

BALANCING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

BUILDING A LEADER IN THE WORKPLACE

BY JAY PERRY

Delegation is very much misunderstood. Some think that it means giving jobs that they are entirely qualified to do to others. In some cases, that may be true, but the reality is it is about finding—or as you will see, creating—the most qualified individual on your team and giving the job to her.

That whole concept of delegation strikes fear into the hearts of the usual leader because, as I have often seen, supervisors fear for their own existence if they do not know the specifics of a job. For an organization that understands that real power—the power to excel beyond what the competition can accomplish—is not held by one person on the team, but rather by the team members as individuals who are guided by the leader, this idea could not be farther from the truth.

Those in leadership roles must undergo continuous monitoring of themselves, assuring they are constantly and consistently handing out jobs that would normally take them from the other duties they have. Choosing the right person can be a matter of degrees such as individual acumen due to experience, or specific training. But it can also be working with people to help

develop them in their abilities to take on more or broaden their scope of expertise.

When recently working with a leader within a very progressive company, we made a simple rule: whatever he was doing in the company, he needed to have at least one person beside him so they could

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learn. That seems a bit onerous when you consider all the phone calls and in-person meetings this man has, but it is one of the ways that knowledge-transfer is facilitated.

His learned habits and style over the years have made him and the company very successful. As he approaches retirement age, he has made it a point to accelerate the transfer. So, when he talks with an employee, works on solving a challenge, calls a client or discusses matters with other business partners, he has one of the designates with him so they can witness not only what he does, but also how he does it. He also de-

velops briefs with the individual so that they may receive even deeper insights into his thinking and those things that we would consider “second nature”. Don't forget that second nature to us experienced folks was learned over time. Why expect your people to go through the same steep learning curve that we did? It would be foolish.

This system he has developed is part of how he gains confidence in others when it comes to delegating tasks. What does the delegation do for a leader? Very simply, it allows us to look at other things, do research, have conversations about trends and future challenges as well as reflect.

In other words, you broaden the impact you have on your own company when you have an organized and thoughtful approach to delegation and the training that can help you win the benefits. That's how you stay the one who's driving! **CRM**



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