

Team Building

Delegating Activities and Responsibilities

A critical skill required for successful team leaders is the proper delegation of activities and responsibilities. Delegating properly builds teamwork, increases efficiency, develops leadership, raises morale, and boosts productivity. Simple strategies include the following:

1. Delegate responsibility, not work

Too many team leaders confuse delegating responsibility with dumping work on team members. Team players know the difference. Assign activities with room for personal initiative. Team leaders should be **open to different ways of solving problems and conducting activities**.

2. Allow team members to be team leaders

Provide opportunity for team players to take the lead when the situation allows. This does several things:

- It shows that team player's abilities are respected and trusted
- It builds confidence and leadership skills
- It gives the team player exposure, experience and opportunity to take on more responsibility.

3. When delegating, avoid “Do you understand?”

It is human nature for people to answer “yes” regardless – for fear of looking stupid. Better to ask: “Any idea off the top of your head as to how you’ll proceed?” This will result in a better sense of whether or not the delegation instructions were clear.

4. Keep a “Delegation Diary”

Proper delegation will produce effective and uplifting results. A team leader will want to do it more often but must be careful and organized. Written records of activities delegated, to whom and noted results will serve as a valuable guide for future delegating.

5. Establish “Routine Checkups”

At the beginning of the delegation process, establish in advance when the team leader and team player can preview activities and make sure everything is on track. It is important not to check up too often but to have a specific method of follow-up. The team player must feel the trust given to get the activity completed successfully. It is a delicate balance of management (leading) and delegation.