

Excerpt from Savia Lane: Bi-weekly Newsletter - October 6, 2005

Advice For Cubicle Divas™

Advancing Your Career By Delegating

Delegating or assigning tasks and projects to someone else, is very difficult for women to do. We rarely want to ask for help and we're anxious to prove that we can do it all.

However, delegating can be one of the most liberating things you can do for yourself and your career. I caught up with **Cheryl Scoffield, a Personal Assistant** who shared with me the value of delegating.

SL - How important is it to delegate projects or tasks to other people?

Cheryl - The challenge for managers is to learn to delegate tasks to others so you can do more in a day. 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.

A good way to set the stage is by sitting down with your team, find out what they want from their career and plan a course to help them get there.

Delegate tasks that provide opportunities as learning steps along the way. If you do not delegate and take the time to train your team you may be keeping all the growth opportunities to yourself.

SL - One of the things I dislike is assigning a task to someone and then that person re-assigns the task back to me. What are the steps to identifying the right person to delegate to?

Cheryl - Some things to consider as you prepare to delegate:

- To maintain responsibility for the output of the project **you'll need to plan ahead**. Prepare a time line outlining when tasks need to be completed and schedule in dates for following up with whoever is helping you.
- 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 time line to accommodate their input - this opens the door and allows you to move into collaboration.
- Build trust and strengthen your role as a manager by **establishing follow up dates** for the days ahead. Support team members with positive language. If appropriate, praise past accomplishments and link them to the present task.
- Last but not least, **plan to celebrate**. Bring in something to share and have note cards ready to let people know you appreciate their contributions.

SL - Why are women often hesitant to give stuff to other people to do?

Cheryl - Perhaps you feel the project was given to you and is really up to you to finish. You may feel that by asking for help you are slacking off or burdening others.

Isn't it funny how we do not feel like part of a team when we think about getting help even though we may be willing to help others when we are asked?

SL - What final advice can you give to women who fear delegating projects, tasks or activities to others?

Cheryl - Think of delegation in cooperative/collaborative terms - you help me and I'll help you. That's team work, and a win win game that everyone can play as the days ebb and flow.

It's all about collaboration and sharing the learning experiences through delegation. Everyone on the team has an opportunity to grow, be challenged and stay excited about coming to work.

Thanks Cheryl. To you, have fun until next time when I take you on your path to the career you deserve.

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