Numark Core Leadership Module

Effective delegation

Session Objectives

By the end of this workshop you will be able to:

- explain the benefits of effective delegation

- determine suitable tasks and activities to delegate

- identify who will be the best person/s in their team to delegate specific tasks

- apply a step by step delegation process to ensure successful results

- build empowerment in the team

Why delegate?

"You can do anything, but not everything"

What are the benefits of effective delegation?

- Frees up time for you to spend on more important tasks!
- Builds a team both through morale and performance.
- Decisions will be taken nearer to the front-line, these decisions will often be faster and better as they are made by people dealing directly with them.
- Develops people in the team and builds their skills to take on more responsibility moving forward.

Delegation can be a win-win for you and team if done correctly.

Common reasons for not delegating

"I do the best job here, so I'll do it myself"

Really? This is one of the most common reasons for not delegating; we feel we are the only ones who can do it to the right standard. However have you ever tried different ways of doing it? People can learn how to match your exact standards, but they can also suggest better ways of doing something which could even improve things.

"It's just so much quicker to do it myself"

Potentially yes to start with, but this means you will always do it and never free that time up. It may take a bit more of your time up initially, but then moving forward that time will be free for you.

"He'll resent being asked – thinking I should just be doing it myself"

This is a big assumption to make. Being clear with the individual as to why you are delegating the task should help you overcome this fear.

"Delegation is risky! What if they make a mistake?"

It's only risky if you have not planned how you will delegate the job, who is the best person to take it on and what level of support they will require. It is pointless to worry about what 'could' happen and instead focus on how you can help them achieve the required outcome.

"I like doing that job myself"

Sometimes we simply don't delegate because we like doing something. However you have to look at your priorities and ask yourself is this really the best use of my time?

"My people are overloaded themselves – I can't ask them"

Fair enough, but why? Are they managing their time effectively, do they need some guidance? Who is overloading them, is it you? Or is it someone else? Is more resource required? Do you perhaps need to look at who does what in the team?

These are all common reactions to avoiding delegation. The belief that you can do something better, faster and with fewer mistakes can lead to a vicious cycle of too little time and too much to do.

The impact of not delegating

- You feel stressed/overloaded
- People in the team don't learn or develop new skills
- If you are NOT there, things simply don't get done
- People in team won't feel trusted, valued or sometimes even capable

Remember delegation is NOT abdication!

When you delegate to someone, you give them responsibility, but stay in the information loop and offer support. Abdicating is giving someone responsibility and then disappearing, only to reappear at the end and complain if it's done wrong!

What can you/can't you delegate?

Not everything can be delegated; there are **5 key questions** to ask yourself:

1. Is there someone else who has (or can be given) the necessary information or expertise to complete the task? There may be some tasks that only you have the qualifications or experience to be able to do.

2. Does the task provide an opportunity to grow and develop their skills?

3. Is this a task that will recur in the future?

4. Do you have enough time to delegate the job effectively? You may need time to train the individual, for questions, and for checking progress.

5. Is this a task I should delegate? There will be some things that only you can do, perhaps things linked to long term success (e.g. recruiting new team members).

The other things to consider are...

Project/task timelines and deadlines

- How much time is available to do this?
- What are the consequences of not completing the job to the required standard on time?

Your expectations of the results

- How important is it that the results are of the highest possible quality?
- Is an 'adequate' result good enough?
- Would failure be crucial?
- How much would failure impact on other things?

How do I choose who to delegate too?

It is important to **not always delegate to the same people** to fully utilise your resource and develop/motivate all your team. If you delegate too much to one person they will just be unhappy and stressed.

Focus on an individual **SKILL** and **WILL** level for a certain task. How capable are they of doing something and how motivated are they to do it? Ideally they should have high skill/high will, however to develop people it can also be good to delegate to those with low skill/high will as these can be people motivated to learn to achieve a good result.

Areas to consider:

Experience, knowledge and skills of an individual

- What knowledge, skills and attitude does this person already have?
- Do you have the time and resources to provide any training needed?

Individuals preferred work style

- How independent is this person?
- What do they want from their job?
- What are their long term goals/interests and how do these align with the work proposed?

Current workload of the person

- Do they have time to take on more work
- Will you delegating this task require reshuffling of other responsibilities and workloads?

What if they don't want to do it?

Ask yourself and them why? Are they fearful they won't know how? Are they too busy? Consider and agree any solutions with them to gain commitment because the more committed they are, the more likely they are to succeed.

If it is a larger task you could choose to delegate it to more than one person so there is shared responsibility.

