"TAKING ACCOUNTABILITY"

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"Mission Karmayogi – Taking Accountability"

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TAKING ACCOUNTABILITY

"Setting individuals up for success is the best way to convince them to accept accountability"
~ Gordon Tredgold.

Introduction

1.   Mission Karmayogi is India's first comprehensive mission to reform civil services and enable them to offer services in an effective and efficient manner. This is a bold move by the Government of India to democratise the training process and level the playing field for all. This purpose stresses the 'servant' aspect of the well-known civil services. It seeks to address existing system difficulties like as complexity and red tape through a capacity-building strategy that works at the person, institutional, and procedural levels. This mission can overcome all of its flaws provided the programme is driven by a long-term vision and ongoing motivation.

2.   The 89 percent of bureaucrats in direct contact with the public receive fragmented and inadequate training. The mission will aim to abolish the bureaucracy's 'work-silo' culture through a bottom-up strategy and digitised manner of working and training. Mission Karmayogi aims to include 46 lakh central government employees in its purview. The government proposes to invest INR 510.86 crore during a five-year period, from fiscal year 2021-22 to fiscal year 2024-25. External accountability and transparency are regarded as critical for improving individual responsiveness. The mission aims to improve information systems, ensure accountability for inputs, and improve auditing.

Unique Features of Mission Karmayogi

3.   There are varied unique features of Mission Karmayogi such as Rule based to Role Based Training, Professional Growth, Uniform Training Approach, Vision for Future India, On Site Learning, Adoption of Best Practices and Reducing the Training Cost. The mission will urge all Central Ministries and departments, as well as their organisations, to place a greater focus on online courses and to direct their resources toward co-creation and sharing of learning processes through internal and external faculty.

Guiding Principles

4.   The guiding principles of the Mission Karmayogi include: -

a. Complement physical capacity building approach with Online Learning.

b.   Support transition from 'Rules based' to 'Roles based' HR Management. Aligning work allocation of civil servants by matching their competencies to requirements of the post.

c.   Create an ecosystem of shared training infrastructure including that of learning materials, institutions and personnel.

d.   Calibrate all Civil Service positions to a Framework of Roles, Activities and Competencies (FRACs) approach and to create and deliver learning content relevant to the identified FRACs in every Government entity.

e.   Enable adoption of modern technological tools such as digital platforms, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Data Analytics.

Advantages of the Mission

5.   There are various advantages of Mission Karmayogi mission like having National Architecture for Civil Services Capacity Building that will herald into Silo-less Performance. There needs to be a holistic approach which is a comprehensive reform of capacity building apparatus at individual, institutional and process levels for efficient public service delivery. Being the competency driven HR Management policy it will ensure that right person with right competencies is at the right position. This will also enable Civil Servants to learn from the best institutions and practices across the world. The mission is Knowledge driven and aims at building competencies to transform Civil Servants into leaders and subject matter experts.

6.   Having good governance will play a vital role in performing core governance functions. The mission will help make Civil Servant more efficient, effective, accountable and responsive to the needs of the citizen. This will further lead to better Work Culture and strengthening public institutions through adopting modern technology which lays emphasis on skills. It is an opportunity to continuously build and strengthen the Behavioural, Functional and Domain Competencies in their self-driven and mandated learning paths for all civil servants. Having uniform approach will enable a consistent approach to administering and regulating the capacity-building ecosystem through collaboration and co-sharing. Lastly it will reduce cost of training due to emphasis given on continuous online learning and shared ecosystem, it will reduce training costs. Similarly, expenditure on foreign training will also be cut down.

Taking Accountability

7.   The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has issued a clarion demand for an efficient, transparent, and responsible bureaucracy, which was also stressed in NITI Aayog's report on India@75. Although the concept of responsibility is not new, its power and benefit have grown much better appreciated over time. Personal accountability, according to management consultant Todd Herman, is "...being willing to answer... for the results coming from your decisions, behaviours, and actions." When you are personally accountable, you accept responsibility for the situations in which you are involved. You see them through, and you accept responsibility for what happens for the better or for the worst. When something goes wrong, you don't point the finger at others. Instead, you make every effort to put things right.

8.   According to the Cambridge Dictionary, 'accountability' is "the phenomenon of being responsible for what you do and being able to offer a good reason for it or the degree to which this occurs." Simply said, accountability means being held accountable for something you say you're going to do, regardless of the outcome or whether you do it. Accountability implies that you are aware that there are external dangers or penalties if you do not follow through on what you have said, but it also implies that there may be external benefits for following through or going above and beyond.

