

## Quick Guide: Be a better delegator

Got a heavy workload? Still doing routine tasks because it's quicker to do it yourself? Worried someone else won't get it right or do it your way? Maybe you need to consider delegating more tasks and more often! Here are the **top ten tips** to help you delegate better:

- 1. Make a job breakdown of all the tasks you do.** Ask yourself **why** you do each task and why **you** should keep it. You may be surprised to discover just how much you do that someone else not only could but should be doing. (Or that nobody should be doing!)
- 2. Recognise what cannot be delegated.** These are tasks which a) are essential to your overall control, perhaps because of legal requirements; b) involve discipline over your team members and their colleagues; and c) are confidential security and policy matters restricted to your own level.
- 3. Everything else can be delegated!** So decide what to delegate and to whom: be truthful about your reasons for delegating.
- 4. Determine whether any training is required** and ensure this occurs before the task is handed over fully.
- 5. Define the responsibility/reasons/objectives of the task** and any limitations. Consider sharing a task with a staff member at first, if you are reluctant to let go entirely.
- 6. State the authority and limits for each task** and when they should refer to you. If not you, then who else they can go to.
- 7. Agree (do not impose) target times for completion** of each stage or the whole task. Check that your proposed deadlines really are what the firm requires, not simply your own personal timescales.
- 8. Plan feedback and follow ups** (eg when you expect a report back, or when they can come to you for advice). Also plan in when and at what stage they can take over any "shared" tasks.
- 9. Let the staff member have "ownership" of the task**, once agreed. Ask yourself "If I have all this control, how does it benefit me?" See if the answers you arrive at are consistent with the management values you hold.
- 10. Recognise and praise the work well done** by your team member, then go and seek out a new piece of creative or major planning work for yourself and which will allow you to achieve your full potential.

**Compiled by Des Whitehorn**