The 10 step delegation process

Once you have identified the task and the right person to delegate to, follow this process to help achieve success

STEP ONE: Explain why you are delegating it to the person

- Sell it to them
- Explain the benefits it will bring
- Explain what they will be able to do as a result of it
- Tell them how appreciative you will be

STEP TWO: Specify the expected outcomes

- Establish and specify what the completed task should look like
- What's expected and where can they bring their own ideas in

STEP THREE: Establish a target completion date

- Agree the target and ask them how long they think it will take

STEP FOUR: Discuss how

- Ask them how they feel they can tackle it as this method gets more buy-in than simply giving them a set of instructions
- Encourage them to talk you through ideas they have
- Give them some latitude in how they choose to complete the task as long as the outcome is what you have specified

STEP FIVE: Identify resources required

- Time – do you need to re-allocate some of their workload to others?
- Equipment – anything they need?
- Money – is a budget required at all and how much?
- People – what other help may be needed and who is available?

STEP SIX: Decide how and when you will monitor progress

- Depends on complexity of task, their skills and experience and the risks of it going wrong.
- Establish checkpoints but avoid asking 'how's it going' every hour!

STEP SEVEN: Identify anyone else who needs to be informed

- The team – to avoid gossip and assumptions!
- Other stakeholder or internal/external contacts who may be involved

STEP EIGHT: Acknowledge effort

- Review achievement and celebrate success, remember to say 'thank you''
- Assign credit where it is due, they may have done the task for you, but the success is theirs.

STEP NINE: Keeping control

- Once you have worked through the process, ensure you keep your promises and review progress as agreed. It is getting the right balance of support. If they are struggling consider what further support they may need?

STEP TEN: Set aside time to review

- When delegated work is delivered back to you, set aside enough time to review it thoroughly. If possible, only accept good quality. If you accept work you are not satisfied with, your team member does not learn how to do the job properly and worse still you will have more work to do again!

Although delegation can seem a bit time consuming, risky and potentially hard work initially the outcomes and results in the business moving forward will more than make up for it.

What if you only want to delegate a very short/simple task?

Perhaps you only want to delegate a small task with very few instructions, here you can use the PAT model instead to still ensure you get the required outcome as follows:

Purpose – Why are you asking them to do it?

Actions – What do they need to do? Check their understanding

Timeframe – When does it need to be done by?

Empowerment

Sometimes a crucial key to building your team and freeing up some time might not be about delegation but 'empowering staff' to deal with a situation and build their confidence.

What is the difference between delegation and empowerment?

Delegation is something that is controlled by the person who manages the team whereas empowerment hands control over to the team members to make their own decisions. In addition it means more ideas regarding ways of working and doing things are introduced to the business.

Whilst a fully empowered team can take quite a long time to put in place, you can start small to begin with to encourage empowerment in your team and grow from there. Consider the following example:

"A customer comes in and just says they would like to speak to the pharmacist"

Does the customer always need to speak to the pharmacist or could a member of the team assist?

A colleague can be empowered to reply "how can we help you today?"

They can then determine if they do need to get a pharmacist or if they can deal with the query themselves.

This type of empowerment can lead to increased customer satisfaction too, as their enquiry can be dealt with quicker and possibly in a better way.

Empowering staff can be a valuable technique, but also comes with the same 'risks' of delegation. It will still be a learning process and mistakes will more than likely occur at some point and need to be managed.

Steps to encourage empowerment

Develop people's skills through coaching and training

Empowerment comes when employees have the feeling that they can handle their job and have enough knowledge to complete their tasks.

Display a positive and enthusiastic attitude

Nothing is more damaging to empowerment than negativity and passivity. You can motivate through empowerment when your employees believe that you believe in them.

Listen to employee suggestions and implement the ones that could work

Being heard and having your opinion shape the face of a business can be a very empowering experience for an employee. They know then that they are valued and important to the company as a whole.

Avoid harsh reactions to failure. No one is perfect

If an employee makes a mistake, rather than reacting harshly, find the good in their actions and efforts and discuss what they could have done differently for next time. Coaching them to move forward will help.

Set boundaries for empowerment

Although this might sound like a contradiction, your employees will need to be clear on areas where they can be autonomous and thinks they are not permitted to do. e.g. perhaps you are happy for them to deal with general customer complaints, but if anything involves OTC or prescription medicines you would prefer them to pass to yourself. Make it clear with them why you have set certain boundaries.

Empowerment just like delegation is a tool that has a range of benefits to yourself, your customers and the business and one to be embraced effectively.