



Rule No. 24 —Own your mistakes.

The quality of a leader is often most visible in how they respond to failure.

Great leaders don't deflect blame, they absorb it, learn from it, and lead forward.

Owning your mistakes isn't weakness; it's the foundation of credibility, respect, and real accountability.

In any failure, you either make excuses or you make progress, never both.

The Hard Truth

Leaders who own mistakes build trust. Leaders who hide them lose it.

The fastest way to destroy credibility is to blame, deflect, or explain when you're wrong.

Nobody trusts a leader who can't say 'I got that wrong and here's what I'm doing about it.'

Accountability isn't weakness. Avoiding it is.

Ask Yourself —

(this one is a gut check for many leaders)

If my team copied the way I handle mistakes, would we be stronger, or weaker, as an organization?

Action Steps —

This Week's Task: Own one mistake

Don't look for someone else to improve. Start with yourself.

Choose one mistake, missed expectation, or leadership decision from the past month or quarter that still deserves your ownership. It doesn't have to be your biggest failure, just one where you could have led better.

Then complete these three steps:

1. Own it. Admit your role without explaining it away or blaming circumstances.
2. Address it. Have the conversation, make the apology, or communicate what you've learned to the people affected.
3. Improve it. Identify one specific change you'll make to ensure the same mistake is less likely to happen again.

Your challenge: Before the week ends, say the words "That was my responsibility." Then back those words with action.

Remember: The goal isn't to prove you're perfect. It's to prove you're accountable. Great leaders aren't remembered because they never made mistakes, they're remembered because they owned them, learned from them, and never stopped improving.

This Rule is important because it's a culture check.

Look closely at how your organization reacts when something goes wrong, that's where your real culture shows.

In a culture of excuses, people hide problems, protect themselves, and wait for direction.

In a culture of ownership, people step forward, speak up, and fix what's broken before it becomes visible.

Leaders set that tone, not policies.

If your team isn't taking ownership, start with the person in the mirror.

Because when a leader consistently says, "That's on me," everyone else eventually starts saying, "I've got this."

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Practice the principles.



Recommended Reading —



Extreme Ownership, by Jocko Willink & Leif Babin

"The leader must own everything in his or her world. There is no one else to blame."

Each day, set 2 specific actions
that move this week's Rule into practice
and help complete the Action Step by week's end.

TOP 3 priorities this week:

WEEK 11

monday

tuesday

wednesday

thursday

friday

saturday

sunday

notes —

this week...