

DELEGATION

1. What is delegation? Delegation in its true sense means letting someone else make a decision for which you are held accountable. The word entrust best defines it. Delegation results when the performance of specified work is entrusted to another, and the expected results are mutually understood. The degree of delegating depends on the amount of entrusting done, not on the size of the project. Unless we entrust a project to somebody, we're merely assigning it, not delegating it. Delegating is not just getting others to help us out in our jobs, but is giving them the authority and the freedom to handle the details on their own initiative.
2. Why is learning to delegate important? The Stevens Institute of Technology Laboratory of Psychological Studies examined the case histories of unsuccessful executives in more than 200 companies to determine why they had failed. The study revealed the inability to delegate responsibly as the number one cause of failure.
3. There are two basic reasons for delegating:
 1. To streamline your executive workload.
 2. To strengthen the organization.

I want to read to you an excellent example of each from the original textbook on business management and human relations.

First -- Streamlining Your Executive Workload

EX. 18: 13 - 26 Moses had roughly three million people under his charge.

"It came to pass on the morrow that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood by Moses from the morning to the evening." Moses was sitting there day after day with a line miles long waiting to see him. He had an executive work overload.

"When Moses' father-in-law saw what he did to the people, he asked, 'Why do you sit here alone with all the people standing by you from morning to evening. The thing you're doing is wrong. You're going the wrong way about it.'" Here was the first management consultant. "You will truly wear away both you and this people with you, for this thing is too heavy for you, so that you're not able to perform it yourself alone." He said "hearken now to my voice and I'll give you counsel.... Be you for the people Godward that you may bring the causes to God, and you shall teach them ordinances and laws and show the way wherein they must walk, and the work they must do.... Your job is to teach laws and principles, to make the policies."

"Moreover, you shall provide out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of ten. And let them judge the people at all seasons. And it shall be that every great matter they shall bring to you; but every small matter they shall judge." That is the best definition of true delegation, in its modern sense you can find in any printed matter. "So shall it be easier for yourself and they shall bear the burden with you."

This is delegating to streamline the executive workload in the truest sense. What does it do for an executive? It eases the job pressure on him and releases valuable time for planning, interviewing, education. Delegating saves other people's time. It enlarges your area of action. It usually results in a better decision by someone closer to the facts.

Second -- Strengthening the Organization.

The second reason for delegating is to strengthen the organization.

Luke 19: 12 - 17.

He said "therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." He called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, "Occupy till I come." But his citizens hated him, and sent message after him saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us."

And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds." And he said unto him, "Well, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities."

Christ delegated to develop His subordinates into executives. He was willing to let them make mistakes with His money in order to give them a chance to develop. He was willing to let them make decisions for which he would be held accountable to give them a chance to grow.

Donald K. David, Dean of the Harvard School of Business said, "Delegation and control are the principle functions for the development of the greatest effectiveness of a management team."

Any manager who fails to develop his people has failed in his greatest area of responsibility.

Why don't people delegate? There are seven reasons. Most executives agree completely with each one of these and in the next breath swear that none pertains to them!

1. Self delusion - the man thinks he is delegating, but in reality is only assigning duties and never letting go of the authority.
2. Lack of training - most don't know how. Delegating is a skill that has to be developed.
3. Resistance to change - he is complacent in the niche he has made for himself, set in his ways and nobody from above is prodding him for new ideas or increased productivity. He doesn't want new ideas, new problems or more work. But sooner or later that prod from above will come!
4. Fear of Competition - has an inferiority complex and feels insecure. He can't tolerate mistakes in other people and is always worried over the impression he is making on others. Therefore he keeps tight control on all decision making. Yet Andrew Carnegie said, "The great manager is one who knows how to surround himself with men much more able than himself.
5. Fear of having weaknesses exposed - afraid delegation would bring his own personal shortcomings to light. All of us have weaknesses, and delegation could help shore up a vulnerable area.
6. Not enough time - "Manana" approach. He doesn't delegate because he doesn't have time. But the longer he goes without delegating, the less time he will have. Vicious circle.
7. Inability to communicate - He is unable to get ideas across freely and clearly and doesn't want to take the time to do so. He keeps his employees ignorant of the overall goals and objectives of his department, and never defines responsibilities. The result is a constantly frustrated department.

