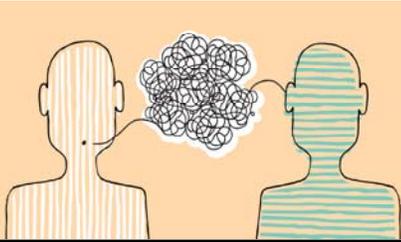


UNWILLING TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY:

I'm not doing it! I'm too busy!



The Challenge

- As soon as the group identifies action plans, people start making excuses about why they can't take responsibility.
- The reliable workhorses volunteer while others evade responsibility.
- Members start to give assignments to individuals who aren't at the meeting.

What's Really Going On

- Some individuals may lack skills necessary to take on tasks.
- Others may be feeling they're already overworked.
- There may not be a mechanism to reward or recognize extra effort.
- The group may be lacking cohesion; people don't feel any sense of responsibility for each other.
- People may be wary if a past assignment didn't get organizational support or yield results.



Facilitator Pitfalls

- Allowing people to assign work to absent individuals.
 - Loading more work on the same few people who always volunteer.
 - Not surfacing or dealing with resistance to taking responsibility.
- Letting people leave the meeting without clear next steps.

Intervention Strategies

- Tell people to expect follow-up activities right at the start of the project or meeting.
- Help the group create a targeted norm about members taking responsibility for implementation activities: “All of your good work today is going to be wasted if we don’t follow-up.”
 - What commitments are you prepared to make today to ensure that this project moves forward?
 - How can we ensure that work gets divided evenly and doesn’t all fall on a few people?
- Engage members in a problem-solving conversation about what’s keeping them from taking on assignments.
- Conduct a skills needs assessment for this project and arrange for specific training to help people overcome skills barriers.
- Create coaching relationships so that experienced people are available to provide support to inexperienced team members.
- Seek outside assistance to remove the system blocks that people feel are discouraging them, and, where possible, get senior managers to act as champions and sponsor assignments.
- Implement project-planning processes like “Gantt Charts” to help members track projects and add a measure of accountability.
- Put a “Bring Forward” item on future agendas to ensure the group reviews past work and that people feel supported and recognized for their efforts.

TIP: Identifying blocks, removing organizational barriers, and ensuring personal accountability are critical intervention strategies.

