

Effective Delegation

Delegation is essential to effective management. It releases the manager for other tasks and it expands the abilities and experience of subordinates (job enlargement and job enrichment). But delegation is often a difficult problem for managers. Following are some guidelines in delegating effectively.

1. Delegation is not abdication of responsibility or authority. You must manage all delegation.
2. Be very clear about the delegated assignment. Check with your subordinate to see that the delegated task is fully understood.
3. Be clear regarding standards of expected performance. Be sure expected results are clarified and understood.
4. Establish clearly defined and understood boundaries for the subordinate. These include:
 - How much authority is granted to the subordinate
 - Over what issues authority is granted to the subordinate
 - What budget is granted to the subordinate and how to access it
 - What political problems to avoid (known pitfalls or possible conflict areas)
5. Establish mutually acceptable control points. Clearly establish the following:
 - Frequency of contact you expect with the subordinate
 - Dates by which tasks are to be completed
 - Dates by which reports and other documentation are to be completed
 - What indicators of problems or progress are applicable
6. Determine (a) what kind and (b) how much information you want as the subordinate proceeds with her/his task.
7. Mutually agree on (a) with what sorts of problems you will provide help and other assistance, and (b) what level of help and other assistance you will be able to provide.