



## How Accountability Builds Trust

### The Power of Owning It

While every team wants to win, the ones that do usually have one thing in common that most people don't talk about. It's not talent or hard work. It's accountability. Being accountable means owning your mistakes and not blaming someone else. It means saying, "That one's on me," even when saying it might be uncomfortable. In fact, it might be the most powerful thing you can do to help your team succeed.

Why? Because accountability builds trust. When teammates know you'll take ownership of your role in a game or a particular play (good or bad) they're more likely to do the same. It creates an environment where everyone can grow. No one understood this better than legendary coach Pat Summitt. Her teams didn't just win; they built a culture rooted in honesty, effort, and mutual respect.

### About Coach Summitt

Coach Pat Summitt turned the University of Tennessee into one of the most successful programs in college basketball history. Her teams won over a thousand games and eight national championships during her 38 seasons. But what really set her apart was how deeply she cared about her players, not just as athletes, but as people.

One of her most powerful beliefs was about accountability. She once said, "Accountability is essential to personal growth, as well as team growth. How can you ever improve if you are never wrong?"

Pause for a moment and reread that last sentence.

### Blame Breaks Teams

It's normal to want to point fingers when things go wrong. Maybe a teammate missed a throw. Maybe a coach wasn't clear enough. Maybe someone made an error that cost the team the game. But blaming others doesn't fix anything. In fact, it usually just makes things worse, because blame creates tension, and tension creates an awkward vibe.

On the other hand, when a player says, “That one’s on me,” not only does it show maturity, it also reminds everyone else that we’re all human. When you take responsibility, it’s not about getting stuck in the past or dwelling on mistakes. It’s about using those mistakes as stepping stones for improvement.

## **Accountability Builds Trust**

Trust grows when everyone takes responsibility for their role, big or small. Whether you misread the ball or didn’t react quickly enough, owning it shows maturity and leadership. More importantly, it strengthens the bond of trust between you and your teammates. Trust isn’t built on perfection. It’s built on honesty and the courage to take ownership, even when it’s hard.

## **The Bottom Line**

Accountability is not about being perfect. It is about being honest about what happened, taking ownership, and learning from it. So the next time something on the field does not go your way, do not point fingers. Take a breath, own your part, show maturity, and set the tone for the team. And remember, this mindset doesn’t just make you a better teammate. It also helps you grow into the kind of person others can count on in school, at work, and in life too.