

Delegation QUICK TIPS

Why Delegate?

Delegation is an ethical responsibility leaders owe to themselves, those with whom they work, and their organization.

For yourself delegation...

- **Allows time for planning**
- **Allows time for organizing**
- **Allows time for other pursuits**
- **Teaches valuable lessons about how to work with and develop others**
- **Builds trust**
- **Encourages open communication**

For members delegation...

- **Motivates**
- **Builds self esteem**
- **encourages creative problem-solving**
- **Stimulates initiative**
- **Trains future leaders**
- **Builds trust**
- **Facilitates communication**
- **Stimulates creativity**
- **Allows significant contributions**

For the organization delegation...

- **Promotes perpetuation**
- **Opens new avenues of creativity**
- **Increases productivity**
- **Improves overall efficiency and effectiveness**

DELEGATION: A Parable

Once upon a time, there was a little red hen who owned a wheat field. "Who will help me harvest the wheat?" she asked. "Not I," said the pig. "I don't know how." "Not I," said the cow, "I'm too clumsy." "Not I," said the dog, "I'm busy with some other things." So the little red hen did it herself. "Who will help me grind the wheat into flour?" she asked. "Not I," said the pig. "That is another vocation in which I am untrained." "Not I," said the cow, "You can do it much more efficiently." "Not I," said the dog "I'd love to, but I'm involved in some matters of greater urgency. Some other time, perhaps." So she did it herself. "Who will help me make some bread?" asked the little red hen. Again all declined... so she did it herself.

That evening when guests arrived for her big dinner party, she had nothing to serve except bread. She had been so busy doing work that could have been done by others that she had forgotten to plan a main course, prepare a dessert, or even set the table.

Moral: A good leader will find a way to involve others to the extent of their ability. To do the whole thing yourself is to "chicken out!"

PRINCIPLES OF DELEGATION

- Assigning responsibility to others does not lessen your responsibility-it gives you the capacity to handle greater responsibility.
- Never assign a task to someone because the task is unpleasant to you.
- Delegate only if you have confidence that the member is capable of handling the task.
- When delegating, be sure to back up the member when his or her authority is called into question.
- Even though you may be able to do the task better or faster, delegating allows others to grow.
- Delegating often includes teaching someone how to do a task--what better way to ensure that others can run the group when you're gone?
- Delegating can be a significant motivator in retaining members as it gives them a sense of accomplishment when a task is successfully completed.
- Delegation is most successful when someone expresses an interest in the task, when he or she has a specific skill which would suit the task, or when he or she would benefit from the responsibility.

WAYS TO DELEGATE

Ask for volunteers in a meeting.

Appoint someone.

Assign the task to a committee.

Break up the job into logical parts and spread the work out to a few people.

Find out your members' interests, skills and time commitment--then find a task to suit them.

Create a project outline complete with deadlines with the person to whom you are delegating--then follow up.

DON'T BELIEVE THESE MYTHS:

"I could do it better and faster myself."

"I'm not doing my job if I have to ask someone to help."

"If someone wants to help, they'll tell me."

"I'm the only one who knows how to do it."

"If I do it, I know it will get done."

"If I delegate, I'll be giving up my authority."

Most of all, LET GO and let them do the work. Follow up to make sure details are being taken care of, but do not jump back in and take over. Give feedback to members on their performance.