

Developing Others Through Delegation

BEFORE YOUR DELEGATE

<p>Who should you delegate to?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider which subordinates need to be developed and in what skill areas. • Take into account differences in motivation and interest level. • Try to delegate to different individuals each time. • Give all your subordinates an opportunity to prove themselves.
<p>What responsibility should be delegated?</p>	<p>Ensure that your chosen responsibility fulfills as many of the conditions of empowerment as possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningful. Delegated responsibilities should be consistent with your subordinates' ideals or meaningful to them personally. • Flexible. Responsibilities should be flexible enough that your subordinates can determine, at least to some extent, how and when to complete the responsibility. • Challenging. Delegated responsibilities should be difficult enough that your subordinates can develop their skills, but realistic enough that they believe they have the knowledge and skills to achieve some success. • Important. Responsibilities are good to delegate if your subordinate believes that they will have an impact on the unit as a whole or the overall mission.
<p>What level of oversight is appropriate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on what the lowest possible appropriate level of oversight is. • Acknowledge that with less experienced subordinates, greater oversight is appropriate, and check-ins may emphasize the methods as well as the results. • Demonstrate a willingness to adapt your initial assessment of oversight based on your subordinate leader's opinions and actions.
<p>How will you mitigate risk?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on the scope of the responsibilities. • Brainstorm all possible outcomes to the delegated responsibility, particularly negative outcomes, and identify means to mitigate those. • Identify the resources, abilities, and authority your subordinate will need to have success. • Ensure before you delegate that you are in a position to allocate the necessary resources and authority. • Do not delay delegation because you are waiting for the perfect circumstances to arise; be willing to accept some risk.

DELEGATING THE TASK

<p>Allow enough time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow enough time to both prepare for and engage in the delegation process. • Organize your schedule to allow for an unhurried meeting to communicate the responsibility to your subordinate. • Ensure that the meeting is far enough ahead of the intended “end date” for the delegated responsibility.
<p>Communicate all necessary details</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what needs to be done, why the responsibility is important, and why it is being delegated. • Specify the deadlines involved and how firm or flexible they are. • Communicate the results you expect and the standards that must be met. • It’s better to provide too much information rather than too little.
<p>Specify reporting requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specify what must be reported, how often it must be reported, and the manner in which progress will be monitored. • Indicate that you will stick to the schedule specified. • Encourage subordinates to check in more frequently with you if they encounter challenges or unforeseen circumstances. • Try to have progress reports emphasize results rather than methods. • Be willing to adapt reporting requirements if a subordinate gains skills or demonstrates competence.
<p>Check understanding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask open-ended questions. • Ask for a summary or back brief to assess what your subordinate understands. • Encourage questions from the subordinate you are delegating to.
<p>Provide encouragement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close your initial meeting on a positive note. • Let your subordinates know you trust them. • Express confidence in your subordinate’s abilities. • Offer to be available for further help and specific times when you will be available.

OVERSEEING THE DELEGATED TASK

<p>Inform others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform people who are affected by the delegation. • Inform people whose assistance is necessary for success. • Communicate with these individuals yourself and not via your subordinate. • Ensure others that you have provided the authority to your subordinate and will provide support.
<p>Provide resources and authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the amount of authority and resources necessary to succeed with the responsibility. • Consider funding, decisions that can be made without prior approval, and agreements that can be negotiated with other individuals. • Consider people, units, supplies, equipment, networks, information, and time. • Communicate with all necessary parties to ensure these resources will be accessible to your subordinate.
<p>Review and monitor progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in at regularly scheduled intervals. • Stick to your agreed-upon schedule. • Provide ongoing support by being open to questions. • Be available when you say you are going to be available.
<p>Avoid reassertion of the responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show appreciation as the task is being completed by thanking your subordinate, rewarding progress, and giving public praise. • When problems arise, help the individual recognize them. • Help evaluate the effectiveness of proposed solutions rather than recommend your own solutions. • Reassert control as a last resort or if the seriousness of the situation warrants it.
<p>Make mistakes a learning experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept that errors may occur. • Do not hold subordinates to an expectation of perfection. • Discriminate between errors to underwrite as a learning experience and errors that are unacceptable in a military leader. • Hold an after-action review to help subordinates learn from mistakes.