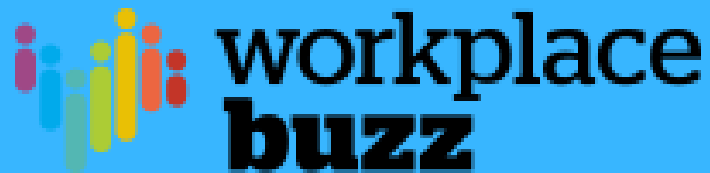

Prepared by
WorkplaceBuzz

Created on
July 2020

DELEGATION SKILLS: GROWTH ALL ROUND

By
Dr. Mark Slaski,
C.Psychol, AFBPsS



What is it?

Done well, delegation is a win-win situation. Over time, effective delegation should give the leader more time and team members a boost to their competency and capability.

At work, delegation usually refers to the transfer of a task from a manager to a subordinate. It can also occur through a less formal chain of authority, like a member of a group being designated as a leader of a team to delegate tasks to peers in the group. However, delegation does not mean relinquishing complete responsibility. Consider delegation to be the sweet spot between the extremes of micro-managing and neglect.

Although it can take a lot of work up front, good delegation comes from a desire to give someone the opportunity to develop and improve their capabilities, as much as it is a strategic time management tool.

How to do it?

Assess: Before delegating, take time to match the responsibility with the right person's skill set. Get to know your employees' strengths and weaknesses and assign tasks to those with the skills that match the job. Check if there is a desire to take on the task, and if will benefit the employees as well.

Clarity: Be clear about the desired outcomes up front and set expectations and goals. Outline milestones, outputs and key decision points. Give reasons for why the task is important and why you are delegating to them. Ensure they understand the task and what they need to achieve.

Deadlines: Set regular deadlines. Schedule in contact points through the duration of the project to communicate updates and to manage slippage. This also allows specific times for feedback and to reassure everyone is on the right path.

Guidance: Provide guidance when necessary. If the work starts to take a tangent away from the plan, take action to investigate and redirect. Formulate a mutually agreed plan to return to the targeted goals. Reassert what you are trying to achieve and the strategy you to achieve it. Ensure the staff has access to training and development necessary.

Feedback: Be sure to give both positive and negative feedback where relevant. Excellent performance that is recognised and rewarded is more likely to continue. Make time to review fully what has been delivered and be able to discuss it adequately.

Oversight: Monitoring the work can both motivate them and help to catch problems as they arise. Check that they have the tools and resources needed to accomplish the task. Be decisive where it is needed to help break through blocks.

Authority: Give employees the authority they need to get the job done. Delegated tasks should contain their own authority. This might refer to the power to allocate budgets, represent the department or company or make key decisions without committee.

Benefits

The most obvious benefit and goal of delegation is better time management. Particularly for reoccurring tasks, taking the extra time needed at the outset to set someone up with a new task pays dividends in the long run in keeping your focus on work only you can do.

But it is also an excellent tool for employee development. It offers a tangible reason for access to new training, and the opportunity to practice what they've learnt in a live setting. Endowing them with the trust to take on a task of yours offers a growth in confidence in their own skills and that their work is being recognized.