

How to Delegate Effectively

Delegation, one of the most important skills a leader develops in becoming an effective leader, is the process of granting the authority and responsibility for performing a task to another individual.

Why People Don't Delegate:

- Nobody does it better than I do.
- It's habit, I've always done it.
- I don't want to lose control and not know what is happening.
- Training people takes time.
- I don't want overextended members.
- There aren't enough leadership roles for all who are interested.

Why Members Don't Accept:

- Insecure about their abilities.
- Fear of failure and/or criticism.
- Lack of resources required for the task.
- The issue of authority is unclear for decision-making.
- A lack of motivation due to inadequate rewards or incentives.

How Delegation Helps You:

- Increases your management experience by learning how to effectively assign, coordinate, and administrate tasks.
- Incorporates fresh perspectives and creative ways to fulfill responsibilities.
- Increases quality of tasks accomplished in a time period.
- Helps to avoid burnout by sharing responsibilities.
- By sharing knowledge, you and your organization will achieve more by working with well-trained, motivated members.

How Delegating Helps Members:

- Builds a team of strong, active, informed members, who feel a deeper sense of responsibility for the organization.
- Members stay excited about the goals and work to reach them.
- With appropriate recognition of member contributions, members feel a sense of achievement.
- Members train for leadership roles facilitating advancement.
- Responsibility is more equally shared among members.

When not to Delegate:

- Tasks involving another's morale.
- Confidential or behavioral matters.
- Anything you're unwilling to do.
- Potentially controversial tasks.

How To Delegate Effectively:

Select the person to delegate to:

- Ask for volunteer, assign when necessary, be aware of factors that may interfere with an individual's ability to do a task.
- Select individuals whose needs and interests match the task requirements.
- If you have to delegate to procrastinators, do it early.
- Allow people to work on various types of tasks that vary in desirability.
- Based on responsibility and maturity, assess your responsibility in the task completions.
- Find opportunities for leaders beyond those presently offered by your organization.

Approaching the person to delegate to:

- Approaching the person can be challenging, but it becomes easier with practice.
- Set an appointment with them to inquire about their schedule and other responsibilities to make sure they have the time to take on the responsibility.
- Determine what is involved beforehand, and describe your expectations in detail, including the basic timeline and the desired outcome.

Performance Expectations:

- After agreeing to accept the task, discuss the details and objectives of the project.
- Mutually set specific performance expectations, and evaluation of progress times.
- Let them know that they have the authority necessary to perform the task, and you are available to help them.
- Be sure that all of the necessary materials including information and training are available to the person performing the task.

Things to Remember:

- Always communicate new information about the responsibility by passing it along in a timely manner.
- Ask questions for clarification in a discussion giving accurate and honest feedback because people want and deserve to know how they are doing.
- Use progress checks to catch or prevent mistakes; however, you need to allow for mistakes to be made without condemning the person.
- One of your most important roles as a leader is to help your member learn more and grow from both their successes and failures.
- Once you have delegated a responsibility, take it back only in the case of impending disaster.

Effective delegation is a complex process of communication and evaluation but once mastered can allow your organization to achieve far more than one person could do alone.

The development and maintenance of an active, well-trained member is difficult, but obviously rewarding task for any leader.