

EFFECTIVE DELEGATION

Why is Delegation important?

Delegation is an essential skill because in any managerial role we hope to achieve more than we can accomplish on our own. Setting it up properly and making it work seems somehow to be difficult for many managers. This report demystifies the solution.

We accomplish most when we delegate

We free up time

This is **leverage**

2 or 3 or more people
doing what you would do
all at once

BUT

Many people refuse to delegate

They feel
- it takes too much time and effort
- they could do the job better themselves

Transferring responsibility is a skill that can be learnt

SPEND A LITTLE TIME delegating effectively TO GAIN A LOT OF TIME

As a manager or owner you need to work *on* your business not *in* your business. Delegation is a marker of personal managerial skill.

Producer or manager?

Learn to distinguish the producer from the manager.

A producer does what it takes to do the job.

- The commis chef cooks lunch
- A secretary types up letters
- A doctor treats ill patients

A manager is a person who sets up systems/processes and works through other people to produce the business output.

- A secretary who supervises other secretaries and office personnel is an Office Manager.
- A chef who runs a brigade is a leader - a Chef.
- A doctor who runs a hospital is a Clinical Director.

A producer invests one hour of effort and produces one unit of results, assuming no loss of efficiency.

A manager invests one hour of effort and produces ten or fifty or a hundred units through effective delegation.

The two types of delegation

The two types of delegation are *gofer* and *stewardship*. These correspond if you like to the two opposing leadership styles: a command and control style versus a coaching leadership approach.

Gofer delegation	Go for this, Go for that, Do this, do that, and tell me when it's done.

People moving from being a producer in someone else's business to being a manager or owner of a business often get stuck in producer mould. For example the mechanic who buys his own garage, the hairdresser who opens his first salon feels that they know how to do it. The solution is not just to tell someone else to do it as you would ie gofer delegation.

The critical step is learning how to set up a full delegation so that *another person* is committed to achieving the necessary quality outcome and will ensure they get the job done. This is stewardship.

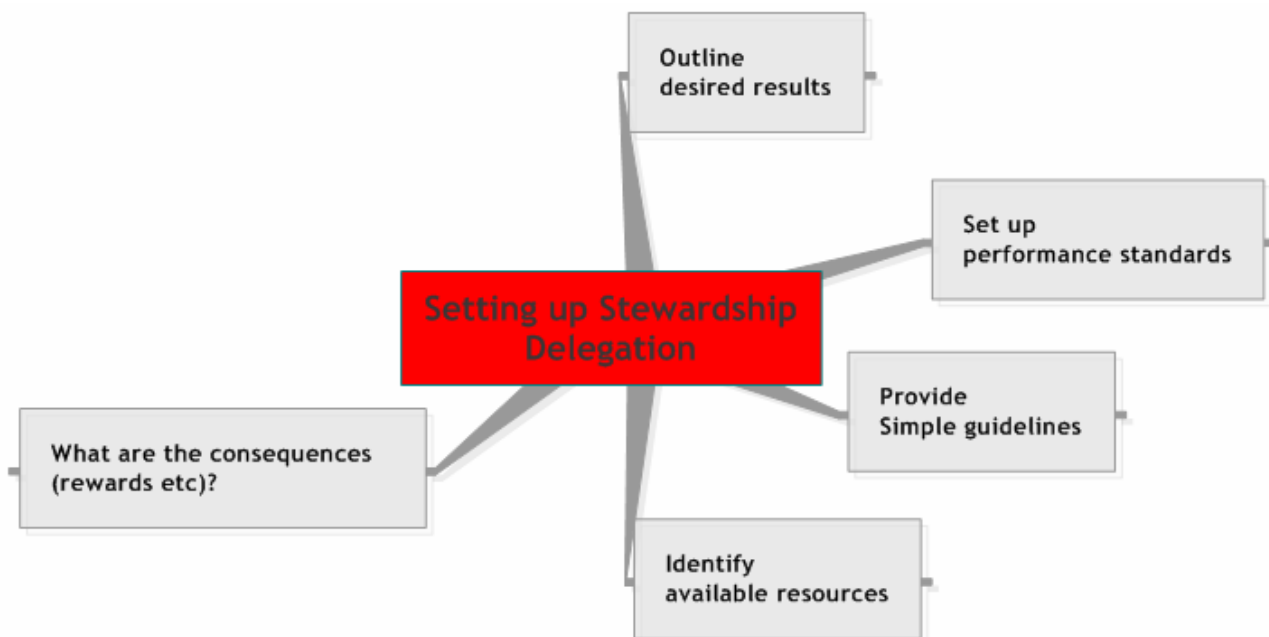
<p>Stewardship delegation</p>	<p>Depends on your steward's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-self awareness-responsibility-imagination & conscience <p>Depends on your</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-up front explanation
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Setting up stewardship

