Delegation Strategies to Increase Effectiveness

One of the best ways to improve your effectiveness and productivity is through effective delegation. You may be thinking “I can’t delegate tasks due to my position or level of authority”, or, “I don’t have someone to delegate to”. Before you give up on delegation, try reframing the way you approach the issue. Consider breaking your tasks into small segments or activities that you can share, partner with someone, or even say “no” to. By inviting others to take on a small part or component of the activity they may be well suited for, you have taken your first step towards delegation. Shift your mindset from being all-or-nothing on the task to embracing a team-work attitude.

Every time you share responsibility for completion of a task, you take one step closer to delegating expanding your ability to do more through and with others. This is also a critical step in developing your management and leadership skills.

Success does not depend on how much you can do personally; rather on much you can do through and with others.

Use the following Delegation Checklist to start, or improve, your own skills.

1. Clearly define the task to be delegated. Don’t over complicate it – keep it simple and clear.

2. What is the benefit of completing this task? Be honest with your answer - don’t talk yourself into doing something that should not be done at all. If there is no benefit in completing, say no to the task, or if possible wait to see if there is a follow-up request before acting.

3. Does the task meet the SMARTER formula? Yes / No

4. What are the requirements of the person(s) best suited to complete this task?
   a) abilities/skills
   b) education
   c) special training
   d) location
5. Is there any special training or instruction required to complete the task? If yes, define the exact requirements or skills.

6. Type and frequency of communication required with this person(s):
   a) personal meetings
   b) email
   c) telephone/skype conversations
   d) video conferencing
   e) letter

7. Frequency of communication required with this person:
   a) daily
   b) weekly
   c) monthly
   d) quarterly

8. Who else must be involved in this project and what is their role? Person (name, position, unique skill set, location) or authority or ability (support, research, approval).

9. What are the limits or boundaries for the “delegatee”? (Don’t give total responsibility to someone who cannot or shouldn’t do the tasks. You risk embarrassing or creating problems for them and yourself)

10. What are my responsibilities to ensure this project is completed on time, according to plan, and within budget? *(Don't pass the buck to avoid doing something you are responsible for or avoid using it as a learning and growth opportunity)*

11. What will determine the success of the tasks or project delegated?

12. Who can I delegate upwards to? Is there a manager or senior person with specialized skills relating to the issue / project you are working on to involve or even take a portion of the work? *(If you don't ask you won't know. Be careful how you approach this so it isn't viewed as you trying to get out of your responsibilities)*

**How can you apply this exercise to a current situation, opportunity, client or project?**