**Peter Strauss**

*Social Media Content*

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Freeing Yourself from Excuses

 Is there a common denominator for all of your success and all of your failure? Believe it or not, there is an unshakeable shadow chasing your every move: you. For some, this becomes a a badge of honor. They are excited by the radical freedom of full ownership of their actions. If they succeed, it is because of their perseverance, not dumb luck. By the same token, if these people fall, they are not pointing fingers.

How often are you shifting blame, and how can you start to understand the world in a better way?

 Too often, we try to blame the dog for eating our homework. We did not get the job done, or the deal fell through, and we start searching for all the outside forces that conspired against us. Especially in a larger organization, shifting blame seems like a painless, simple process. We blame John and he can blame Jane and, in the end, nobody is to blame, right? Wrong. Have the maturity and motivation to accept responsibility for your actions, whether they produce a success or a failure - [something I spoke to in a previous post](https://peterjstrauss.com/2018/02/01/embracing-your-fear/).

Understand that I am not asking you to become a martyr or a glutton for punishment. If this was truly John or Jane’s responsibility, it is not right that you take the fall. However, you need to recognize that your sphere of influence might be larger than you know. For leaders, this could not be more true. Think about Apple under Jobs or Tesla under Musk. When those companies surged or stumbled, the headlines would say things like, “Steve Jobs Misses Projections.” Steve Jobs had resources to hire the very best people, and these teams of people were surely the ones designing the products or setting quarterly projections. Yet, the blame or accolades falls on the head of the company because these leaders are willing to stake their reputations to their companies and they are willing to conduct the self and team examination to learn from the failures. Are you willing to tie your name to what you do?

 Regardless of your profession or title, you cannot take pride in what you do unless you are equally willing to accept your losses and wins. We cannot grow by avoiding consequences, and, if we are not growing, then, quite simply, we are shrinking. You want to launch a new product? That is fantastic; shout it from the rooftops. When it is a runaway hit, everyone will know that it was your passion that lead to the outcome. If you sincerely believe in your project, should it fail, do not give up on it then either. Have the dignity to say that this was worth exploring, that you tried but you could not make it work this time. Be clear that you have examined the project path and you have learned from the outcome – all of which makes the next attempt more likely to succeed. That is a person with whom I want to work. That is the kind of person who will grow no matter the outcome.

 To read more of my thoughts on the qualities that drive successful people, [take a look at my blog](https://peterjstrauss.com/blog/). If you would like to learn about my business and the state of captive insurance in this country, [read my latest book](https://peterjstrauss.com/book/).