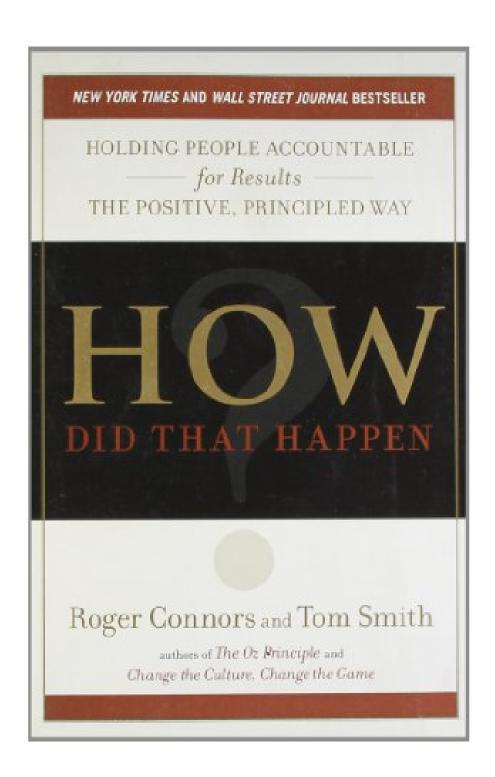


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The New York Times bestseller that provides a simple, proven approach to improve accountability and the bottom line.

The economy crashes, the government misfires, businesses fail, leaders don't lead, managers don't manage, and people don't follow through, leaving us asking, "How did that happen?"

Surprises caused by a lack of personal accountability plague almost every organization today, from the political arena to large and small businesses. How Did That Happen? offers a proven way to eliminate these nasty surprises, gain an unbeatable competitive edge, and enhance performance by holding others accountable the positive, principled way.

As the experts on workplace accountability and the authors of The Oz Principle, Roger Connors and Tom Smith tackle the next crucial step everyone can take, whether working as a manager, supervisor, CEO, or individual performer: creating greater accountability in all the people on whom you depend.

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Most helpful customer reviews

49 of 49 people found the following review helpful.

Good, but not revolutionary

By J. Schulte

How Did That Happen provides a framework for setting expectations and then holding people accountable. The first half focuses on four stages of goal setting:

- FORM goals (Frame them, make them Obtainable, make them easy to Repeat, and make them Measurable)
- Communicate (explain the Why behind the goals to win the hearts and minds, not just the hands and feet)
- Align (getting agreement with stakeholders)
- Inspect (check in by Listening, Observing, measuring Objectively, and therefore Know how things are going)

The second half looks at breakdowns and helps people explore why a commitment has not been met. Four causes include:

- Motivation issues
- Skills
- Corporate culture
- Personal accountability

For new managers or others new to the topic, this would be a an accessible introduction and framework. If you've ready any other book on a related topic, such as Crucial Confrontations or even The One Minute Manager among others, or you've been exposed to SMART goals, I don't think you'll find much that is very knew other than some insightful stories, and acronyms that provide mnemonic keys to help with the process.

There simply is no magic to accountability. Clearly established expectations, realistic plans for action, and then honest assessments with positive and negative consequences are the backbone for any process of accountability.

If you've never read a book on the topic before, start with this one. If you have, then you'll maybe pick up a few tips, but I don't think this will revolutionize the way you work.

28 of 32 people found the following review helpful.

Smart Lemming Review: A must-read book for managers and knowledge worker

By Lori Grant

The Good: Provides managers and workers with models, self-assessments, charts, and lists to create and maintain an accountability sequence to establish accountability expectations and managing unmet expectations.

The Bad: Initially mundane, but How Did That Happen quickly turns a corner, becoming compelling as you find yourself doing mental checks to see if you've properly set expectations with your workers to instill accountability.

Action Item: Managers should buy this book to learn how to establish expectations of accountability and how to manage unmet expectations. Knowledge workers should also buy this book to understand how they can become a high performer, using the accountability models, self-assessments, and lists from this book as they develop their skill set.

