

10-Point Delegation Checklist

Here's a 10-point checklist to make sure your delegation projects go smoothly and have the desired success.

Note: 5 of the items on the checklist apply to what you must do before you ever start delegating a task – the remaining 5 points apply to things to check while the delegation project is in process.

Before You Start

- Have you selected the right task or project to delegate?**
A strategic duty your superiors expect you to take on yourself may not be the right task to delegate.
- Have you selected the right person to delegate the task to?**
Maybe the person is ambitious and needs a new challenge to keep him or her motivated; maybe it's something that suits his or her temperament because it requires a detail orientation – whatever it is, there must be a reason why this person has been selected.
- Have you rehearsed your presentation speech?**
You're going to sell this person on the benefits of taking on this extra work. What's in it for them? Why should they buy this presentation from you?
- Have you defined what success looks like for this task?**
If you don't know what constitutes success in your own mind, you won't be able to communicate it to the person you're delegating it to.
- Do you have a Plan B?** If a train runs off the track, do you have a Plan B? Management often consists of anticipating unintended consequences and figuring out what to do next.

During And Throughout The Project

- Have you clearly communicated deadlines?**
Do the delegates know when the deliverables are due and have they accepted those deadlines as fair and possible to meet?
- Have you clearly communicated lines of authority?**
Mass confusion can arise if the delegate does not know the limits of his or her new authority and starts ordering other people around who haven't been told they need to report to the new delegate. A little bit of authority often goes to people's heads. Clearly spell out the limits of their authority.
- Have you sufficiently empowered them?**
If you don't give them some rope to figure out how to do things on their own and if you keep hovering over them to make sure they do every step exactly the way you want it done, you will become a notorious micromanager and will demoralize your employees.
- Have you established regular check-in points?**
If you wait to check in with them until an hour before deadline, you may get a nasty surprise. Do yourself and the delegate a favor, and check in at regular intervals just to make sure they're on the right track and no snags have developed.
- Have you instilled enough confidence in them?**
If you have conveyed any doubt about their ability to perform the task adequately, they'll probably fail. If you've given them confidence and training, they'll do well. Whatever you expect – you'll probably get it.