

## HOW to HOLD SLACKING COWORKERS ACCOUNTABLE

- **Suspend judgments and get curious.** Perhaps your coworker is unaware of the effects of his or her actions. Enter the conversation as a curious friend rather than an angry coworker.
- **Make it safe.** Don't start by diving into the issue. Establish safety by letting your coworker know you respect him or her and reminding him or her of the mutual goals you share.
- **Share facts and describe the gap.** Start with the facts of the issue and strip out accusatory, judgmental and inflammatory language. Then, describe the gap between what was expected and what was delivered.
- **Tentatively share concerns.** Having laid out the facts, tell your coworker why you're concerned. Help your coworker see the natural consequences of his or her actions.
- **Invite dialogue.** Next, ask if he or she sees the problem differently. If you are open to hearing others' points of view, they'll be more open to yours.

**ABOUT THE RESEARCH.** The study collected responses via an online survey from 549 individuals in August 2012. Margin of error is approximately 4%.

**LEARN NEW SKILLS.** To learn how Crucial Accountability™ can help you hold slacking coworkers accountable, visit [www.vitalSMARTS.com](http://www.vitalSMARTS.com) or call 1.800.449.5989.

According to our research, slacking coworkers cause a quarter of their hard-working colleagues to put in four to six more hours of work each week.

Our study of 549 people found that goodwill isn't the only victim in this situation—productivity, satisfaction and quality also suffer. In fact, four out of five say the quality of their work declines when they have to pick up their coworkers' slack—a huge potential blow to the bottom line when you consider that 93 percent have a coworker who doesn't do his or her fair share.

With such a great toll on resources, what do the majority of employees do when faced with slacking coworkers? Unfortunately, not much. The study shows that only 10 percent speak up and hold their underperforming colleagues accountable to their bad behavior.

The top five reasons employees list for biting their tongues:

1. They don't believe what they say will make a difference
2. They don't want to undermine the working relationship
3. It's not their place
4. They fear retaliation
5. They don't know how to approach the conversation

Employees often avoid holding others accountable for bad behavior because they fear the potential risks of speaking up, while failing to consider the risks of not speaking up.

**About VitalSmarts**—An innovator in corporate training and leadership development, VitalSmarts combines three decades of original research with 50 years of the best social science to help leaders and organizations change human behavior and achieve new levels of performance. VitalSmarts has identified four high-leverage skill sets that, when used in combination, create healthy corporate cultures. These skills are taught in the Company's award-winning training programs and *New York Times* bestselling books of the same titles: *Crucial Conversations*, *Crucial Accountability*, *Influencer*, and *Change Anything*. VitalSmarts has consulted with more than 300 of the Fortune 500 companies and trained more than one million people worldwide. [www.vitalSMARTS.com](http://www.vitalSMARTS.com)

## KEY RESULTS

**93%** have a coworker who doesn't do his or her fair share

**one** out of **four** employees put in four to six more hours of work each week to make up for a slacking coworker

**four** out of **five** say the quality of their work declines when they have to pick up their coworkers' slack

Only **10%** speak up and hold their underperforming colleagues accountable