



Stanford eCorner

The Feeling of Accountability

Bob Sutton, *Stanford University*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/3274/The-Feeling-of-Accountability>

Excellence can be propelled forward in an organization when employees possess an attitude of 'I own the place and the place owns me,' says Stanford Professor Bob Sutton. Here the co-author of *Scaling Up Excellence* discusses the benefits of peer-powered accountability.



Transcript

One thing that really struck us is in organizations where the workforce sort of propels the spreading of goodness, there is this real feeling of accountability. And by accountability it's the feeling that I own the place and the place owns me that everybody puts pressure on everybody else if you will to do the right thing and to switch the medical organizations we actually, both Huggy and I got fairly obsessed with healthcare, it's really interesting to look at the difference between most hospitals where when they've got - I'm not supposed to go that far, when they've got a - somebody who is near death usually with a head injury and they want to harvest the organs and has given permission and everything, most hospitals sort of get that right about 50% of the time. About 15% of U.S hospitals get it right about 75% of the time. And in those hospitals they have a set of norms where everybody is involved in making sure that everybody does the right things, the nurses, the doctors, the clergy, the receptionist, they pull in family members who have been in the same situation before and there is this notion where they all teach and they all learn and to us that is a hallmark of organizations that spread excellence, it's this feeling of accountability in organizations where there is not silence, where people feel compelled to tell other people when they're screwing up or to teach them or to help them.