Discussion

9.   While it may appear that accountability begins externally, it actually begins within oneself. The first step is to make sure your officer is prepared to be held accountable. We want the governance to succeed, so it is critical that before we discuss accountability, we help to establish an environment in which people believe they can succeed. Officers may then take full responsibility for any action they choose to take when the time comes, and they will do their best if things don't go as planned since they have consciously decided to be accountable for their actions. Accountability is beneficial not only to those who are unable to find time for themselves, but also to those who suffer from perfectionism.

10.   Consider the interaction between a boss and a staff member as an example. The management assigns the employee the duty of completing a proposal by the end of the week. The employee is aware that their manager will request the proposal and expect an update at the end of the week. If the proposal is not finished, some external implications may include the staff member losing their job, disappointing their management, and offending the officer for whom the proposal is intended. External benefits could include the management being very happy with the staff member's job, granting them a promotion who may supply further information on more work and business in future.

Benefits of having Accountability in work place

11.   It is probably isn't tough to imagine why accountability in the workplace is important. Few of the benefits of a team that's highly accountable are as follows:-

        a.   **It Boosts Trust**   Accountability is not just a goal for individuals, but it is also a priority for teams. According to one study, nine out of ten employees named accountability as one of the top development goals they want to see at their company. A big portion of it is based on trust. A toxic culture quickly develops when a team is comprised of people who refuse to accept accountability. When employees do not believe that their team members will hold themselves accountable for their own actions and performance, they are more prone to continually glance over their shoulders, fearful that one of their team members may throw them under the bus. People are more confident that their team mates will support them rather than sacrifice them for personal benefit when everyone is held accountable for their own performance.

        b.   **It Improves Performance**   High-performing teams often have well-defined roles and duties, precise expectations, and frequent check-ins for progress monitoring. All of these factors increase accountability among team members, which reduces

misunderstanding and saves time. As a result, your entire team's performance will be considerably boosted.

    c.   **It Allows for Learning** . How will they recognise opportunities for growth and advancement if they refuse to admit their own mistakes and pitfalls? Experience is a harsh teacher, but it is also a good one. Fostering an accountability culture within your team allows everyone of your employees to understand how they're doing and how they can improve.

Common Roadblocks to Accountability

12.   Though accountability has numerous advantages, following are some common challenges to accountability that teams must overcome.:-

    a.   **Unclear Expectations**   According to Gallup research just around half of employees know what is expected of them at work (Boogard.K,2020). Isn't it a terrifying statistic? Employees find it difficult to keep themselves accountable if they do not know what is expected of them in the first place. While it may be tempting to believe that a lack of set standards gives your employees more autonomy and independence, it can actually undermine their capacity to take ownership of their responsibilities.

    b.   **Fear of Failure**   A poll of managers and employees in 500 different U.S. organisations discovered that the fear of being held accountable for mistakes or failures was the single most impediment to encouraging people to assume more responsibility at work (Nink.M,2015). Organizations that impose harsh repercussions or punitive measures on employees who make mistakes might reduce their employees' psychological safety, making them significantly less eager to admit their mistakes, propose fresh ideas, or take on unexpected challenges.

    c.   **Lack of Engagement**   You've probably heard the worrying numbers about employee engagement today. The good news is that it is increasing. Gallup recently discovered that approximately 34% of the workforce is engaged. While that figure is improving, it still implies that 66 percent of your workforce may be actively disengaged. Consider this: you want to improve accountability, but why would employees want to step up and embrace their duties if they believe that's the only time their voice will be heard? They must feel respected and listened to in all circumstances, not only when they are being held accountable.

