



HR Examiner

*Examining practical HR issues business owners
and managers encounter every day*

Enhance Your Own Independence: Don't Wait to Delegate

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Delegation Benefits

To make delegation work, there are three components for success. The first is identifying the right tasks. The second is determining to whom you delegate. The third is strategizing how to effectively delegate the task.

Here are some tips:

Delegation Barriers

I've been researching various management topics for one my training programs and thought I'd share some of my results regarding effective delegation.



Whether you manage 1 employee, 20 employees or 0 employees, many of us struggle with do-it-all-yourself syndrome. No, this syndrome isn't covered under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act). But it certainly can get in the way of our effectiveness.

- ▶ Delegate the objective, not the procedure
- ▶ Delegate the appropriate authority along with the responsibility
- ▶ Provide the right tools
- ▶ Clearly explain what you expect
- ▶ Make the work valuable
- ▶ Make the work do-able
- ▶ Explain why the job is important and relevant
- ▶ Schedule progress reports, interim timelines and final deadlines
- ▶ Check the individual's understanding of the task
- ▶ When you finish giving

We may reason that delegation takes too much time -- to train, supervise and follow-up on someone else. Or we may not be willing to slow down or able to wait patiently for the results of a new learner. Or you may not even know who to delegate to!

The reality is that most of us have tasks, jobs, responsibilities and assignments that may be more effectively delegated than held onto. My guess is if we did a cost-analysis of the tasks we are performing at our "rate of pay" vs. the cost of delegation, there would be more than a few items moved off our plates.

We need to consciously eliminate our barriers to delegation so we can accomplish not only more work but more meaningful work.

So, what items are delegate-able?

The tasks to delegate should only be SMART tasks. Just like SMART goals, delegated tasks must be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound. In order for the delegatee to succeed, you must be able to clearly explain the results you need.

The key is to take a critical look at what you're doing, how your time is spent, then determine what should be delegated.

instructions, ask:
"What else do you
need to get started?"

- ▶ Determine how you
will reward and
celebrate completion

But selecting the task to delegate isn't enough. Next, you need to determine who is the best individual or team to delegate the task or project to. And this decision could apply to resources inside or outside your organization.

When delegating internally, delegation becomes an effective developmental tool for your employees. You don't want to delegate to only one employee. It's important to spread the "rewards" of receiving a new project or responsibility to a variety of deserving employees. It's a matter of choosing the right people appropriately to ensure their success and yours.

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Simple Formula

Follow this SIMPLE formula for holding employees accountable not only for delegated responsibilities but for all job responsibilities.

S = Set Expectations

- Employees need to know exactly what is expected of them
- The clearer you are up front, the better the results for all

- Don't make assumptions about their understanding of the task
- Be thorough in setting the stage

I = Invite Commitment

- Knowledge does not equal Commitment
- After setting goals and expectations, employees need to verbally commit to accomplishing the goal
- Employees need to know how the goals benefit them personally as well as help move the organization forward to help them buy in.

M = Measure Progress

- Create a system to measure their on-going performance
- Create checkpoints for you and the delegatee
- Quantify the results compared to goals

P = Provide Feedback

- Share the information you gather at the various checkpoints
- Give authentic, timely feedback
- Set expectations for the next stage of the delegated tasks

L = Link to Consequences

- To guide and focus employee behavior and encourage commitment
- Determine appropriate consequences (not punishment) if the tasks aren't accomplished. For

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example: this could include the impact on other employees, customers, etc. for failing to meet the objectives

E = Evaluate Effectiveness of the Delegation

- Evaluate and communicate quantifiable results
- Explore whether you were successful in holding employees accountable
- Review how you handled the process
- Hold yourself accountable for holding others accountable

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