Why Delegate?

Delegation is an ethical responsibility you owe to yourself, to those with whom you work, and to your organization. A leader cannot do everything for an organization. There are only so many hours in a day and so many tasks one person can do. Besides, an uninvolved member soon becomes an apathetic, unmotivated member who most likely drops out of the group. A good leader learns to use the skill of “delegation” to help his/her organization develop to its fullest potential.

Benefits of Delegation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Allows time for planning</td>
<td>- Motivates</td>
<td>- Promotes perpetuation</td>
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<td>- Allows time for organizing</td>
<td>- Builds self-esteem</td>
<td>- Opens new avenues of Creativity</td>
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<td>- Allows time for non-organized pursuits</td>
<td>- Encourages creative problem solving</td>
<td>- Promotes increased productivity</td>
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<td>- Teaches valuable lessons in how to work</td>
<td>- Stimulates initiative</td>
<td>- Improves overall efficiency and</td>
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<td>with and develop others</td>
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<td>effectiveness</td>
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<td>- Builds trust</td>
<td>- Trains future leaders</td>
<td>- Creates team enthusiasm</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Enables the leader to multiply him/herself</td>
<td>- Builds trust</td>
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<td>- Enables leader to work smart, not hard</td>
<td>- Builds morale</td>
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<td>- Encourages open communication</td>
<td>- Facilitates communication</td>
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<td>- Stimulates creativity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Allows significant contributions</td>
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Obstacles to Delegation

Leaders will not delegate because:
“I can do it better and faster myself” fallacy.
They do not know which tasks to delegate.
They are afraid people won’t like them if they ask for help.
They lack confidence in a member’s ability.
They fear a loss of control. They are unwilling to let members make decisions and be held accountable for those decisions. They get personal satisfaction from doing the tasks themselves.

**Members will not accept delegation because:**
They find it easier to ask the leader than to make a decision by themselves. They do not understand their own authority level. They fear criticism for mistakes. They lack the resources and necessary information to do the job. They lack self confidence. They feel the incentives are inadequate to motivate them.

**WHY DELEGATION FAILS**

- The process is incomplete. Responsibilities for the results have been distributed without granting sufficient authority or creating a relationship of accountability.

- The leader refuses, consciously or unconsciously, to delegate. The obstacles to delegation are never overcome by the leader to the member.

- Delegation is blocked by incomplete or ineffective communication. The leader thinks he/she has delegated a task, but the member is unaware the delegation has occurred.

**FOUR LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES NEEDED FOR DELEGATION**

1. A leader must be receptive to other people’s ideas.
2. A leader must be prepared for and willing to accept mistakes.
3. A leader must forego the luxury of blowing his/her top.

**FIVE STEPS IN THE PROCESS OF SUCCESSFUL DELEGATION**

1. Policy guidelines must be clearly stated.
2. Jobs must be defined.
3. Goals must be set and agreed upon by members. “People support what they help to create.”
4. Two-way communication must be established between the leader and the member.
5. Feedback systems must be established, through effective meetings and during the “in between meeting times.”

**FIVE WAYS TO DELEGATE**

- Appoint someone
- Assign it to a committee
- Ask for volunteers in a meeting
- Break up the job into logical parts and spread the work to a few people.
- Find out your members’ interests/skills/time commitment and then find a task to suit them.

**Caution**
* Don’t overload any one person. Spread the responsibilities and get everyone involved.
* Don’t delegate only those tasks that you dislike or that are very simple.
* Don’t overlook the need to constantly train your members.
* Don’t look upon delegation as a sign of weakness.

*Adapted from LeaderBits, The University of Kansas and Delegation, Judy Kawamoto.*