



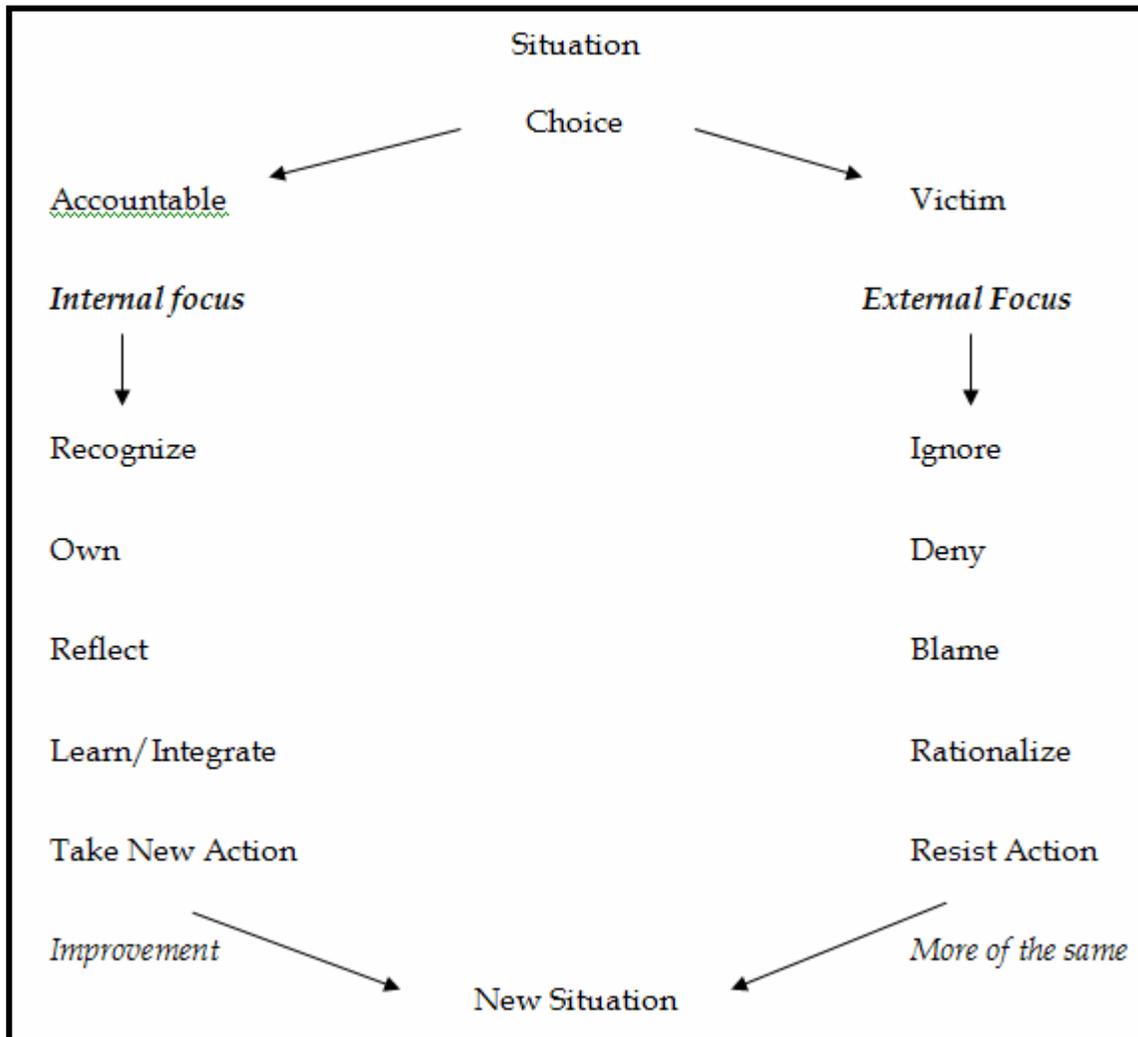
Keyword: Victim Choice

The Victim/Accountability Choice

by Kevin Eikenberry

In every situation we have a choice to make. If something hasn't gone well, we can either consider ourselves a victim by focusing our thoughts on what others did to cause the situation (otherwise known as blame), or we can look internally to see what role, however small or large, we played in the outcome.

This first fundamental choice and the questions that immediately follow set us on a path of accountability and action or victimization and status quo. I've outlined the steps that we go through after that initial choice (whether the choice is conscious or unconscious) below.





The Victim/Accountability Choice (continued)

While I could write at length about the right side of this decision tree, let's focus on the left side because on this side we can institute change and improvement and therefore achieve greater success.

(If you want more information on the right side, start with the Bonus Byte *Five Truths About Blame* - which you can find at www.RLBonus.com, keyword blame.)

Thoughts About the Accountable Choice

If you want greater accountability around you, start by being more accountable yourself. Before you tune me out, I know what some of you are thinking...

"I'm just a middle manager - it's not my responsibility."

"I'm just a supervisor - I can't change it."

"I'm nobody - it doesn't matter what I do."

Maybe you are in one of these roles. Or maybe you are a senior leader, or the CEO. It doesn't matter what your role is or how long you have been in the organization. Let me say it again.

If you want greater accountability around you, start by being more accountable yourself.

If you want to engender and create greater accountability in those around you, you can start by being a good role model. You can be 100% accountable yourself.

I'm reminded of what my father often told me: "When you point a finger towards someone else, there are four times as many fingers pointing back at you."

Being accountable is about figuring out how you can make things better. Other people's actions aren't in your control, and many events aren't in your control either, but your response to these situations and events is completely in your control. You can choose to be 100% accountable and responsible for your response.

Some Questions

While thinking about the challenges you face with accountability in your organization, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is my role in this situation?
 - What am I doing (or not doing) to promote the situation as it currently exists?
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The Victim/Accountability Choice (continued)

- What about this situation is in my control?
- What am I thinking?
- What are my beliefs?
- What can I do to have an impact?
- What can I do differently to change the result?

Asking these questions takes courage, because it takes away your ability to blame others. Asking these questions may be a change of your habits. Asking these questions may be hard, because the answers may require work. Asking these questions put you on the left side of the column.

Courageous and difficult, perhaps, but these are the questions of a 100% accountable person. Your unique answers to these questions will allow you to take the first step towards greater accountability first and foremost for yourself; as well as in those around you and in your organization at large.



Kevin Eikenberry is a bestselling author, consultant, trainer, speaker, coach, leader, learner, husband and father. He is the Chief Potential Officer of the Kevin Eikenberry Group (www.KEIKENBERRY.COM) and the Creator of the Remarkable Leadership Learning System (www.Remarkable-Leadership.com), both of which are dedicated to life-long learning and helping Clients unleash their remarkable potential. Interested in becoming the remarkable leader you were born to be? Go to www.Remarkable-Leadership.com today!
