PRACTICING BLAMELESS PROBLEM-SOLVING

A Checklist to Assess Your Workplace Culture

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When mistakes happen, staff members often point fingers instead of focusing on solutions. But blaming others alienates coworkers and doesn't fix anything. What's more, it prevents teams from learning from problems and building processes to ensure they don't become chronic.

So how can a leader create a solution-focused culture where employees tackle problems as a team?

By identifying, coaching, and practicing key behaviors that form a high-performance culture.

Is your organization promoting conduct that cultivates blameless problem-solving? Use this checklist to select the behaviors you see your team members demonstrating regularly.

☐ **Leading by example.**
Our managers and supervisors are good role models. They engage in productive problem-solving and don't blame people or dwell on errors in a negative way. For example, instead of singling out individuals when things go wrong, they help their team members work together to address mistakes effectively and learn from them.

☐ **Assuming positive intent.**
Our staff members don't rush to judgment and work from the perspective that people usually act with good intentions. If mistakes happen, they acknowledge that everyone makes them and choose to think of their coworkers in a positive light. They don't harbor resentment and instead support one another in making things right.

☐ **Taking ownership.**
If mistakes occur, our employees don't try to pin them on others, make excuses, or say they're inevitable. When problems arise, they look for solutions and find a way to overcome them. Then they analyze systems and procedures and determine how to improve them to prevent similar issues.

☐ **Collaborating.**
Our employees help prevent problems by sharing information and working together. They anticipate future issues, plan for contingencies, and address them in advance. When errors occur, they brainstorm solutions together.

☐ **Having a team-first attitude.**
Our staff members don't let their egos or personal agendas get in the way of doing what's best for the team. When things go wrong, they don't adopt an "It's not my problem" or "It wasn't me" attitude. They have each other's back and are willing to pitch in to help their teammates find solutions.

☐ **Being relentless about improvement.**
Our team members aren't complacent and know that as things change, traditional procedures and old ways of thinking can cause errors. They understand they can prevent mistakes by constantly looking for ways to improve processes. And they're willing to learn and take advantage of opportunities to gain more knowledge.

☐ **Being curious.**
When something doesn't seem right, our employees don't look the other way. They challenge and question what they don't understand—but they do it without assessing blame. They are resourceful, show initiative, and are willing to think outside of the box to develop innovative solutions.

☐ **Staying positive.**
Our staff maintains a positive outlook when mistakes happen—they know negativity compounds problems. Instead, they focus on moving beyond errors and identifying lessons that can be learned from them.

Fixing problems at their source.
Our team members address issues by discovering the root cause rather than just tackling the symptoms. For example, they don't try to identify who dropped the ball when a mistake occurs. Instead, they look for systematic issues and team up to develop long-term solutions.

Speaking up.
Our staff members don't try to hide errors; they acknowledge when they've made a mistake and gather resources to correct it. They know they work in an environment where they're supported and can safely speak up without worrying about negative repercussions.

How many boxes did you check? Companies that cultivate blameless problem-solving experience more innovation, stronger employee engagement, lower turnover, and higher productivity. And employees freely engage in positive accountability in a blame-free workplace, making it easier to achieve team goals.

We're human, and mistakes happen. It's how your organization handles them that makes the difference.

Book a call with a CultureWise specialist to learn how to develop and sustain a solution-focused culture.