

Grow Your Work Team By Delegating

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Delegating or assigning tasks and projects to someone else, can be very difficult to do. You may not want to ask for help or be anxious to prove that you can do it all. However, delegating can be one of the most liberating things you do for yourself and help with your career. Delegating can be seen as training and offer value to your company and accomplishments to your resume.

In today's business environment, learning to delegate projects is especially important because we are all challenged daily to do more. If you are a manager or a small business owner, delegating can make the difference between profit and loss on your bottom line. Avoid the trap of believing the old axiom "If you want it done right, do it yourself." Do not listen to that little voice in you that says, "it will take extra time to train and I can not be sure of the results or that the person will complete the task".

Think of delegation as allowing others on your team to learn from your expertise, you're giving them an opportunity to grow towards their potential and reach their career goals.

Even if you are busy right now, before you begin, take a little time to sketch out a basic project time line.

Doing the research helps you to implement the training plan. It may seem like a lot of work in the beginning but once this outline is developed you can use it over and over.

A good way to set the stage with your team is to sit down and find out what they want from their career and plan a course to help them get there! Create win win right up front!

Delegate tasks that provide your team 'along the way' opportunities to use as learning steps towards their career goals. If you do not delegate and take the time to train your team, you may be keeping all the growth opportunities for yourself!

Here are some steps to consider as you prepare to delegate:

- To maintain responsibility for the output of the project **you'll need to plan ahead**. Prepare a timeline outlining all the tasks/projects on the left and the dates they need to be completed to the right. Also schedule in regular follow up dates to make a progress check. Later, you can fill in the person's name to whom the task has been assigned.
- When you meet for the first time with the person you have chosen, **outline your project simply** and ask for feedback on the project and the timeline. If you can, adjust your timeline to accommodate their input - this opens the door and moves you into the mode of collaboration and gains buy in from your helper.
- Build trust and strengthen your role as a manager by letting your helper know you will be **following up on these dates** ahead. Use positive language to support your team and let them know you are in this together. If appropriate, praise past accomplishments and link them to the present task.
- **Plan to celebrate**. Plan an opportunity for everyone to get together to share the stories of their personal success and tie it into the team's success.

Last but not least, always have **thank you/success note cards** ready to let people know you appreciate their contributions.

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