace report.

# HOW BIG IS THE ACCOUNTABILITY & ENGAGEMENT PROBLEM?

**91%**

of people rank **ACCOUNTABILITY** as one of the top development needs needed at their organization

**82%**

of managers feel they have little to no ability to hold others accountable

*Statistics provided from The Workplace Accountability Study. The workplace survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Poll on behalf of the American Psychological Association between Jan. 28 and Feb. 4, 2014, among 1,562 adults aged 18 and older who reside in the U.S. and are either employed full time, part time or self-employed.*

## ACCOUNTABILITY MATTERS

**82%**

of business leaders surveyed feel that more than half of their employees avoid accountability.

**42%**

believe the range of unaccountability among employees to be 20-50%.

*According to a 2013 survey conducted by AMA Enterprise, a division of the American Management Association®, business leaders recognize a lack of accountability on the part of employees. [www.amanet.org/news/8636.aspx](http://www.amanet.org/news/8636.aspx)*

## WHAT DOES DISENGAGEMENT LOOK LIKE?

# 30%

of employees are actively committed to doing a good job.

# 50%

of employees are merely putting their time in.

# 20%

of employees act out their discontent in counterproductive ways, negatively influencing coworkers, missing days of work, or driving customers away through poor service.

## WHAT IS THE SINGLE GREATEST CAUSE FOR EMPLOYEE DISENGAGEMENT?

# ***POOR LEADERSHIP.***

*Gallup's 2013 State of the American Workplace report.*



# WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF LOW ACCOUNTABILITY & ENGAGEMENT?

01

## Missed Opportunities for Focus & Alignment

91%

of surveyed participants said they weren't even sure what their organizations were trying to achieve.

02

## Missed Opportunities to Leverage Personality

- ✓ Poor results
- ✓ Failed initiatives
- ✓ Missed target
- ✓ Low morale
- ✓ Distrusting environment

03

## Further Erosion of Employees

- ✓ Pretend not to know about their accountability - Deny their responsibility
- ✓ Blame others for their predicament
- ✓ Cite confusion as a reason for inaction
- ✓ Ask others to tell them what to do
- ✓ Claim they can't do what is asked of them

## BIGGEST PROBLEMS

Caused by Low Accountability & Engagement

- 01.** Misalignment around key priorities and desired results.
- 02.** Declining engagement levels in the workplace.
- 03.** Ineffective execution of team and enterprise-wide initiatives.
- 04.** Low levels of trust within the culture of the organization.
- 05.** Problems with collaboration and cross-functional teamwork.
- 06.** Low morale in every quarter of the organization.
- 07.** High turnover due to confused expectations and poor management practices.

