

DELEGATION

Being able to delegate effectively is a skill that all managers need but few possess. It is a critical part of the manager's role.

4 poor reasons not to delegate

It is too much up front effort (i.e. I am far too busy chopping wood to stop and sharpen the axe).

Delegating is not what got me promoted to this job in the first place – in fact just the opposite! I got here by being a really good “doer” – I have no idea how to delegate and I am not even sure it is a good thing to do!

I can do the job better than them anyway – so to get best quality it is best for me to do it myself.

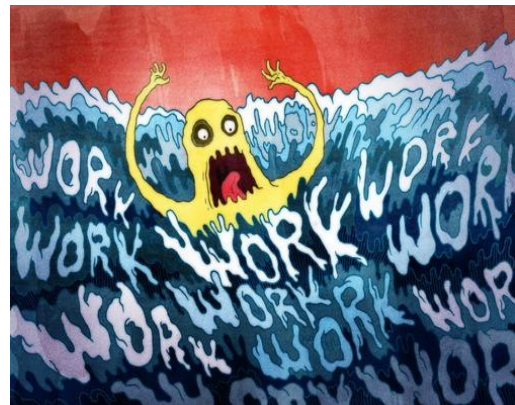
If I delegate then I have to manage the person I delegate to – that means all sorts of interpersonal stuff that I don't enjoy (and in fact I am a little afraid of).

But there is a pay off for good delegation

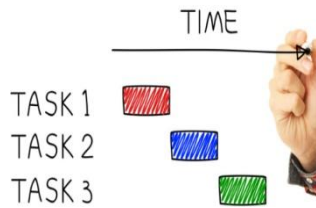
Delegation is the key to managing your workload. If you add your tasks to those that your subordinates should be doing but are not, then the overall workload will swamp you.

It is also the best way to develop subordinates and test their capabilities. If that isn't a good reason in of itself then remember that before you can be promoted again your boss will want to know where they can find a replacement for you.

And most importantly you need to delegate to make sure you have time to do the higher level work that only you can. When you are “sucked down” to do work that should be delegated to a more junior person there will almost certainly be some higher level, more strategic task that is being neglected.



How to do it better - 3 things to focus on



Task. Make sure you delegate a whole task and not just a piece of one. This allows you to better define required outcomes and measures of success. When you hand over the task make sure you provide all the information needed – including things like office politics and other influences.

Trust. Firstly make sure the person can do the task you are delegating, don't just guess or rely on them to tell you if they have doubts. Once you are sure they are capable then behave like you think that they are, including delegating necessary authority to match the task you have given them.



Tend. Delegation doesn't mean handing something over and then abandoning the person doing the task. Discuss with them how you want to be kept in touch with progress, establish check-in points which are appropriate places to confirm progress and direction.

And one final thing– keep an eye out for them. The best managers and delegators have the knack to appear just when the person they have delegated to feel they need a helping hand.



Best Wishes

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