



Doug Hall

Useful Information Resources

Quotes

"I not only use all the brains I have, but all I can borrow."

Woodrow Wilson

"Estimates given to us by our clients of the amount that could be done by someone more junior range up to 50% or more of each senior person's time."

Patrick McKenna and
David Maister

"The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good people to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling

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Valued Clients and Potential Clients:

Delegating Work is an important and necessary component of good management. It is a requirement for owners and managers who want to grow their business.Without delegation, you are destined to have a small company and stomach ulcers.

Delegation is an acquired skill.

It involves entrusting another person with a task for which the delegator remains ultimately accountable. It is the assignment of authority and responsibility to carry out specific activities. Hurdles to good delegation are often the owner-manager's need to micromanage and the "I can do it better myself" attitude.

Do you ever ask yourself -

- Why am I working so many hours?
- Am I spending my time on the right tasks?
- Is my business more profitable than it was last year?

Delegation enables you to work smarter ...not harder and longer. Most likely, you do routine tasks better and faster than your staff. However, as an owner or manager, these routine tasks take valuable time away from your real responsibilities (planning, selling, mentoring, and more) The willingness to delegate will help you leverage your own time and strengths to address these more critical, high-value activities.

Do you find it difficult to delegate work? Here are some possible reasons:

- You may be the best suited to do the task yourself
- You enjoy doing the task or feel it is more expedient to do it personally
- You decide against delegation as an avoidance strategy to keep from doing other tasks that must be done
- You have a strong need for control and must have your hands in on everything
- Delegation is an investment which takes your time and resources
- The task has become a habit for you
- You don't have the talent to delegate to (Who's responsibility is this?)
- You don't believe anybody else can do the task as well as you can (Is it possible someone could get the same results as you by taking a different approach or using newer technology?)

with them while they do it."

Theodore Roosevelt

"In too many professional services firms, what is really taking place is the equivalent of surgeons piercing ears."

Paul Dunn and Ron Baker

"Those owner-managers who can't or don't delegate either preside over permanently small enterprises, or else their companies grow chaotically and progressively develop one problem area after another."

Paul Resnick

"A manager who avoids delegation cannot possibly hope to complete effectively all of the tasks that find their way on to his or her desk."

Robert Heller and Tom Hindle

"Systemic underdelegation is a bad habit that reduces profitability, adversely affects motivation and morale, reduces a firm's competitive capabilities, and prevents senior professionals from spending more time with clients and

If you are able and willing to delegate (remember - somebody probably delegated to you at some time!), **here are some benefits** you can anticipate:

- Improved morale and increased retention of key employees
- Higher efficiency
- Increased staff motivation
- Develops the skills of your staff - helps them grow professionally
- Better distribution of work through the group
- Reinforce your role as a leader and manager
- More opportunity to do the tasks you do best
- An ongoing opportunity to evaluate employees and to give frequent and direct feedback
- Enjoy professional success and still have a personal life

Here's a suggestion - keep a time log. This is an easy exercise that will result in better use of your time. Make it simple and do it for a week. Keep track of what you are doing in half-hour intervals - beginning when you wake up and ending when you go to bed. Find out where your time really goes! At the end of the week, for each written task, ask yourself three questions:

- Does this task require my special skills?
- Could someone else do this task? Who?
- How often will this task be done in the future?
- In the case of leisure activities - would I like to do more of this?
- How much time did I really spend on high-value activities?

The objective of delegation is to get the job done right by somebody else. To enable someone else to do a job for you, **you must ensure that:**

- You pick the right person
- They know what you want
- They have the authority to achieve it
- They know how to do it

The difficult aspect of delegation is that the final accountability for the work cannot be delegated. Results - good or bad - will always belong to the owner. Consider using the following steps in the **"SMART"** process to improve your odds for successful delegation.

Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information. Give me a call at 512-306-8444 or email at wdhall@austin.rr.com.

Doug Hall

SMART process for better delegation results

When you decide to delegate, consider the following steps:

Specific - Be specific about all the actions to be taken. You may want to put them in writing (at least the first time for this person). Furnish samples of finished work when possible. When the task involves client communication, discuss how the client should be treated.

investing in the future of the firm."

David H Maister

Building Your Library

The Firm of the Future: A Guide for Accountants, Lawyers and other Professional Services by Paul Dunn and Ron Baker (2003)

First Among Equals: How to Manage a Group of Professionals by Patrick J McKenna and David H Maister (2002)

The Small Business Bible: The Make-or-Break Factors for Survival & Success by Paul Resnick (1988)

Essential Manager's Manual by Robert Heller and Tim Hindle (1998)

Guts & Borrowed Money: Straight Talk for Starting and Growing Your Small Business by Tom S Gillis (1997)

Managing the Professional Services Firm by David H Maister (1993)

Measurable - Establish exactly what you intend for the outcome. If possible, quantify the result. State it clearly and ask for it to be repeated back to check for accuracy.

Accountable - Select a person who will take ownership of the project or task. This must be someone who will communicate results in a timely fashion and will not try to cover up or require constant attention and a lot of reassurance.

Realistic - Create checkpoints along the way to monitor progress and quality of the work. Allow extra time for mistakes that are part of the initial learning curve - just make sure you have a way to catch them. Do not delegate something that is not humanly possible to accomplish in a given time frame. Make sure you provide adequate resources to get the job done. If time is short, more assistance may be required.

Timeline - State very clearly the date for completion, any checkpoint dates and the impact of not meeting the deadline. Remember that the first time any task or project is undertaken, it will take longer to accomplish. Expect increased efficiency with repetition.

A Useful Checklist for Monitoring Delegated Work*

1. Is the work on schedule?
2. Is it moving in the right direction?
3. Is it on budget?
4. Has the assignment been interpreted correctly?
5. Are there unforeseen problems or circumstances that you must broker?
6. Are there internal personality or turf disputes that you must broker?
7. Are any additional resources needed - personnel, money, facilities, authority?

*from the Small Business Bible by Paul Resnick

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