*Do you recognize any of these problems in your organization?*

## THE COST

of Low Accountability and Engagement

UP TO

**7%**

**Annual Sales Lost**

**5-10%**

**Productivity Lost**

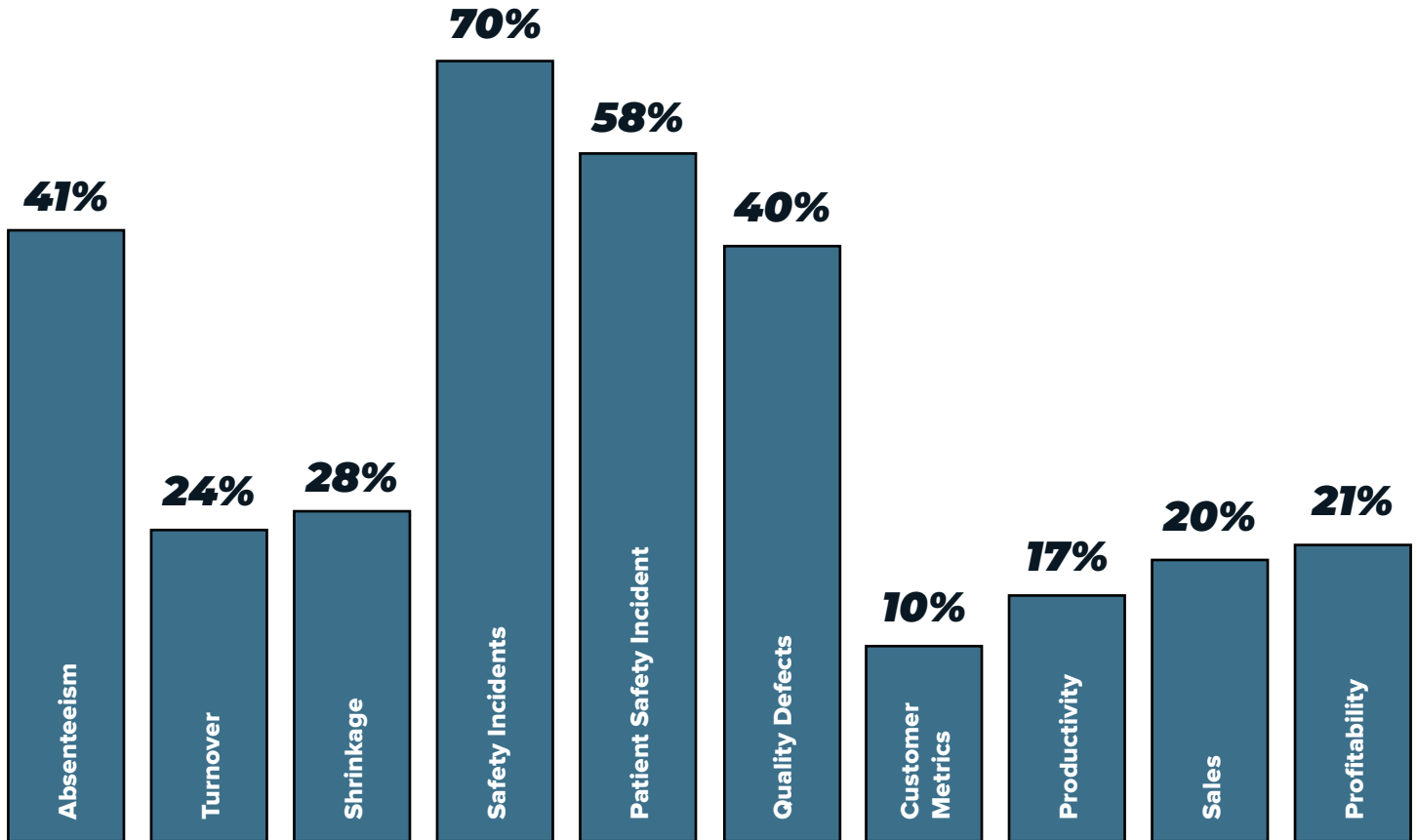
According to 2014 Partners in Leadership Workplace Accountability Study, a multi-year project involving over 40,000 participants.

According to research from the Blanchard Company <http://blog.johnspence.com/2015/10/high-cost-poor-leadership/>

# WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET ACCOUNTABILITY & ENGAGEMENT RIGHT?

Gallup compared its Best Performing Companies (top quartile) to the lowest performing companies (bottom quartile) of Engagement. (Data collected from more than 195,600 employees in 2015 and 2016.)

## Companies in the Top Quartile realized **IMPROVEMENTS** in the following areas



Employee engagement is the outcome of actively involving employees through a strategy that drives improved performance.

\*All data gathered from Gallup's 2017 State of the American Workplace report.

# INTRODUCES A STRATEGIC WAY TO GET THERE



Create a shared vision.  
Involve everyone in the process.



Connect strategy to execution, level by level.  
Build **ACCOUNTABILITY** from the ground up.



Launch a sustainable cycle of planning,  
communication, and improvement.

# 5-STEP PATH TO POST



**Year 1**

**1st 6 Months**  
*Strategic Planning*

---

**2st 6 Months**  
*Implement Level 1*

**Year 2**

**1st 6 Months**  
*Implement Level 2*

— **Sustain** —

**2st 6 Months**  
*Adapt Level 2*

**Year 3**

**1st 6 Months**  
*Implement Level 3*

---

**2st 6 Months**  
*Adapt Level 3*



# 01

## CREATE A DELIBERATE PLANNING PROCESS

POST creates a logical and repeatable framework for planning, beginning in the first 6 months and then flowing through the whole organization.



**ENGAGE**

### PURPOSE

Define purpose, position, and desired future.

