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DELEGATION

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

Leaders

- Allows time for planning
- Allows time for organizing
- Allows time for non-organized pursuits
- Teaches valuable lessons in how to work with and develop others
- Builds trust
- Enables the leader to multiply him/herself
- Enables leader to work smart, not hard
- Encourages open communication

Members

- Motivates
- Builds self-esteem
- Encourages creative problem solving
- Stimulates initiative
- Trains future leaders
- Builds trust
- Builds morale
- Facilitates communication
- Stimulates creativity
- Allows significant contributions

Organization

- Promotes perpetuation
- Opens new avenues of Creativity
- Promotes increased productivity
- Improves overall efficiency and effectiveness
- Creates team enthusiasm

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.
4. A leader must exercise great powers of self restraint.

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.