The issue of stewardship is covered in the Bible by the Parable of the Talents. I won't repeat the story but the bottom line is that left in charge of the store two out of three servants made the boss some profit while he was away. However the servant who just gave the boss back his original investment was thoroughly shafted by the boss on his return!

The striking feature of the story (which always upset me hearing it as a child) was how unfair it all was. The servants did not get any up front guidance about the boss's expectations. Reflecting on it now, my thought is that if the boss had set it up properly **all** his servants would have done what he wanted!

Stephen Covey has described how to set up this type of delegation. He lists five components



Let us look at this in more detail.

When you define the desired results talk specifically about *what* needs to be accomplished. Talk in terms of *what* and in terms of *results*. Do not talk about *how* or the *methods* you want used. Paint a picture of how things will be and say *when* you want the job completed.

Ask the steward to talk it all back to you. It is important that you get them to say how they *see* it, what they will *feel* about it and how they want to *hear* people talk about it. Using all these sensory features (feel etc) fixes the goal in their head.

The steward does the job how they want but within your guidelines. Your guidelines should be very simple and broad. You must not talk in detail about methods (that is gofer delegation). When you are setting the performance standards you can be specific about the required behaviours such as tidying up as you go, using so much of a specific product, being cheerful with the customers and so on.

So do not tell them exactly how to do things but do be clear about any absolute restrictions. You do give them must do's and must not do's. Covey has a nice way of putting this particular point.

If you know the failure paths of the job, identify them.

Be honest and open tell a person where the quicksand is and where the wild animals are. You don't have to reinvent the wheel every day. Let people learn from your mistakes or the mistakes of others. Point out the potential failure paths, what not to do, but don't tell them what to do.

*Keep the responsibility for results with them.
They should do whatever is necessary within the guidelines.*

You should clarify what **resources** (human, financial, technical or organizational) are available to help them achieve the results you need.

They need to know when and how you will **evaluate** the results and what will happen, ie the **consequences** after the evaluation. The consequences would usually be a carrot not a stick. In other words there may be financial rewards, public acknowledgement, and new roles. If at all possible tie the delegated project in to the known organizational goals and values.

Managing the process

If we want really great results we must add a sixth element - **MANAGE** the process. We have set up the stewardship but we should check how it is going and fine tune the performance. This means review the results, reflect on the process and coach on the job.

When coaching someone, the same restriction applies as when you set the job up. You should not *tell* the individual how to do the job better. The process of coaching means you first get their awareness that they need to do better. Then the answers and solutions come from the person who you are coaching.

The conversation might go like this.

- You So tell me, Sally. How did you feel about the? (the results)
- Sally I think it went pretty well
- You OK let's just check what we set up (I asked you to ...). Is that right?
Sally nods. Well did you actually achieve that? (raising awareness)
- Sally Well no... not exactly...
- You I know you tried really hard (encouragement). But I do need to have things up to standard. So have you any thoughts how you could do things differently so we get up to scratch?
- Sally Well I did think that if I did it the other way round. if I did the xxx first and the yyy second, things would go better.
- You That sounds like a good idea. Can we agree you will do it that way next time?
(Sally agrees)
Ok let's just check the process standard. I noticed that when you were doing the customer you seemed to be very busy rushing around and were not talking to them.
- Sally Well...yes...I didn't have everything to hand you see and it wasn't very familiar with the process.
- You How can you change things to do this better? Any ideas?
- Sally Well if I laid it all up first before the customer came in... that would help.
(at this point restrain yourself from screaming!)
And perhaps if I tried it out a couple of times on somebody here before I do the next customer I would be a bit slicker.
- You Sounds great ...when exactly will you do that?

So the management process looks like this.



This may sound rather long winded if your usual management style is command and control (sometimes called telling and shouting!). The benefit is the commitment and responsibility for self improvement that you generate.

Acknowledgement

*The concepts and terms of gofer and stewardship delegation comes from Stephen Covey's book *The Seven Habits of Successful People*.*