

4 Steps to Creating a Great Delegation System



Delegation can be difficult for many business leaders – even scary! When you delegate, you are handing over responsibilities. Often, these could be tasks that you performed well for years.

Wouldn't it be better for the company to just continue the tasks yourself?

Rarely.

Delegation can improve the productivity of a company. You can complete work faster and grow branches of the business. It can even help you keep your most valued employees by giving them new challenges. If delegation is a struggle then follow these five steps:

1. Trust Your Employees

The first step to delegation is trusting your employees. If you cannot trust your employees you will never be able to delegate.

Ask your employees if they would like to take on more responsibility. Tell them if this could lead to a raise or promotion. You can even make this part of your employee development plan.

2. Establish Your Priorities

Create a priority system for delegating tasks. You can divide tasks into categories – for example, urgent, important, and low tasks. Delegate the urgent tasks first.

3. Hire If Necessary

No delegation systems work without a strong team. You may determine that you need to hire after you establish priorities and the status of your employee.

As a Specialized Quality and Regulatory Recruiter, I have helped business leaders hire productive employees to handle delegation, and to upgrade the caliber of their team.

4. Include Instructions

It would be great if your employees could read your mind. Unfortunately, most businesses don't have that technology! Include detailed instructions to get your delegated tasks finished correctly and also set clear expectations. Eventually your employees will not require lengthy instructions which can save you hours, or even days of work.

What to Include in Your Instructions

- Detailed Milestones
- Deadlines
- Small Tasks

Delegating is a major step for any business leader. If you feel you need to add to your team, contact me to discuss your needs and we can create a solution plan for you. Contact me at jking@rfocus.com or (541) 639-3501.

5 Reasons Why Your Employees Are Quitting



Any business owner knows the anxiety when great employees quit their jobs. We invested training, resources, and time. Then your employee puts in their two weeks notice.

Why did this happen?

This article explains some of the top reasons that employees quit their jobs. Hold an exit interview to discover where your employees were dissatisfied.

Low Compensation

Money is one of the most persuading factors for business decisions. This includes wage. Your employees want to be paid what they deserve. If your incentive does not fit the employee's effort you could experience a high turnover rate. Especially in a tight market for talent where your employees may be getting contacted about opportunities that are offering a better compensation package. Retraining, relocating, and hiring is a hefty cost for the company. In the end, paying your employees less could be costing your company more.

Negative Environment

Bullying, screaming, talking down, mismanagement, hostility, or more subtle forms of poor communication are all forms of a toxic work environment. As a business leader, you should not accept this environment as "what it is."

What is the root of the problem?

If an employee is spreading gossip then speak with them. If the problem is ongoing, you will probably experience high turnover in your workplace. Another common problem I hear about is lack of recognition or appreciation for the job your employee is doing. Showing appreciation goes a long way to building loyalty

with your employees.

No Opportunity for Growth

According to a survey by TinyPulse, Only 26% of employees surveyed felt they had adequate opportunities for career growth. The managers of these same employees were more optimistic: 50% of managers surveyed felt there was adequate opportunity for professional development at their organizations. This is a major disconnect!

The miscommunication can lead to a high turnover rate. Employees want to work for a company where they can advance their career. To avoid conflict, provide job trainings and promote new openings internally.

Poor Management

Poor management impacts the entire organization. Employees become unproductive, unmotivated, and the company is unable to fulfill it's potential.

The average organization is 50% as productive as it should be, thanks to less-than-optimal leadership practices.

Problems of Poor Management

- Operate Bad Meetings
- Employees Not Recognized
- Employees Afraid of Losing Job
- Stressful, Negative Work Environment
- Hire the Wrong Candidates

Pursue Another Passion

Sometimes, the career just does not fit your employee's passion. They may decide to move onto another career that is a better fit. Don't take this rejection personally. Wish them good luck.

It is inevitable that your employees will quit. However, if you are experiencing high turnover it is important to discover why this is occurring. I am a specialty Recruiter for Regulatory and Quality professionals and can help find you the right candidate the first time, and can give you some insights on how to keep the employees you have. Contact me at jking@rqfocus.com or (541) 639-3501.

The Importance of Asking Questions at Work



Asking questions can be the simplest and most effective ways of learning. Innovators, brilliant minds, and curious thinkers ask questions. If you are not asking questions, you could be missing out on opportunities.

As a business leader, information is imperative. You need to understand what your employees and clients need, as well as where your organization can improve.

Not convinced? Learn why asking questions can be imperative in the workplace:

Questions Encourage Creative Thinking

An innovative company is always coming up with new ideas. Brainstorming sessions are a productive method to inspiring new ideas. Questions can create the creative thinking that you need for a great brainstorming session. Open-ended questions are some of the most efficient, such as;

- I wonder if/why...

- What would happen if...
- In what ways can we...

Questions Create Reflection

There are periods where we all just focus on getting the job done. However, if those periods turn into years, we can lose the spark that makes us creative leaders. Constantly ask yourself questions, such as;

- Why are you in business?
- What is your favorite part of your job?
- How did you create change this year?

Questions Start Change

It's easy to get stuck in a rut. During those periods, we know that we need to make changes but we can't find where to make it work. Your questions could open a new way of thinking that keeps your company innovative.

