

# THE DELEGATION SHUFFLE

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It has been almost thirty years since I trained my first manager and many things are still the same. The field of management has improved tremendously, yet some things remain the same. Everywhere I go, I see the same problem with delegation.

Management students learn about delegation in the university. Later when they are employed, their employer has seminars or training courses on delegation, but many seem to miss one vital point; balance.

Balance is important. You, the manager, are delegating because you have too much to do. You are off balance. So what do you do?

The manager will look for the best qualified employee to delegate some duties. Most of the managers do an excellent job of evaluating which employee is best qualified to perform the duty then they delegate that duty to the employee.

Often this will motivate the employee to perform even better. This is where the manager becomes blind. Here is the downfall to the manager.

Usually, the manager sees how well the employee is doing and praises the employee. This is great. The manager should praise the employee to encourage the employee, but afterwards the manager will often delegate more to the employee. Here comes the point of being out of balance.

Now, if you remember when you were an employee, you will remember that you were not going to complain about the amount of work you were doing, especially after the manager had just praised you for being such a great employee.

So, you accepted more work and continued doing your own work plus the delegated work. After a few months or more, 'burn out' starts to set in. You feel overwhelmed at work. It is no longer fun or enjoyable and then you quit. There was no balance.

If the manager had learned the 'Delegation Shuffle', he would not have lost this 'key' employee. He would have maintained balance for everyone.

The Delegation Shuffle is very simple, once you have found the right person to receive your delegated duties; you evaluate which duties that person has that can be given to someone else.

Normally, we delegate our duties to someone who does not have the authority to delegate any of their duties to anyone else. So, that person becomes overloaded (out of balance) with duties that they can not get rid of. Therefore, we, as good managers, must do the work for them.

The manager must evaluate his 'key' employee and find which duties can be given to someone else then evaluate which person would be best qualified to receive those duties.

In other words, the manager might have to go through the delegation process two or three times before everything is operating properly, before everyone is in balance. Though it sounds like a lot of work, it will pay great dividends.

First, you will save your key employee from 'burn out' and build loyalty in the relationship. The key employee will see that you trust him with more, important duties and will try to prove he is worthy. He will also see that you care about his well being and will respect you for that. You will build a great deal of loyalty from these points.

Secondly, you will build respect with the other employee you assigned duties to. He will see that you trust him more and will respond.

Lastly, you will not have to hire a replacement for the burnt out 'key' employee or look for a new key employee. This will make your job easier in the long run.

You will also build two employees and reduce your work load all at the same time. This is the Delegation Shuffle. It takes a little more planning on the part of the manager, but the benefits out weigh the extra work.

So, the next time you are thinking about delegating work to one of your employees, think about their work load. Think about the Delegation Shuffle. Think about how you can increase the productivity and lifespan of everyone by moving a few duties around.