Quiz - Do You Take Responsibility for Your Actions?

By: Tracey Porpora

When something goes wrong at work, it’s your dreadful boss who is to blame. And when the bills are not paid or there is not enough money in the household budget at the end of the day, it’s your spouse’s fault. If these scenarios sound familiar to you, you may be a person who rarely takes responsibility for their actions. Take our quiz to find out how responsible you really are.

1) When you’re at work, and participating in a team project:
   A. You take the lead, and think to yourself, “win or lose you will have done your part.”
   B. You’re a team player, but nothing more.
   C. You let others do all the work, because if the project fails you won’t be responsible.

2) When you have a disagreement with your partner:
   A. Try to reach a compromise, and often admit when you’re wrong.
   B. Admit you’re wrong only sometimes.
   C. Always see it as his/her fault because you never do anything that causes disagreement.

3) When your mother chastises you for not calling:
   A. Tell her you’re sorry, and will make more of an effort to stay in touch.
   B. Roll your eyes, but tell her you will try to call, even if you really have no intention of doing so.
   C. Whine about being busy, and ask why she doesn’t try to call more often since she is the mother, and you’re her child.

4) When you meet the guys/gals out for dinner, and you find yourselves waiting an hour for a table for reservations you made:
   A. Tell the group you’re sorry. You should have picked a less crowded eatery.
   B. Explain that the place is such a hotspot, and it was bound to be crowded.
   C. Complain to the hostess, and demand to talk to the owner. Complain about how it’s inconsiderate for paying customers to have to wait.

5) When your colleague asks you to cover for him/her while he/she is on vacation:
   A. Agree, and do your best to make sure nothing falls by the wayside for the company’s sake.
   B. Agree, and try to do his/her job if you can.
   C. Say you will, but if anything goes wrong be prepared to tell the boss it’s because he or she was on vacation.

6) When a new person you’re dating asks if it was you who called and hung up from a private number that came up on his/her caller ID:
   A. Admit it was you, and you didn’t realize he/she had answered when you were hanging up.
   B. Cite short term memory loss as your answer.
   C. Say it wasn’t you when it really was.

7) When your neighbor asks you to pick up his/her mail while he/she is on vacation and you forget to do so:
   A. Apologize, and bring over a home baked apple pie.
   B. Tell him/her you had asked the mailperson to bring it over to your house and he/she forgot.
   C. Blame it completely on the U.S. Post Office.

Give yourself five points for every “A,” three points for each “B,” and one point for every “C.”

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June/July 2010

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Quiz Results:

If your score is 30 or above you take responsibility for your own actions.

“This person is confident and willing to learn from his/her mistakes. He/she sees mistakes not as failures, but as learning opportunities,” says Pegine Echevarria, a motivational speaker, and chief executive officer off Team Pegine Inc., a consulting company in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. “His/Her confidence is built on past experiences where he/she found himself/herself in similar situations.”

If you’ve scored 20 to 29 you sometimes take responsibility for your own actions. This person often wants to do “the right thing,” but sometimes succumbs to the temptation to blame his/her shortcomings on others. “Nobody wants to face the perceived negative consequences of not responding to a request, direction and mission so it is natural to play out the choices by being a martyr, victim or drama queen. However, the majority of people decide to be the adult, own up to the issue and take responsibility,” says Echevarria, who also is author Sometimes You Need to Kick Your Own Butt: Strategies for Success, (PEGCO Publishing, 2006) and For All Our Daughters: How Mentoring Helps Young Women and Girls Master the Art of Growing UP (Chandler House Press, 1996).

If your score is 19 or below you don’t take responsibility for your own actions. Echevarria believes there are three types of people who don’t take responsibility for their own actions:

- Drama King/Queen: “This is someone who seeks to divert attention away from the fact that he/she hasn’t completed a task, or is avoiding a task by creating a crisis or drama,” she says. “Typically, this person is not confident, and wants to avoid confrontation at all costs. There is a need to hide, but at the same time be noticed. It’s the ‘me but don’t hate me’ thoughts that hold them back.”

- Martyr: “This is the self sacrificing person who will put their own responsibilities on hold to take care of someone else’s needs, or the person who will take care of your health, but not take care of his/her own issues and will then use this as an excuse for his/her personal failures,” explains Echevarria. “The martyr typically feels unworthy of his/her own time, money and efforts and values other’s needs over their own. He/She doesn’t mind being hurt. He/She does it all for your love and attention.”

- Victim: “This person sees the world as ‘out to get them.’ Nothing ever goes right. Often, he/she will spend time procrastinating instead of taking action because he/she truly believe that he/she will fail at it, so why bother? This is a very difficult behavior to change,” she says.