

Delegation

Got too much on your plate? As a general rule, if somebody else can complete a task at least 80% as well as you, pass it off. While you are still responsible for the completion of certain tasks, allowing others to take on additional projects increases their personal investment in the group/organization/institution. Assume that people want more responsibilities and are keen to learning new skills.



To Delegate or Not to Delegate, that is the question...

- If you should not be doing an activity, eliminate it instead of delegating. Do not waste others time if you refuse to do it.
- Delegate routine activities, even though you don't want to:
 - Fact-finding assignments
 - Preparation of rough drafts of reports
 - Problem analysis and suggested actions
 - Collection of data for reports
 - Photocopying, printing, collating
 - Data entry
- Do not delegate performance reviews, discipline, or firing.

Delegating Instructions:

- Allow the person to complete the task his or her own way. You want to delegate the objective, not the procedure. Outline the desired results, not the methodology.
- Remind them that they can check in with you as needed. You might state that you will check in after a certain amount of time so that they can expect you to inquire about their progress.
- Delegate to the right person. Do not always give tasks to the strongest, most experienced, or first available person. You want to develop your entire work force.
- Spread delegation around and give people new experiences as part of their training.

- Obtain feedback from employees to ensure they feel they are being treated appropriately. A simple "How's it going with that new project?" might be all that is needed.
- Be sure to delegate the authority along with the responsibility. Do not make people come back to you for too many minor approvals.
- Trust people to do well and do not look over their shoulders or check up with them along the way, unless they ask.
- Be prepared to trade short-term errors for long-term results.
- When you finish giving instructions, the last thing to ask is, "What else do you need to get started?" They will tell you.
- Give praise and feedback at the end of the project, and additional responsibilities.

In Summary... the purpose of delegation is not just to relieve your workload, but to allow your people to grow professionally. Effective delegation is a two-way discussion and understanding. Be clear about the delegated task, give staff an opportunity to ask questions, monitor progress, and offer assistance as needed. Use effective delegation to benefit both yourself and the person to whom you delegate.