Now which jobs should be delegated and which should not. Basically those which should not be delegated are 1) overall planning, 2) the settlement of disagreements among subordinates, 3) departmental morale and discipline, 4) the requisitioning of new employees and the establishment of adequate training programs, 5) promotions and discharges 6) interdepartmental relations, 7) the provision of proper tools and equipment.

Those that can be delegated are. 1) maintaining quantity of production, 2) maintaining quality of production, 3) health and sanitation, 4) proper use and control of materials. 5) maintenance of premises, 6) maintenance of necessary records and reports.

One thing cannot be overemphasized: When a responsibility is delegated, the supervisor must also delegate the necessary authority to carry out the responsibility.

How to delegate. Here are ten tested and proven guidelines to help you delegate more simply and effectively:

1. Carefully pick the job to be delegated - What you delegate can be just as important as how you delegate. Are you simply palming off an unpleasant chore? Would your supervisor approve of you delegating it?
2. Match the person to the job - Is he well qualified and capable of understanding the assignment? Does he really want the job? Will the rest of your staff gracefully accept your choice? Often others feel hurt.
3. Motivate his job enthusiasm - There are positive and negative aspects to every delegated assignment. POSITIVE: The man given increased authority and responsibility, is in a position to add to his knowledge contribute more to his company, and prepare for further advancement. NEGATIVE: He has to work harder. Therefore, you must let the man know "what's in it for him!"
Don't tell a man "Bill, I want you to take in this job because I'm too busy to handle it myself." Tell him why you selected him for the job.
4. Build his confidence thru training and guidance - Confidence inspires enthusiasm. Many people greet challenges and change with doubts and apprehensions. Give the man all the knowledge and guidance he needs to do the job. Then shore up his confidence at regular intervals by letting him know you are pleased with his progress.
5. Define his duties clearly, but not rigidly. - A job description that is too loose is likely to leave the man confused about what is expected. A too rigid definition may restrict his movement and intiative.
6. Encourage his independence and intiative - a bird has to try his wings. And some birds need a little prodding now and then. Don't expect a man to do a job exactly like you do, even if you feel your way is better. Teddy Roosevelt once said, "The best executive is one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling while they do it.
7. Be prepared for possible failure - Your reaction to his blunders can make or break him. Help him save face if he fluffs. Be sure to find out what went wrong and most important why. But the emphasis must be on building up, not tearing down his confidence.
8. Pass on and announce his responsibility and authority. - This is where most fall down. We delegate responsibility, but not authority. In addition, the people he is working with must know he has that

authority. Announce both his responsibility and his authority to the whole group he will be working with and ask for their co-operation.

9. Back him up - Don't desert him in battle. If he makes a mistake, support him. Take responsibility for his mistakes on your shoulders- because you are the one who is really responsible. If he gets in trouble, don't withdraw his authority. So often we give a man authority and when the going gets rough we withdraw that authority and desert him in battle. If you support him, he will go all out and never make the same mistake again.

10. Maintain overall control - Often a cause of misdelegation is turning over total control with an assignment. As long as you are the man's superior, final authority should remain in your hands. Don't spy on him or you will lose his respect totally. But have him report progress. Set appointments for him to come back and report to you and keep the appointment yourself. Encourage a free discussion of problems. Review and evaluate his performance periodically.

This then is delegation. It is the key to organization and personal development.

- References:
- "The Holy Bible"
 - "Elements of Supervision"
 - "For Executives Only"
 - "How to Motivate Men"
 - "Ambassador College Management Seminar"