




# DELEGATION IS A DELICATE MATTER

## DELEGATION IS A DELICATE MATTER

An Extract From The Book 'Think About It', By: **Mosi Dorbayani**

ISBN-10: 0994084226

University of Salford, Practice as Research Center of Excellence - PaR

 / 0000-0002-8362-1034

Delegation will always be one of the most important management skills, and one of the easiest to get wrong. Good delegation saves you time, develops your people, grooms a successor, and motivates. Bad delegation will cause you frustration, de-motivation and confusion for others, and fails to achieve the task itself. Here are some simple steps to follow if you want to get delegation right, and the seven levels of delegation freedom you can offer.

### Steps for successful delegation:

**1. Define the task:** Confirm in your own mind that the task is suitable to be delegated. Does it meet the criteria for delegating? Should you delegate the task at all?

**2. Select the individual:** What are your reasons for delegating to this person? What are they going to get out of it? What are you going to get out of it?

**3. Assess ability and training needs:** Is the person capable of doing the task? Do they understand what needs to be done? If not, you cannot delegate.

**4. Explain the reasons:** You must explain why the job or responsibility is being delegated. And why to that person? What is its importance and relevance? Where does it fit in the overall scheme of things?

**5. State required results:** What must be achieved? Clarify understanding by getting feedback from the other person. How will the task be measured? Make sure they know how you intend to decide that their job is being successfully done.

**6. Consider resources required:** Discuss and agree what is required to get the job done. Consider people, location, premises, equipment, money, materials, other related activities and services.

**7. Agree deadlines:** When must the job be finished? Or if an ongoing duty, when are the review dates? When are the reports due? And if the task is complex and has parts or stages, what are the priorities? At this point you may need to confirm common understanding with the other person.

As well as showing you that the job can be done, this helps to reinforce commitment. Methods of checking and controlling must be agreed with the other person. Failing to agree this in advance will cause this monitoring to seem like interference or lack of trust.

**8. Support and communicate:** Think about whom else needs to know what's going on, and inform them. Involve the other person in considering this so they can see beyond the issue at hand.

Do not leave the person to inform your own peers of their new responsibility. Warn the person about any awkward matters of politics or protocol. Inform your own boss if the task is important, and of sufficient profile.

**9. Feedback on results:** It is essential to let the person know how they are doing, and whether they have achieved their aims. If not, you must review with them why things did not go to plan,

and deal with the problems. You must absorb the consequences of failure, and pass on the credit for success.

### **The seven levels of delegation:**

Delegation isn't just a matter of telling someone else what to do. There is a wide range of varying freedom that you can confer on the other person. The more experienced and reliable they are the more freedom can be given. The more critical the task, the more cautious you need to be about extending a lot of freedom, especially if your job or reputation depends on getting a good result.

Take care to choose the most appropriate style for each situation.

1. "Wait to be told." or "Do exactly what I say." This in fact is NOT delegation at all.
2. "Look into this and tell me what you come up with. I'll decide." This is asking for investigation and analysis but no recommendation.
3. "Give me your recommendation, and the other options with the pros and cons of each. I'll let you know whether you can go ahead." Asks for analysis and recommendation, but you will check the thinking before deciding.
4. "Decide and let me know your decision, but wait for my go ahead." The other person needs approval but is trusted to judge the relative options.
5. "Decide and let me know your decision, then go ahead unless I say not to." Now the other person begins to control the action. The subtle increase in responsibility saves time.
6. "Decide and take action, but let me know what you did." Saves more time. Allows a quicker reaction to wrong decisions, not present in final level.
7. "Decide and take action. You don't need to check back with me." Perhaps this is the most freedom we can give to the other person. A high level of confidence is necessary for this, and it needs good controlling system to ensure mistakes are flagged.