The Best Accountability Tool on Earth

I get tired of leaders telling me that they need greater accountability in their organizations. As they lament that they have accountability problems, I sometimes wish I were a female toting a purse. (I’m pretty secure in my manhood, but I don’t and don’t plan to carry a murse—if you don’t know what that is, look it up.)

Why?

Because if I had a purse, I’d be carrying the best accountability tool known to man.

It’s called a mirror.

Because paradoxically, when we are complaining about others not being accountable, we are doing exactly what we are complaining about—not seeing what part we play in a situation.

Unless I have a strong relationship and a clear set of boundaries with the person talking to me, I am seldom as blunt as holding up a mirror to their face. But hey, I’m writing to you on a blog, so I’m going for it. And yes, it is easier to make this point in print without being seen as confrontational.

Please don’t lose my mirror messages.

• When you have a situation that isn’t perfect, look in the mirror and recognize you are a part of that situation. Once you figure that out, you can choose what you can do to influence the situation moving forward.

There’s a second message in the mirror that is related and equally important. It is true for everyone, and is especially true for us as leaders.

• The world around you begins to mirror you in many ways (especially when you are a leader).

People are watching you more than you realize. People consciously or not tend to mirror our thoughts and actions. If you don’t see the thoughts and actions in the world around you, look in the mirror and really consider them.

And if you don’t like what you see, it is time to do the heavy lifting and hard work of changing your habits and behaviors. I know it isn’t easy, but as my Dad used to tell me: “That’s why you get paid the big bucks.”

The next time you are lamenting about accountability, use the best tool on the planet. Look in the mirror.