Beyond The Oz Principle and Journey to the Emerald City: Connors and Smith's first two books are required management readings. Over the past twenty years, managers have learned some of the fundamentals of management in The Oz Principle and Journey to the Emerald City. The Oz Principleteaches steps to accountability that establishes the necessary foundation for organizations to build an accountable workforce. Journey to the Emerald Cityexplained the path organizations must take to create a culture of accountability. Like any good trilogy, How Did that Happen completes the accountability storyline by teaching managers how to hold people accountable for results. As new managers and workers come into organizations, getting results through accountability is a repeatable process, one that must be vigilantly assessed and reassessed to achieve results year after year.

In this book, Connor and Smith developed an easy to learn, but comprehensive model to explain what accountability is, why it may be lacking, how to create it, and how to manage it. How Did that Happen teaches "The Accountability Sequence." It's an ideal approach for organizations to create accountability for achieving results by holding others accountable in a positive, principled way. It teaches how to enable people to fulfill the expectations you have for them, while concurrently building a positive Accountability Connection. Below are the highlights of The Accountability Sequence:

- * How to apply the Accountability Sequence Model to day-to-day accountability interactions with others
- * How to use your Accountability Styles and hold others accountable in a positive way
- * How to establish expectations that people want to fulfill
- * How to manage unmet expectations and have the Accountability Conversation that leads to better, and more consistent results from the people on whom you depend
- * How to establish positive Accountability Connections with everyone in your Expectations Chain
- * How to improve your ability to hold others accountable in a way that motivates and produces results

How to Hold People Accountable for Results: How Did that Happen initially is bogged down in explaining why accountability maybe lacking your organization. Once you turn this corner, Connor and Smith outline their framework in two parts: The Outer Ring of establishing expectations and The Inner Ring of The Accountability Conversation to manage unmet expectations. The Outer Ringer of this framework explains how to establish expectations using four management techniques:

- * Form expectations: Creating framable, obtainable, repeatable, and measurable expectations of your workforce.
- * Communicate expectations: Communicating key expectations with clarity, allowing people to understand what is expected and why it's important for them to follow through and deliver results
- * Align expectations: Creating and maintaining alignment around those expectations with everyone who contributes to the expectations
- * Inspect expectations: Assessing the condition of how closely key expectations are being fulfilled, ensuring continued alignment, providing support, reinforcing progress, and promoting learning to deliver results

Connor and Smith also provide invaluable assessments to assist managers during this phase of accountability with the following tools:

- * Accountability Style Self-Assessment
- * Clues to Assessing How Well You Form Expectations
- * The Deliberate Leader Self-Test
- * The Keeping-Up Quiz
- * "How Often I get Surprised"
- * Am I a Chaser?

How to Manage Unmet Expectations: Understanding that managing unmet expectations is most likely the hardest part of managing others, Connor and Smith explain The Accountability Conversation. What do you do when a worker isn't aligned to company or department expectations? How do you deal with a worker's competency problem?

The Inner Ring of The Accountability Sequence explains how to have the accountability conversation by using four solutions: training, accountability, culture, and motivation. The authors effectively provide you with a road map on avoiding conversation and cause killers, identifying the telltale measures of motivation, understanding the characteristics of accountability attitudes, and learning the triggers that move you from the Outer Ring to the Inner Ring. Connor and Smith provide the following additional assessment tools for managing unmet expectations:

- * How Strong is Your Cause?
- * How conscious Am I? Self-Test
- * Which Way Does Accountability Flow in Your Organization
- * Culture Questions

* Organizational Integrity Assessments

Connors and Smith have written another must-read business book that explains what accountability is, why it may be lacking, how to create it, and how to manage it. They provide invaluable models to explain how to establish and manage met and unmet expectations. As if this wasn't enough, they also provide self-assessment tools to help you determine your environment or situation, so you know what your next steps should be in managing expectations. If you're new to Connors and Smith's books, after reading How Did that Happen, you'll feel like you just came in to the last part of a trilogy, leaving you with a compulsion to learn what happened in parts one and two. Before you know it, you'll be reading The Oz Principle and Journey to the Emerald City.

13 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Powerful Book with Great Concepts

By T. L.

I read this book thinking it would be your typical management/leadership book, but boy was I wrong. The authors do an excellent job of not just talking about principles of accountability, but they offer assessments and models that help the reader begin to become more accountable right away. This was my kind of book and one I would recommend to my friends.

See all 68 customer reviews...

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