

Quick Guide: Do more of your own work!

Do you sometimes end up doing tasks that others should be doing, leaving yourself less time to focus on your own? If a member of your team comes to you with a query or a problem, do you hear yourself saying "leave it with me"? Which one of you is actually responsible for getting the task done? If this sounds like you, then here are the **top ten tips** to help you give them back their own work, and allow you to do more of yours:

1. **Set specific times** when the members of your team can come to you. This doesn't mean you are inaccessible at other times, but that this is their quality time to iron out issues and bring you up to date with progress.
2. **Wake up!** and hear yourself saying "I'll deal with it later" or "I'll get back to you on this". Either of these phrases will mean you do someone else's job for them.
3. **Learn to say** "What do you suggest?" instead. This way you encourage them to think for themselves and begin the process of empowering them to solve their own problems.
4. **Ask for a couple of alternative** solutions to verify they have thought through the problem and best outcomes.
5. **Ask for their recommendation** and if you approve, then sanction it: make them feel valued in their contribution. They are more likely to do this first, next time around.
6. **Set a check-up date** (see 1 above) so that you can praise their resolution of the issue or give further guidance if necessary.
7. **Empower them to find a solution** before emailing or telling you of the problem. Do this at your regular meetings with them so they know you want ways to move things forward rather than unload all their gripes, issues and problems on you.
8. **Tell other colleagues** who in your team to go to for specific queries and work. They will eventually learn to trust your team members' knowledge and "can do" attitude.
9. **Encourage your team** to go direct to others, rather than through you, for information or to negotiate solutions, to reduce your to-do list.
10. **Remember** that if you do say "leave it with me" the problem becomes yours. The team member then chases **you** for the answer, and the roles become reversed. They also can't do their own job until you give them the answer!

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