



The Art of Delegation: How to Delegate Responsibility with Respect!

Michael Lewis Training, Motivation and Development

E-mail: info@michaellewistraining.com



www.michaellewistraining.ca

At some point, **every** leader has an **epiphany**, a moment or situation in which they realize that they are **overwhelmed** with work, struggling with a “mountain” of tasks, and is feeling **frustrated** that they can’t get on top of things.

It is then they discover the **power of delegation** and how delegating tasks and responsibilities can “free” up their time and liberate them so they can catch their breath.

Delegation isn’t about “**bossing**” people around, it is about fairly and intelligently **distributing work** to others.

Just Remember A.B.C.

When it comes to employees in general, and also in terms of a single employee’s productivity, there are **three important benchmarks** that you will always observe.

A - Above average productivity / attitude

Recognize, reward, and empower

B - Average productivity / attitude

Build skills, challenge, and coach

C - Below productivity / attitude

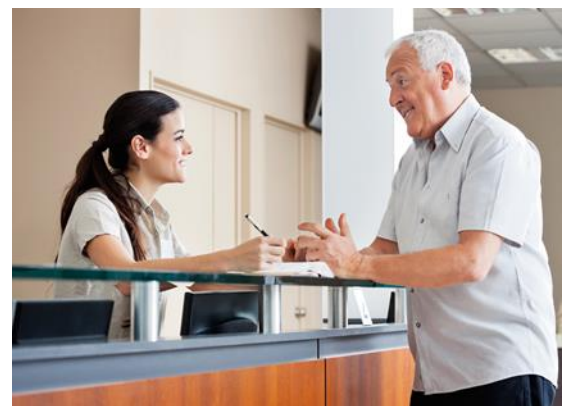
Address, monitor and correct w/ training.

When it comes to delegation and taking on responsibility...

A’s embrace it,

B’s accept it and

C’s resent it.



Defining Delegation

The **co-operative approach** to assigning responsibilities and completing tasks in the workplace!

Delegation is...

- An essential productivity “tool”.
- Based on clear and defined workplace needs.
- “Frees” the manager to manage and empower staff with new skills and abilities

Delegation requires...

- Positive communication / mutual respect (earned).
- Balanced, fair and regular evaluation.



Pre- Delegation Requirements

1. A clear definition of the task.

What exactly is the task(s)?

2. A complete understanding of the depth / complexity of the task.

What are the steps and the expectation?

3. An ability to provide clear instruction.

What will I need to say / do to ensure comprehension?

4. A schedule that permits - follow-up.

When will I follow-up to ensure that the task was completed to your satisfaction?

5. A desire to provide objective and fair evaluation.

What will I say at completion of the task?

Attitude IS Everything

Attitude more than anything drives success!

1. Assess **your mental attitude** before assigning a task.

Get a sense of the employee’s attitude / workload so you KNOW how to approach them.

2. Consider **the timing** of the request for both of you.

3. Mentally rehearse what you will want to say and how you want to explain the task.

4. **Teach Why.**

Emphasize the benefits of the task to
... the business /organization and the clients.

5. **Be business-like** in your tone, make friendly but firm eye contact.



A NOTE ABOUT CONTROL and POWER

You may need to give up a belief that **ONLY YOU** can do the job correctly and thus delegation is impractical.

DELEGATION is the sharing of **CONTROL**

by **empowering others** and in doing so you gain the **POWER** back as an effective trainer and respected leader.

Choose Your Approach

You will need to “teach / instruct” with consideration to the other person’s ...

- a) Ability to learn and retain information.
- b) Level of self-responsibility / work independently.
- c) Ability / desire to seek assistance when required.

If they want or need to take **notes** ... encourage them.

If they want or need to ask **questions** ... support them.

If they need to learn “**hand’s on**” ... show them.



BUT complete learning (**comprehension**) sometimes requires a complete demonstration that might require all of the above.

PRIMER ON ASSERTIVENESS

- a) Practice in advance what you want and need to say.
- b) Pick the place and time to ask.
- c) Ensure a degree of privacy and try to ensure face-to-face contact.
- d) If by phone, speak slightly slower and ascertain understanding as you proceed.

“ I have a task that requires your attention and I thought of you”.

The task is ...

OR _____



Show Me / Tell Me Technique.

- a) Show or demonstrate to the other person everything you want them to do... exactly the way you want it done.
- b) Ask them if they have any questions.
- c) Have them demonstrate the task completely in front of you to ensure the level of comprehension.
- d) Praise or correct as needed.
- e) Let Go ...and tell them when you'll "check back with them"
- f) Follow-up to assure completion and competence.
- g) Reward or correct as needed.

Set Your Limits, Share Your Expectations

Limits INCLUDE

- Deadlines for completion.
- Available resources.

Expectations INCLUDE

- Quality / accuracy of work required
- Reference to previous examples of excellence.

Five Phrases... That Should Accompany Delegation

1. *I believe in you, and I know you can do it!*
2. *Are you sure you understand my expectations?*
3. *I'll drop by later to see how you're doing.*
4. *If you really need assistance, call me!*
5. *Thank-you! I really appreciate your help!*

Let Go!

Sometimes, there is a temptation to monitor a delegated task too closely and thus it evolves into a "shared task".

TRUE delegation means "*letting go*" and allowing **TRUST** to form the employee / supervisor bond.

*Some employees MAY need a higher degree of supervision but even in these cases the ultimate goal is a "gradual and greater degree of independency". The supervisor should make a greater effort to **extend the time** between monitoring.*

IF they come to you BEFORE the task is completed with a need for further clarification or instruction.

THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY ...

- To determine if their question / query is VALID.
- To determine your training/instructional effectiveness.
- To determine their ability to retain instruction.
- To engage the "Show Me / Tell Me" technique again.
- To teach the benefits of taking responsibility to learn.



Building A Constructive Habit

At the completion of any task or assignment, there is an opportunity for a leader to provide one of the following perspectives...

1) PRAISE

Recognize / thank (publicly / privately)

Congratulations! Excellent Effort! Great Job!

2) COACH

Correct and improve.

Here's what you've done well and this is what we need to improve.

3) TRAIN

Discuss/ review and re-assign.

I'd like to take this opportunity for both us to do a better job for your next assignment.

I'll commit to taking more time to ensure provide clearer instruction and I'd like you to commit to ensuring you better understand what is required.

Finally, Let's Recap...

Remember Your **A.B.C's**...

A great attitude towards delegating makes all the difference...

If they want or need to take **notes** ... encourage them.

If they want or need to ask **questions** ... support them.

If they need to learn "**hand's on**" ... show them.

Show them and tell them.

Have them show you and tell you.

It's about competence and compliance.

Praise and recognize.

Coach and improve.

Train to ensure competence.

Delegation is about **empowerment** and that when your employees learn new tasks and can do new things, it makes them feel more **valuable** and **valued**.



For more information, check out my article <https://municipalmonitor.ca/q2-2021/>

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