

# Effective Delegation for Managers

## Five Steps to Maximize Your Time & Employee Resources!

By: Joy Huber

Most of the personnel managers I know complain about disastrous results when they attempt delegating. I frequently hear, "I might as well just do it myself. But it's not a good use of my time!" If you implement the five simple tips in this article I assure you enormous strides will be made in your effectiveness when delegating.

Many people don't realize in order for delegating to turn out very well, specific steps must be followed.

**First off, open the conversation with the employee.** Bad openings I've heard include: "I'm asking you to do this because I certainly don't want to!" Put yourself in the employees' shoes; how motivated would you be if your boss said that to you?

Instead try something along the lines of, "**I'm asking you to do this because I trust you.**" Fresh out of college when I worked in non-profit fundraising for the American Heart Association, my tried and true winner was, "You know I wouldn't ask you to do something I'm not willing to do myself." Sometimes I had to prove that, splitting a list needing follow-up with a volunteer and making the calls to confirm people were raising funds for an event!

**Secondly**, it's important right up-front that you **establish the answer to the W.I.I.F.M. for the employee.** They are thinking, "**What's In It For Me?**" Why SHOULD I do this? So think through what IS in it for them in advance, and be prepared to offer a statement that ideally completes the following phrase

"so that you'll be able to . . ." Does completing the task give them additional job skills? "I'm delegating the monthly forecast to you **so that you'll have** the experience with budgeting needed for a promotion to supervisor." This is a terrific example that ideally gets the employee thinking, "Oh, yes, I have been interested in advancement opportunities so I can make more money & this is how I get experience!"

**Third, make your description of what needs to be done as clear as you possibly can.** Consider the person and their learning style. What I mean by this is some people are visual learners; they need to see it to understand. Perhaps drawing a picture would be helpful. Having instructions written out or a check-list the visual learner can follow is essential. Some people are auditory learners meaning if they've heard it they've got it. MOST of us are visual and most managers only give auditory instructions when delegating only appealing to those who can take information in by ear.

Avoid "You'll have to figure this one out on your own." The manager plays a critical role in the success of the delegation and overall project.

**Fourth**, once you have described the task, you need to **confirm the employees' understanding.** A great way to check for understanding is to simply have them paraphrase or repeat back what they're going to do. Ask what questions they have or what they want reviewed. Ensure there's no fear or negative consequences for asking questions. If someone asks, and you state, "Well, you must have not been listening well!" this doesn't really encourage them to ask further questions. Say, "I realize not all of that may have been clear because we did go over it rather quickly. What should we go over again?"

**Finally**, and this one is so frequently missed, make sure you **confirm the employees' commitment to the task.** A terrific question to ask can be, "Can I count on you?" *Get their commitment before they start the task.* You can also ask when they'll have that ready for you.

Now that you are fully armed with the essentials of delegating, you can begin to delegate with confidence instead of trepidation!



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