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How to effectively Delegate

russell
futcher
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Delegation is defined as shifting authority and responsibility for specific functions, tasks, or decisions from one person (usually a manager) to another person – a team member. It provides autonomy and training to team members and allows you to load share your work as there's only so much that you can achieve working on your own. You can achieve much more using your team; that's why it's so important to delegate and do it well.

Delegating the right tasks to the right team members can be tough. Delegating, or giving authority, responsibility, and decision-making control to a team member or a team, is a behaviour of good managers with - follow through to ensure completion and recognition.

To start with, you need to identify what tasks you will delegate and to who. This means that you need to understand what your team is all about; you need individual performance goals. Only then will you think about your team's skills, experience, and competencies and start matching people to tasks that help you and your team members goals.

When delegating, you must explain your reasonings' for delegating a task to a team member; just telling someone that you trust them without giving them all the details of what a task requires sends mixed signals. Show team members that you trust them to do what's right by sharing all relevant information with them. You must also provide feedback to the team member in the form of a constructive observation (not a criticism) or praise. This will make the process of delegating in the future easier.

Some managers resent the idea that a team member may get the credit for completing a task or a project. In contrast, a good manager does their utmost to make certain that team members always receive credit and publicly appraises them accordingly. They also load up their team members with a heavy workload as this makes the team member perform at their best (busy people achieve more).

When you're deciding how to delegate work, ask yourself the following questions.

- Do I need to monitor this task?
- Will this work help the team member develop their skills, and will it employ their strengths?
- Do I have time to teach the team member how to do the task?
- Do I expect tasks of this nature to reoccur?

Benefits of delegation

- **It frees up your time so you can achieve more.** By delegating, you will free yourself to focus on more critical projects and tasks; you will also help grow and develop your team members.
- If you keep saying, "I'll just do it myself", your work will pile up and make you less efficient. Successful managers know delegating increases everyone's productivity.
- When done correctly, team members are motivated, feel involved, and grow professionally.
- When team members challenge their skill sets, their productivity increases.
- When a manager uses delegation to develop their team members, they are better placed to know who has the skills and strengths to take on other tasks.
- When team members collaborate on a project, this allows for ideas being shared, for people to have a voice and for team ideas to grow.

What prevents good delegation?

Managers who are stressed and are in constant firefighting mode, that is, they go from crisis to crisis, will almost certainly fail to delegate as firefighting is reactive and not proactive. Managers won't delegate due to the following.

- **Ego:** If I do it, it will be better.
- **Time:** It will take too long to explain what's required.
- **Accountability:** Am I accountable if it goes wrong?
- **Skills Gaps:** My team members don't possess the necessary skills.
- **Authority Threat: Delegation reduces my authority.**
- **Fear: The assigned task will not be carried out accurately, or the team member will fail.**
- **Trust: I don't trust my team enough.**

Actions

1. What is the goal? What is the final objective and what results are needed to achieve it? What parts can be delegated?
2. Who is the right person for the task? Who has the right skills to do the work? How might this task help them develop? Will the task use their strengths?
3. Delegate. Have a conversation with the team member.

- Give an overview of the task. Include the importance of the task, the resources available, and why you have chosen the team member.

- Describe the details of the new responsibility. Define the scope of the role and set performance standards and intended results. Set clear expectations but do not say how the task should be completed.
- Have a conversation. Solicit questions, reactions, and ask for suggestions.
- Listen to the team members comments. Make sure they understand what is expected of them.
- Share how this impacts the team. Help establish priorities and relieve some of the pressure by getting someone else to share some of the team members routine tasks for the duration of the work. Make sure to notify others who are affected by the team member's new task.
- Be encouraging. Express confidence in the team members ability.
- Establish checkpoints, results, deadlines, and ways to monitor progress. The entire discussion should be a collaborative process.

4. Stay in touch. Keep in contact with the team member and observe the checkpoints you agreed to at the outset. Remember, delegating means letting go.
5. Recognize and reward. Acknowledge the team member for successful completion of the task. Source: Google. Project Oxygen.

Summary

1. **Delegation.** - Is defined as shifting authority and responsibility for specific functions, tasks, or decisions from one person (usually a manager) to another person – a team member. It provides autonomy and training to team members and allows you to load share your work as there's only so much that you can achieve working on your own. You can achieve much more using your team; that's why it's so important to delegate and do it well.
2. **Benefits of delegation.** - **It frees up your time so you can achieve more.** By delegating, you will free yourself to focus on more critical projects and tasks; you will also help grow and develop your team members. If you keep saying, "I'll just do it myself", your work will pile up and make you less efficient. Successful managers know delegating increases everyone's productivity. When done correctly, team members are motivated, feel involved, and grow professionally. When team members challenge their skill sets, their productivity increases.
3. **What prevents good delegation?** Managers who are stressed and are in constant firefighting mode, that is, they go from crisis to crisis, will almost certainly fail to delegate as firefighting is reactive and not proactive.
4. **Managers who won't delegate due to the following.** **Ego:** If I do it, it will be better. **Time:** It will take too long to explain what's required. **Accountability:** Am I accountable if it goes wrong? **Skills Gaps:** My team members don't possess the necessary skills.