How to Delegate Better and Become a Great Leader



From productivity to company morale, here are the many benefits of delegating responsibility.

July 30, 2019 5 min read

Opinions expressed by *Entrepreneur* contributors are their own.

Stop me if you've heard this one before: You need to delegate if you want to be a more effective leader.

Delegating to the right people is important to entrepreneurs and business owners for many reasons. Yes, it saves you time that you can then spend on more high-value tasks. However, that's not the only reason proper delegation is so important in running a business. It also prepares employees for promotion and bigger responsibilities.

Related: 7 Rules for Entrepreneurs to Delegate Effectively

If you want to help your key team members reach their goals, advance in their careers and provide more value to your company, it's essential to learn to delegate like a boss.

1. Understand what's holding you back from delegating now.

Frequently, micromanaging bosses shy away from delegating due to fear that the job won't be done "right," or a belief that it will take longer to explain than to simply do it yourself.

Effective delegation may require a bit more time and attention up front. But, that's how we all learn new skills – by repetition and practice. Once the employee learns how to handle that task efficiently, the investment pays off in more time and space for you, as well as enhanced productivity for your company.

Another common reason bosses decline to delegate is that they feel too overwhelmed to sit down and figure out what to delegate. In this case, it's hard but necessary to force yourself to spend a little bit of "time capital" now, in order to give yourself more than enough time later.

2. Know what to delegate and what to keep.

Deciding which tasks to delegate can sometimes seem like an overwhelming task itself. Think about it in terms of time management. You're working on letting go of things that are weighing you down. Primarily, you'll want to identify two different types of tasks:

1. Tasks that are not within your primary skillset: You could do them, but it would take you longer than someone

who has a lot of experience and skill in that area.

2. Tasks that anyone can do: If anyone could complete these tasks, then they don’t need your special attention.

Think about setting up a website, or publishing new content on your existing site. Sure, you can learn WordPress or any other content management system. And it isn’t really difficult to format, proof and publish a page on the web these days.

Related: Learn When to Delegate and When to Micromanage

But how long is it going to take you to get this task done? How long would it take a member of your IT staff who eats, sleeps and breathes website work? Even if it takes you both the same amount of time, you have to consider whose time is worth more.

The bottom line is that it costs your company more for you to take care of that blog post than to delegate responsibility to your more experienced and skilled employee. Effective leaders perform this kind of successful delegation over and over again.

3. Create a delegation process.

To make delegation a seamless part of your workflow, think about creating a business system that supports delegating all kinds of tasks.

Start with a time management exercise in which you look at how you spend your days. Make a list of all the specific tasks that need delegating, then think of one or more employees who would be a good fit for those tasks.

Another way to create a more systemized approach to delegation is to create a simple template for delegation memos (or email message if that’s more convenient for you). Use designated

fields for the following:

- A clear definition of the task: Delegation often fails in the instructions. “Here, take care of this” isn’t enough information for your employee to hit your desired performance metrics. Be clear. “Write a 500-word summary of our new product line. Aim for an audience of investors and business partners.”
- The deadline: Providing a “due-by” date keeps the delegated task on track.
- The context, if applicable: Explaining where a task fits into the larger business picture helps your employee shoulder the responsibility more effectively.
- Any brief notes or guidance that will make successful task completion easier for your employee, especially if it’s their first time with a certain task.

Related: 5 Steps to More Smoothly Delegate Decision-Making

4. Keep yourself in the loop.

Follow up on delegated tasks. For larger projects, ask for regular briefings to make sure you’re on top of the overall progress or big-picture view. To be a successful delegator you need to let go of some degree of control, so don’t micromanage the “how.” Just make sure you’re aware of the current status and available to answer questions.

5. Give full access to necessary resources.

Finally, make sure the people to whom you delegate any task are given access to the resources they’ll need for successfully completing that task to your satisfaction.

Ineffective or nonexistent delegation often boils down a lack of trust, which often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy: “See? I tried delegating but they blew it. I have to do everything myself.”

Instead, empower your workers to feel like they’re making valuable contributions and are trusted to handle new responsibilities. Part of that empowerment means giving your workers access to the people, equipment, information and materials they’ll need to do a good job. As a result, they’ll gain more self-confidence and will achieve more.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/337355