Accountability Strategies / Techniques

13.   **Accountability on any team is important**. But, navigating around those common roadblocks isn't always easy. However the good news is that there are a few strategies as given below which one can put into play to encourage ones team to take responsibility for their own positions, decisions, and mistakes :-

    a.   **Be Honest**   Success in life is only possible if you are entirely honest with yourself and others. This entails putting your pride aside and confessing when you've

made a mistake. Honesty is always the best policy, but it should not be used to place blame or create excuses. Instead, concentrate on your own part in a circumstance and consider how you can address the problem.

b.   **<u>Recognize Your Own Mistakes (and Openly Discuss Them)</u>** One of the golden rules of leadership is that you can't hold your team to a level that you don't follow yourself. That means that one of the simplest ways to enhance accountability on your team is to set a good example and hold yourself accountable openly. If you make a bad decision, share it with your team and explain what you'll do differently the next time. If you fall short of a goal, talk about what happened and how you think you could have done better.

c.   **<u>Make Expectations Clear</u>**   Remember how it's difficult for employees to hold themselves accountable if they don't know what's expected of them? That's why it's critical to set clear expectations for everyone in your team. When your staff understands what goals they must meet, they will be far more willing to accept responsibility for themselves.

d.   **<u>Ensure Necessary Resources</u>**   Your staff do not always avoid accountability just to avoid taking responsibility. Sometimes they honestly believe that they aren't to blame for things not turning out the way they should. A well-supported accountable team is essential. That is, all other external conditions must be met. When that is completed, the only thing left is personal accountability.

e.   **<u>Commitment</u>**   Accountability will only work if the officer is entirely committed to and held accountable for their goal(s). If they are not committed, they will be unconcerned about not meeting the goal or being held accountable. Having a sense of commitment will allow the officer to not only want to achieve the goal and take action, but will also create an accountable motivation.

f.   **<u>Goals set should be Achievable</u>**   Not only must the officer be dedicated to their goal(s), but the goals must also be clear and attainable. This will let the officer believe that success is achievable and will keep them accountable. It is difficult for an officer to remain accountable if they do not believe in the aim or do not believe they can succeed. This is where breaking down larger goals into smaller ones with short and realistic deadlines comes in handy. When an officer completes a goal, they can feel proud of themselves and become more driven to complete the next one. This contributes to an officer's self-esteem.

g.   **<u>Work on Your feedback skills</u>** Giving difficult feedback is difficult, but you can improve. Giving feedback is one of the most important things you can do as a manager. In fact, according to a global poll, learning and development is a top priority. It also lowers the possibility that your direct report would be startled by the feedback they get, leading to additional disengagement. At its core, good feedback stems from a genuine desire to assist someone in growing. The feedback should be concise and to the point. Feedback should not be ambiguous.

      h.   **Make accountability a habit**   One-on-ones and team meetings are seen to be excellent opportunities for developing a habit of accountability. Maintain a record of your promises and hold one another accountable. If you vow to give more feedback to your direct reports, make it a future agenda item to hold yourself accountable and make sure you have a mechanism to check in on that day. One simple method to establish an accountability culture – or, if the damage has already been done, correct a lack of accountability – is to ensure that action items are assigned during meetings. This is an excellent method for holding each member of your team accountable for their behaviour.

Conclusion and Recommendations

14.   For the first time in the country, the Civil Service Capacity Building plans will be authorised and supervised by an eminent Council led by the Prime Minister himself under Mission Karmayogi. Multiple systems have been established to provide real-time and credible review, monitoring, and reporting, thereby introducing accountability and transparency by design. The Prime Minister's **iGOT Karmayogi** Dashboard will allow for real-time Mission monitoring, delivering continual snapshots of each department's progress and score card. The significance of understanding expectations and how a person responds to them in order to realise how accountability might help, especially if a person responds well to external expectations. We discussed perfectionism and how accountability might assist perfectionists overcome roadblocks when starting new and foreign goals or ones that appear too challenging. Accountability can be used in the coaching process in a variety of ways, but it must be owned by the officer in order for them to succeed and feel responsible. Accountability is a useful tool that can assist an officer achieve their objectives and dreams.

15.   Given the nature and pace of change in governance, government officials' roles and responsibilities are becoming increasingly complicated. Better-trained officers are now required for efficient and effective governance. As a result, it is critical to increase officials' ability and competency, and more officers should be taught to upgrade their skills and knowledge based on their job tasks, activities, and abilities. A considerable number of officers benefit from the Mission Karmayogi Scheme, which provides more flexible and advanced learning possibilities. It envisions online and, to a lesser extent, mixed instruction with little face-to-face training. Officers will now be able to gain national/international exposure in order to acquire in-depth competences in a variety of subjects/areas or specific specialised subjects required for their present or future job profiles.

16.   Overall, building an accountability culture on your team will not only enhance employee morale and productivity, but will also provide your team with the autonomy and sense of ownership they require to truly thrive. If you believe your team lacks accountability, it's time to make some changes!

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