

FIELD GUIDE TOOL #3

The Accountability Design Worksheet

Chapter 3: Accountability: Moving Beyond Micromanagement

DATE _____ COMPLETED BY _____

SITUATION _____

Use this tool to assess the four structural components of accountability for any role or workstream. Complete one worksheet per team member or function where accountability feels unreliable.

When to use it. Best used when oversight feels necessary and the goal is to make it unnecessary.

Part A: Outcome Clarity

For the role or workstream you are assessing, answer each question as specifically as possible. Vague answers indicate clarity gaps.

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Question	Current state
What does a successful outcome look like for this role or workstream?	
Could the team member describe success in the same terms you would use?	
What are the two or three most important results this role is responsible for?	
Is there a written description of expected outcomes available to the team member?	
Clarity rating (High / Medium / Low):	

Part B: Standards Clarity

Standards define the difference between acceptable and excellent. Most clarity failures live here.

Question	Current state
What does “good enough” look like for the most important outputs in this role?	
What does “excellent” look like? What separates the two?	
What are the nonnegotiables: the things that are never acceptable regardless of circumstances?	
Are these standards documented and shared, or do they live only in your head?	
Have you reviewed the standards with this team member and confirmed shared understanding?	
Clarity rating (High / Medium / Low):	

Part C: Decision Rights

List the ten to fifteen most common decisions this role encounters. For each, identify who has authority to decide.

Decision type	Who decides?	Escalation trigger
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
How many of these are documented and communicated?		

Part D: Review Cadence

A predictable cadence reduces ambient escalation and creates structured space for course correction.

Question	Current state
How often do you formally review progress with this team member?	
Is the cadence predictable enough that they can plan around it?	
Does the review cover outcomes and standards, or mainly activity?	
Is there a clear agenda or structure for these reviews?	
What happens between reviews when something is unclear or urgent?	
Cadence rating (Predictable / Inconsistent / Absent):	

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Diagnostic Summary

Use your ratings from Parts A through D to identify where structural work is most needed.

Component	Rating and priority action
Outcome Clarity	
Standards Clarity	
Decision Rights	
Review Cadence	
Overall accountability structure (Strong / Developing / Needs redesign):	

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Before moving to Chapter 4, confirm:

- ☐ You have completed the worksheet for at least one role or workstream.
- ☐ You have identified which of the four components has the most significant clarity gap.
- ☐ You have named one specific structural fix you will make before the end of this week.
- ☐ You have reviewed whether any current oversight or approval step is compensating for a clarity gap rather than addressing a genuine risk.