

DELEGATION

DELEGATING responsibility (the art of spreading the work around) is an indispensable concept that must be grasped by any leader who expects to be successful.

DELEGATION is important because it:

1. Allows more people to be actively involved.
2. Distributes workload.
3. Motivates members by giving them value and importance.
4. Helps organizations run more smoothly.

WHAT and WHEN to delegate:

1. Matters that keep repeating themselves.
2. Minor decisions made most frequently.
3. Details that take up large chunks of time.
4. When you feel someone else has particular qualifications that would suit the task.
5. When someone expresses interest in the task.

WHAT and WHEN **NOT** to delegate:

1. Situations that would have a large negative impact if failure occurred.
2. A decision that involves someone else's morale.
3. The "hot potato."
4. Something that involves trust or confidence that you should not reveal.
5. Something you yourself would not be willing to do (the menial work).

METHODS for delegating:

1. Ask for volunteers – interest and belief in something is one of the greatest motivators for success.
2. Suggest – someone you feel would be good for the task. Silence in response to a request for volunteers does NOT necessarily mean lack of interest. Often, a person will not volunteer because he or she lacks confidence.
3. Assign – the task to someone. The person can always decline.
4. Spread the good tasks around – “good” jobs give people status and value. Make sure the same people don’t always get the good tasks.

GUIDELINES for Effective Delegation:

1. CHOOSE the appropriate people by interviewing and placing your members carefully. Consider their time, interest, and capabilities.
2. EXPLAIN why the person(s) was (were) selected for this task.
3. DELEGATE segments that make sense, not bits and pieces of a task.
4. DISCUSS the task at hand. Discuss ideas: mutually set possible goals and objectives. Whenever possible, give to those who will be responsible for carrying out a program a voice in the decision making. Do not lower standards. Don’t insult your people.
5. DEFINE clearly the responsibilities being delegated to each person. Explain what is expected of the person(s) and what the bounds of authority are. Be sure agreement is reached as to areas where the person can function freely. Negotiate check-up, reporting, and deadline timelines clearly.

6. GIVE accurate and honest feedback. People want to know how they're doing and they deserve to know. This is both an opportunity for giving satisfaction and encouraging growth. Allow for risk taking and mistakes.
7. SUPPORT your officers and chairpersons by sharing information, knowledge, and plans with them. It is incredible how many errors are made simply because of a lack of information. Share their failures as well as successes.
8. REALLY delegate. Most responsible people do not appreciate someone looking over their shoulder, or taking back parts of their assignment before they have the chance to do it. As the leader, it's hard for you to let go. You want to be the doer – or you can't just throw them out there to sink or swim. Let them do the job! Delegating does not eliminate work, it simply changes it. As you delegate appropriately, a multiplier effect occurs: the time spent doing a job can be spent enabling several people to do numerous jobs.
9. STRESS the importance of evaluation: You must not overlook the need to evaluate and measure the extent to which your actions conformed to your plans, if the plans went well, or if the original plans were appropriate and worthwhile.

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