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with *Barbara Best*

Transcript: Effective Delegation

Delegation is an extremely important aspect of business leadership, and when executed correctly, it's a practice that should be used whenever possible. Here's my best tips to help you get more done through effective delegation.

Hi, I'm Barbara Best and this is Humans Working Remotely, a podcast where I'll show you how to meet the expanding needs of your organization by utilizing alternative solutions for operational staffing. Through expert insight and meaningful conversations with business professionals, we'll talk about common challenges and proven strategies that will provide you with more time to focus on your organization's mission, relationship building and other high value growth activities.

Did you know that there are many people out there that would rather overwork themselves than delegate a task? Either it's just easier or they don't trust someone else to do it right or they plain just don't feel like doing it; they have to end up fixing someone else's work anyway. These are just excuses. As a business owner or association executive, you cannot do it all and you shouldn't even contemplate it.

Tip number 1: make sure you plan ahead.

There is nothing more annoying than a team member waiting until the day before a deadline to flag that they need help on a task. Everyone on the team suddenly finds themselves in an awkward position and sometimes there just isn't the time to get everyone up to speed on what needs to get done. It's stressful, it's aggravating, and sometimes can make you that person. Please don't be that person.

The key is to never get to the point where you are that person. Always examine tasks ahead of time and consider if you will need help for any part of it. If you do need help, give your resources a head's up so they know that a delegated task may be on its way to them.

Number two: delegate the right tasks.

There are some tasks that simply cannot be delegated to others. They're either too variable, too high value to you, or you need lots of training or background info to do them. These are the tasks that you need to hold on to, while letting other tasks be delegated. Recurring tasks that are simple in nature are great to delegate because once you've trained someone, they can always take that task from you on a more permanent basis.

Number three: give examples of completed work.

One of the best ways to help someone succeed at a delegated task is to show them the end result you want to have. It's easier to problem solve if you provide a framework for reference, or something you can try to emulate. Sometimes it's more effective to share details visually.

If there's no previous example of the work you're delegating, you can always share videos, drawings, sketches, rough drafts, or mock ups. Anything that can give perspective to someone new to the task will be helpful in getting them to the end result.

Number four: don't delegate at random.

This is a big one. Every person on your team virtual or in house has different strengths. They will be most productive if you assign tasks to them that match those strengths. Avoid delegating work that doesn't fit the skill sets of your team members. Good leaders find positive ways to develop their team ways that don't include stressing them out by asking them to do something they don't have an aptitude for. Remember that if a team member is really good at what they do, and they enjoy it, the task will be done efficiently and effectively.

Number five: manage expectations.

When delegating a task, be extremely clear on what you expect, and what the finished product should look like. You must give people details when assigning them a task, or you might find that they're on a totally different page than you are. By then it might be too late to fix the problem and a deadline may get missed. If you delegate a task to someone and they come back to you with a completely wrong design or idea, it's not necessarily their fault; it may be a communications disconnect. Having someone verbally confirm the details of a task back to you is a great way to make sure that everyone is on the same page. If the task has a long duration, it will be worthwhile to create an implement a periodic check in, something like once or twice a week.

My sixth and final tip: is to please don't "Delegate Dump".

This is where you send out a large quantity of tasks all at once with little or no direction. This does no one any good and generally stresses everyone out. (Remember what I said in tip one, don't be that person). At best, it may initially alleviate your stress to get everything off your desk. However, as many questions for each task come in, you will be inundated and stressed out all over again. Instead, delegate a small amount of tasks to begin with; plan to have questions come back to you, plan to have time to answer those questions or provide training and plan time to review the work that's been completed. It's not just about getting it done. It's about getting it done right.

If you remember these six tips, you should hopefully avoid unnecessary stress and disappointment when you delegate. Delegation is an important teaching tool as well as a good time management tool. It should not be avoided or deemed "too hard". As with all things worth doing well, it takes time and patience.

In closing, I'd like to thank you so much for listening today. I hope this information was helpful, and I look forward to providing more. I'm Barbara Best, CEO of Virtual Works, Inc.

Here's a few action steps:

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“Are you struggling with getting things done? Are there projects always on the back burner? We can help! Take a moment to fill out our services questionnaire <https://forms.gle/MDZ88vGCfsL8KJku8> as a first step to get things off your plate!”



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