PRACTICE
Building Character Through Soccer

Accountability:

Willingness to accept responsibility for one's own actions
Synonyms: responsibility, answerability

Accountability Story

It is impossible for a team to function to the best of its ability unless there is a clear system of accountability. Coaches are accountable for teaching and creating the learning environment. Players are accountable for their commitment, attitude, performance, and character as both individuals and as part of a team. What you are doing when its just you and what you are doing around others often makes the difference in a player's character development.

As an athlete, to hold yourself accountable, you understand that you create your own performance and that you are responsible for and accept the outcome, good or bad. If you truly understand this concept, you will often say, "I gave it my all today, but unfortunately we did not get the win", "I did not have the best practices this week and I hope I get to play this weekend, but I understand if I don't". If you fail to understand accountability, you will look for excuses to lay blame for the outcome.

As part of a team, holding yourself and your teammates accountable is important. Top performing teams attribute their success in part to a culture where players respectfully and immediately hold each other accountable when situations arise. Rather than simply highlighting their mistakes or challenges, players encourage each other indirectly through comradery within the team. Performance and team morale are vastly increased when the whole team recognizes that accountability is a collective action.

Here is an example of a fictional team with no self or team accountability:

At the end of practice, teammates Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody were asked by their coach to pick up all of the equipment. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got upset about the situation as it was Everybody's task. However, Everybody thought that Anybody would do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. So, in the end Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done!

Follow Up Questions:

Why is it important to develop self-accountability?

Write a brief description of a time when you held yourself accountable. What did you learn from the experience?

Is it more important for others to hold you accountable or for you to be responsible and answer for your own actions? Why?

Write a brief description of how accountability can aid in building team chemistry and help build team success.