

# WILL YOU REMOVE BLAME FROM THE GAME?



## FAILURE BEGETS BLAME

Let's face it, failure is part of life – life at work and life at home. There is so much to do, there are so many problems to solve and broken things to fix that I will certainly make a mistake or two today. So will you, so will your colleagues. And those mistakes will likely cost each of us something – credibility, efficiency, effectiveness or personal satisfaction.

But far too often we inadvertently compound our mistakes by falling into the age-old habit of blaming. It is such a quick and automatic habit – a reaction, really. Designed by the mind of a child and perfected by you the adult, it now awaits only the stimulus of a threat to your self image.

## CHEAP THRILLS

Blaming is an easy habit to acquire and maintain because it is addictive. Literally. Every time I make another “wrong”, I get to be “right” and with my “rightness” comes the release of serotonin – the brain hormone associated with pleasure. So the more I blame, the more I get the quick hits of pleasure, the more I train myself to do it again.

## STOP THE TRAIN, I WANT TO GET OFF

So here are some ways to alter the habit of blame:

**1. Notice.** Who do you frequently blame? Are there certain situations that are currently triggering you to blame others? Do a quick inventory. Notice that others do what they do and you automatically have a story in which

they are wrong. You. Your story. This is not to say the other is not accountable in some way for the outcomes that now displease you. It's just that in blaming them, you are likely to push them away, making it unlikely that you can have any positive effect upon them and the outcomes you desire.

**2. Create a New Story.** After you've noticed your blaming story, ask yourself any one of the following reframing questions:

- ***What must he be thinking and feeling such that that behavior made sense to him?***
- ***What is LIFE calling for here?***
- ***What am I afraid of here? What do I want to have happen?***

**3. Take action.** Chose one or two pathways to try. Offer some leadership. Make some request of the other that if fulfilled could move performance to where you'd like it to be.

If you can remove blame from the game, you can turn your mistakes and the mistakes of those around you into opportunities for leadership.



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