- Mission, vision, and values
- SWOT
- Assumptions and conclusions

### OBJECTIVES

Develop strategic business objectives.

- Critical success factors
- SBOs (strategic business objectives)

### STRATEGIES

Cascade strategies to operations.

- Strategies
- Measures (new KPIs)
- Quarterly targets

### TRACKING

Align and track people, processes, and resources.

- Budget
- Organizational structure
- Document key processes



# 02

## USE POST DOCUMENTS THROUGHOUT PROCESS

What would become possible if every employee in your company had their own one-page strategic plan for the year, and it was in total alignment with the company's goals?

### Organizational POST Document

**ENGAGE**



**PURPOSE:**

**OBJECTIVES**

- 1. BUSINESS RESULTS—
- 2. CUSTOMER FOCUS—
- 3. EMPLOYEES & LEARNING—
- 4. PROCESS IMPROVEMENT—

OBJECTIVES	FYE 20XX	FYE 20XX	FYE 20XX
Objective 1: BUSINESS RESULTS			

### Designed to Answer

- ✓ *Who is responsible?*
- ✓ *Who owns key processes?*

### Organized to Define

**Purpose** = Mission & Vision

**Objectives** = 3yr Strategic Business Objectives

**Strategies** = Annual & 1/4 Milestones

**Tracking** = Key performance indicators & due dates

# Individual POST Documents

## Individual Strategic Plan


- ✓ The year on a single page.

## Personal Work Objectives

- ✓ Outlined for the year.
- ✓ Co-created with 90-day strategies to get there.

## Self-Created Tracking

- ✓ Documents how they to measure success and be evaluated (due dates).



**MASTERMINDS  
LEADERSHIP**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name)

## POST DOCUMENT

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

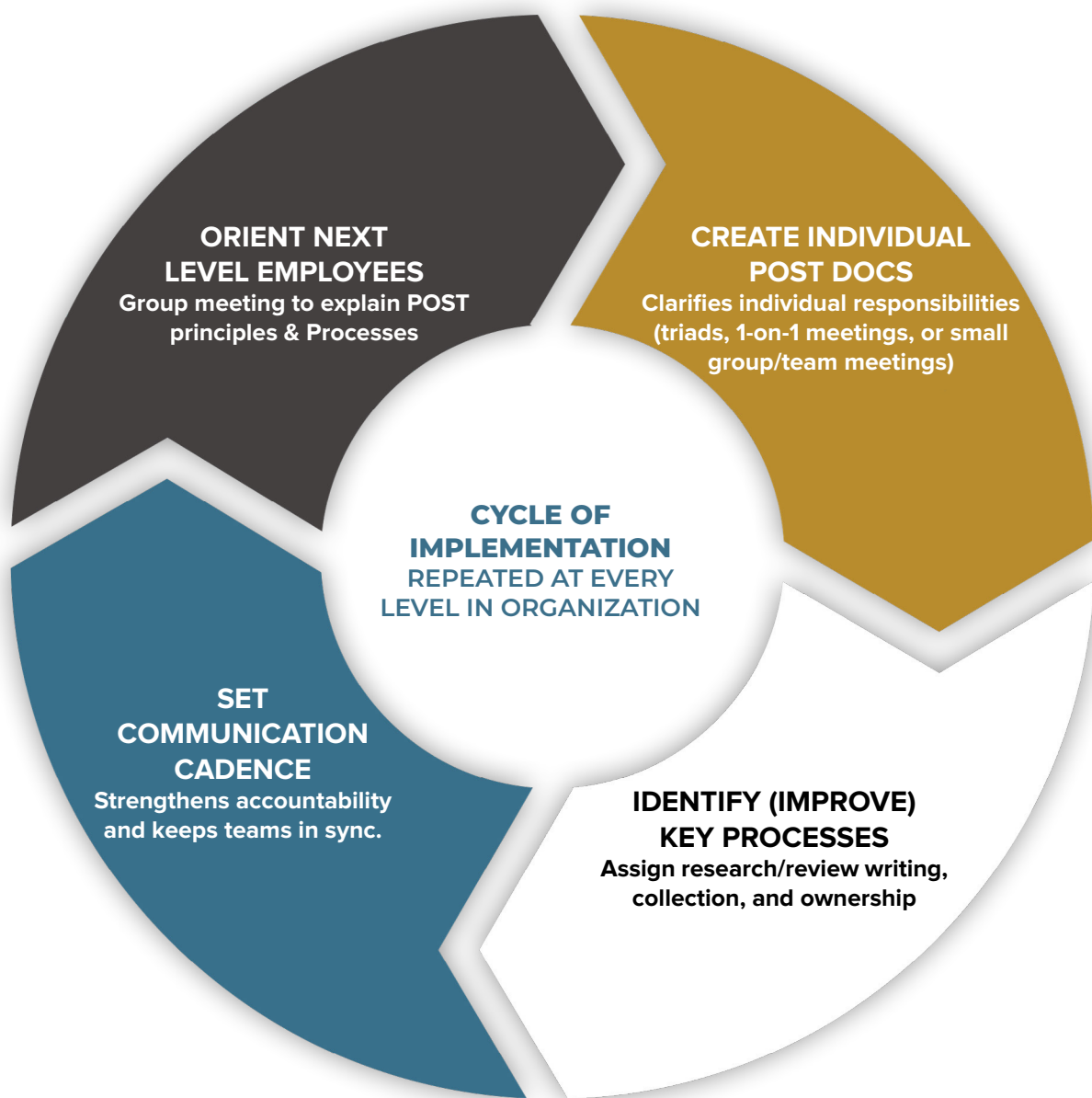
Work Anniversary \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWED:	MONTH 1:	MONTH 2:	MONTH 3:
<b>PURPOSE:</b>		<b>PROCESSES OWNED:</b>	
<b>OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR:</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆</li> <li>◆</li> <li>◆</li> <li>◆</li> <li>◆</li> </ul>	
1)			
2)			
3)			
4)			
STRATEGIES (90-DAY)		TRACKING	DATE
<b>OBJECTIVE 1</b>	1		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	2		
	3		

