

Quick Reference Card (QRC)

Best Practices for Delegating

Your delegating skills may need improvement if:

- You are regularly putting in extra hours on tasks “only you can do.”
- You second-guess colleagues’ decisions and rework their assigned tasks.
- You intervene in projects assigned to others.

Guidelines for delegating:

- Be clear about what you want done, when it should be done, and the expected results.
- Be prepared to do some coaching if needed.
- Monitor progress (schedule dates) and provide feedback.
- Keep lines of communication open, to be available as a resource.
- Build a shared sense of responsibility among the team.
- Focus on results, not on how tasks should be accomplished.
- Develop trust in less-skilled staff by providing structured assignments.
- Develop strong performers by assigning projects with high visibility.

Assigning the work:

- Make sure the person is capable of accomplishing the task.
- Clearly describe the task or project and how it fits into the big picture.
- Identify roles and responsibilities for the work.
- Discuss deadlines and resources.
- Establish standards of performance and accountability.

When the assignment is complete:

- Ask the employee how it went.
- Provide positive reinforcement for work done well.
- Use ongoing coaching or training as necessary.
- Seek employees’ input on their interests for future projects.

Source: Lisa J. Downs, *Effective Delegation*, American Society for Training and Development (ASTD).