



Why delegation is the secret to a great holiday



With the main holiday season now upon us, it's important to make sure you take a complete break from work knowing that some, or all, of your work can continue without you being around. This can be achieved by the timely delegation of tasks to your co-workers, or direct reports, before you go.

Evidently, it's our lack of understanding about what delegation actually means that's our downfall. This can lead to work not being touched whilst we're away and of course that complete loss of holiday spirit when you return to the workplace and realise everything is exactly the same as it was when you left!

Simply dumping work onto someone else isn't delegating. So instead of casually asking a colleague, "can you handle this while I'm away," you need to empower them.

Follow these tips and your team will be eager to get on with the tasks you have left for them.

1. **Identify work to delegate.** Not everything can be delegated and not everything will be a priority to be completed in your absence. Make sure that what you're handing over is clear and easy to understand, and will also support their development.
2. **Make it smaller.** Break down the work that needs to be done into separate parts, provide guidance and stress the obvious benefits for their own job or personal growth.
3. **Define the results.** Make sure any projects you hand over come with proper context, goals and a clear tie into objectives.
4. **Play to your team's strengths.** Match each part of the work to the person who firstly is the most suitable for the job in terms of skills and attitude, and secondly who is most capable of getting it done. These are not same things.

5. **Invest in training.** If you feel any individuals you've selected might need additional resources, coaching or training to enable them to complete the work effectively, then organise it well in advance.
6. **Clear communication.** Avoid micromanaging and getting in the way, but make sure that the person you're delegating to feels comfortable asking questions, providing progress updates and reporting results on a regular basis.
7. **Be patient.** Of course, you may be able to do the task you are delegating quicker than they can, but that's because you've probably done it many times before. Be patient and let people go at their own speed. Once they are more familiar with it, they will get tasks done faster and you will save time in the long run.
8. **Allow for failure.** You might be a perfectionist but it's unrealistic to think that your way is the only way to do something. By giving someone the opportunity to learn through failure, you're empowering them to experiment with new methodology, approaches and ideas that may ultimately increase efficiencies.
9. **Two-way feedback.** Deliver feedback to your employees after the tasks you've delegated are complete. Highlight what they did well, as well as what they could have done differently, or improved on. It's also good to ask for feedback about how you delegated, and if there are areas in which you could do better in the future.
10. **Appreciation and recognition.** Remember to thank and credit those who have worked hard in your absence. Not claiming success for yourself is important here. Reference the teamwork involved and how they have positively impacted the business - this will increase the chances of people wanting to help you out on future work.

Delegating isn't easy- it needs practice. The better you become at allocating the right people with the right tasks and responsibilities, the more effective you'll become as a manager. For further help and advice call 07734 080073.