

DO YOU NEED HELP DELEGATING MORE EFFECTIVELY?*

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TAKE THIS SELF-QUIZ AND FIND OUT

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Whether you work with others, or alone, delegating can dramatically increase how effectively you manage your time. (If you delegate improperly, however, it can be an enormous time drain.)

Even though it may be hard for some to give up total control and to delegate, the good news is that delegating is a time management skill that can be learned. But first you need to recognize if you even have a problem with delegating. Sure tip offs? First, working excessively long hours. Second, not getting enough of the important stuff done -- and you know what that is for your particular job or profession -- the projects, activities, or actions that you *should* be doing. The activities that bring in sales, income, new customers, or clients. The thinking stuff or even the client contact, if that's the most productive use of your time.

To find out if you could use help with delegating, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Are you working much longer hours than everyone else you know who is doing the same kind of work that you do?
2. Are you spending an inordinate amount of time each day on tasks that could easily be delegated such as routine correspondence, non-priority phone calls, and subsequently feeling yourself spread too thin?
3. Have you been feeling overwhelmed by how much work you have to do or as if you're heading for an ulcer?
4. Do you doubt you could select competent people to delegate to?
5. Do you dwell on past delegating mistakes or disasters?
6. Are you a perfectionist?
7. Has anyone told you that you always need to be in control -- of others, of situations, of tasks, of work or have you ever dreamed or wondered about how life could be more enjoyable if you could do *everything* yourself?
8. Are you unwilling to delegate the responsibility for the entire job, along with a specific task?
9. Are you missing too many deadlines even though you are working constantly as well as efficiently and effectively because there is simply just too much for you (one person) to do?
10. Have you been reprimanded or even fired over the issue of delegating?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of the above questions, you probably need help with delegating.

GUIDELINES FOR DELEGATING EFFECTIVELY

Based on my extensive research and observations, here are seven steps to becoming effective at delegating:

1. Decide what you should be delegating as well as what you are willing to delegate.
2. Take the time to carefully evaluate potential job candidates, whether for part-time, freelance, full-time, or even unpaid internship or volunteer help, so you pick the right person to delegate to.
3. Unless proven otherwise, trust those to whom you delegate.
4. Give clear and detailed verbal and written assignments and instructions.
5. Have definite "check points" for completion of a specific task or job and some system of on-going communication with those you delegate to.
6. Give praise and credit to the person to whom you are delegating.
7. If possible, delegate responsibility for a specific job that could be done from start to finish, not just one small task that would require your constant supervision.

For further discussion of delegating, including excerpted interviews, anecdotes, and examples, read *Creative Time Management for the New Millennium* (\$19.95, paperback; \$28.95 hardcover) by Dr. Jan Yager, available through all local or online booksellers including amazon.com. You will also find a discussion of other time management skills, such as organizing, finding your "hidden time," overcoming more than 20 time wasters such as procrastination, doing too much at once, poor planning, disorganization, and the 7 principles of creative time management,

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