8 Keys of Excellence

Take OWNERSHIP
Take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings, words, and actions—“own” the choices you make and the results that follow.

Be someone who can be counted on—take responsibility for your actions!

Ownership is the quality of accountability and responsibility. When you feel a sense of ownership, you give your best efforts and take pride in the results. When you take responsibility for your life, you begin to make things happen. You are in control because you stop blaming things outside yourself for your situation. You can create a huge shift in your life simply by taking ownership of your attitude.

Accountability
Taking ownership is all about accountability. It’s about taking ownership of what you say and do—including your mistakes, your excuses, your failures to act, and actions that you’re not very proud of.

Dismantle the word “accountability” and you’ll see that it literally means the ability to be counted on. It means you’re willing to take responsibility for the choices you make. It means accepting responsibility for making change happen, whether good or bad. The bottom line is that whether things you do or say go wrong or right, you look to yourself as the cause. The choices you made determined the outcome.

Why hold yourself accountable? What does accountability do for you? Accountability puts you in control. It allows you to make things happen. It makes you a potent force in your own life. When you’re in control you are powerful and effective.

Ownership is a whole-life concept: You can take ownership of your education, your relationships, your health, your fitness—everything that’s important to you. You can create a massive shift in your life simply by taking ownership of your choices you’re your attitude.

The buck stops with you
When you pass the buck, you volunteer for powerlessness. You make yourself a passive ingredient in the recipe of your own life. You remove yourself from the equation.

I’m sure you’ve heard, and probably used, denials of ownership like making excuses, laying blame elsewhere, or otherwise justifying unfavorable actions: *She distracted me (laying blame)* … *We were talking about the assignment (justifying)* … *I wasn’t talking (denial)* … etc. Denying responsibility doesn’t make the problem go away, and it may make you look unreliable and even dishonest. Although denial might take some of the immediate heat off you, it does little to relieve the feelings of guilt and even incompetence that come when you know you’ve let someone down.

And that’s the worst part of passing the buck: It erodes your relationships. It marks you as someone who can’t be counted on. To maintain the respect of others and keep your relationships solid, the buck stops with you!

I “own” the choices I make and the results that follow!