*Sample: Everyone uses this POST Document.*

### IMPLEMENT



**POST ENGAGEMENT & RENEWAL SCHEDULE**

<b>Annually</b>	<b>1 hr with supervisor</b>	<b>Create new individual POST documents</b>
<b>3 Quarterly refreshment meetings</b>	<b>30 minutes with supervisor</b>	<b>Refresh strategies &amp; tactics</b>
<b>Monthly check-ins</b>	<b>15 minutes with supervisor</b>	<b>Check in for accountability, removing obstacles, and support</b>

ADAPT



## WHAT'S IN THE SECRET SAUCE?

Many approaches to strategic planning and execution share common “best practices”. You’ve probably heard of techniques like setting “SMART goals” and figuring out the right things to measure (KPIs). You will find those best practices embedded into the POST process.

But there are two ingredients that make the Secret Sauce of POST so much better. Those two ingredients are genuine engagement and mutual accountability. That’s why we call POST a Business Operating System, because it changes how the people in your company operate with each other to collectively pursue goals. The POST system genuinely engages employees in developing both the company-wide strategic plan and their own personal strategic plan. Employees are more motivated to pursue a plan that they helped develop. And they “buy in” to their own part of the plan, because they can see how it connects to the whole. They are aligned, and they know it!



*The same two documents also form the basis of the most powerful ingredient: mutual accountability.*



The missing link between Intention and Execution is Accountability. It’s what gets us across the finish line when we’re all busy with demands. Employees who use POST tell us all the time how much they appreciate the mutual accountability. They know that their peers will know if they don’t accomplish their goals, and they work that much harder to not let anyone down.

Engagement and Accountability need each other. Engagement without Accountability is just having fun. And Accountability without Engagement feels authoritarian. But together, they produce exceptional performance.

# Comments from employees and managers using POST

- ✓ I love that we meet every quarter and report on our goals. It keeps me moving forward.
- ✓ I really like seeing the progress we are all making. Without POST, it would just feel like an endless stream of work. But now I can see that we are going somewhere.
- ✓ Our meetings and discussions are getting more productive. We're talking about the right things.
- ✓ I'm surprised how far we have come already this year!
- ✓ I need the accountability. We all do.
- ✓ I like the fact that it's a process. We keep getting better at it, and we know what to expect now.

