Inspire Personal Accountability:
Excerpt from Change is Good...You Go First
By Mac Anderson and Tom Feltenstein

Something magical happens when we accept personal responsibility for our behavior and our results. But, it's not easy, because it's human nature to "pass the buck". I (Mac) know there have been times in my life when my business was struggling where I found myself blaming others, blaming the economy, blaming this, blaming that! But as I've gotten older (and a little wiser) when things go wrong in my business, or my life, I can always find the culprit...in the mirror. In every instance, it always comes back to choices I've made in my life that put me exactly where I am today. I have to say, that this one "tweak" in my attitude may sound like a little thing, but it has made a big difference in my life.

What does all this have to do with change? Plenty! As a manager, one of the most important things you can do in times of change is to get your people to understand how taking personal responsibility and recognizing problems as opportunities, will not only help the company, but will help them as individuals. In other words, sell the idea of...what's in it for them?

Authors B.J. Gallagher and Steve Ventura wrote a great little book about achieving success through personal accountability titled: Who Are "They" Anyway? I like their list showing how each individual in the company can benefit by adopting a "personal accountability attitude":

- You have more control over your destiny
- You become an active contributor rather than a passive observer
- Others look to you for leadership
- You gain the reputation as a problem solver
- You enhance your career opportunities
- You enjoy the satisfaction that comes from getting things done...the power of positive doing
- You experience less anger, frustration and helplessness - all leading to better physical health
- You realize a positive spillover effect into your personal life at home

According to Gallagher and Ventura, the most important words of personal responsibility are as follows:

The 10 most important words:

*I won't wait for others to take the first step.*

The 9 most important words:

*If it is to be, it's up to me.*

The 8 most important words:

*If not me, who? If not now, when?*

The 7 most important words:

*Let me take a shot at it.*

The 6 most important words:

*I will not pass the buck.*

The 5 most important words:

*You can count on me.*

The 4 most important words:

*It IS my job!*

The 3 most important words:

*Just do it!*

The 2 most important words:

*I will.*

The most important word:

*Me*