Now that you know why to ask questions, it's important to recognize how to ask. You don't want your important question to go unnoticed.

- Watch your tone by keeping it casual.
 - Use follow-up questions by focusing on listening.
 - If you are looking for information, start with the tough questions. If you want to build relationships, start with the easy questions.
 - Keep the questions open-ended.
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How-To Overcome Common Fears at Work



Everyone strives for a job that they love. However, even our dream careers develop workplace fears. If we become focused on our fears, we can lose creativity, productivity, and develop stress. It's important to address our concerns. Fear could start impacting your job performance.

The Fear of Being Fired

Whether you love or hate your job, we all have a fear of getting fired.

How will we support our family? Will we be able to find another job? Will our new job make pay enough to support our lifestyle?

As a Recruiter, I help find you jobs that fit your skills where you can feel secure. Nevertheless, if you are scared of being fired, here are a few tips for you to help you overcome your fears.

How-To Overcome Your Fear of Being Fired

Firstly, assess your work situation. Is there a legitimate reason that you should be afraid of being fired? Some signs could be your boss being critical of your work, you are no longer asked to attend important meeting or your workload subsides.

If you can't find any reason, ask your manager for feedback on your work. Explain to your boss that you want to perform at the best of your abilities. Your boss will probably be impressed by your initiative.

The Fear of Not Receiving the Promotion that You Deserve

Everyone starts at the bottom of the ladder in their career. With hard work, you can increase your position to manager, supervisor, or even CEO. Almost everyone who dreams of climbing the ladder, fears that the “other guy” will get the promotion.

As a recruiter, I help employees find companies that have potential for growth.

How-To Overcome the Fear of Not Receiving the Promotion that You Deserve

Make it difficult for the organization to replace you. Always go through trainings to improve your job skills. Participate in brainstorming sessions. Be innovative! Be willing to help out in other areas and possibly get cross trained in those areas. It makes you more valuable to the company and your boss.

The Fear of Inadequacy

We can easily feel inadequate when our tasks begin to pile. We feel overwhelmed and question whether we can handle our workload.

At some point, someone will discover that we are incompetent.

This chronic self-doubt causes stress which decreases our productivity.

How-To Overcome the Fear of Inadequacy

Inadequacy can often develop from lack of communication. If you do not know what your boss wants then you are more likely to feel that you cannot complete the job well. Start by attaining a clear vision.

Ask your boss, “what would success look like in this project?” You can work confidently now that you know the company’s vision.

The Fear of Not Fitting In

Everyone wants to be liked. Fitting in creates a more comfortable and fun workplace. However, if fitting in is an obsession, you might not value yourself.

How-To Overcome the Fear of Not Fitting In

Start by being friendly to everyone. You will probably receive a positive response which will boost your confidence. After you boost your confidence, participate in brainstorming sessions. Impacting the office can also increase the chance of a promotion or raise.

7 Tips to Calm Your Nerves When Public Speaking



Just thinking about public speaking can make our palms sweat. Inevitably, leadership positions require speaking to large groups.

If this sparks anxiety for you then you are not alone!

3 out of 4 people suffer from public speaking phobia. More specifically, 75% of females and 73% of men.

It is important to take control of public speaking anxiety. Incorporate the following tips into your speech instead of turning down your next public speaking

opportunity.

Visualize Your Success

We need to “see” our success to manifest our goals. Visualize yourself presenting your speech. You are standing in front of the crowd, calm and collected. You provide your audience with the information with they need, receive questions, and sit down. You must believe that you can be confident to be confident.

Know Your Audience

Many people that despise public speaking feel confident with one-on-one discussions. If this is you, make your presentation feel more like a conversation. You can do that by knowing your audience.

- What are their professions?
- Why are they at your presentation?
- What problems are they facing in their career?

The more you connect with your audience, the more comfortable you will feel.

Memorize Your Opening

The beginning of your speech often creates a rush of adrenaline. Learning the first few lines can decrease your adrenaline levels to speak confidently. You start strong despite your nervousness.

Practice, Practice, Practice!

When someone is learning an instrument or training for a marathon, they put in hours of practice. However, many people do not practice for speeches.

You will feel more confident, prepared, and knowledgeable if you practice for your speech. Memorize the opening and key points. Create an outline. Prepare a visualization but do not read from the material.

Adjust to Your Surroundings

Every venue is different. The lights could be brighter. The microphone might be on a stand versus headphones. Some venues seat hundreds of people.

Know your venue before you give your speech. That way you will be aware of distractions that could increase your nervousness during the presentation.

Practice Positive Affirmation

Stop being so hard on yourself! The audience won't notice if you say your opener differently or skip a point. Repeat positive affirmation throughout your speech (in your head) to appear positive and confident.

Positive Affirmation for Speeches

1. I enjoy presenting and sharing my ideas.
2. Today, I am making a difference by being brave.
3. I am confident and comfortable.
4. I am a powerful, inspiring speaker.
5. My words have a powerful effect on people.

Take Deep Breaths

We rarely think about our breath in daily conversations. However, when we stand in front of an audience, we can easily forget to breathe heightening nerves and causing us to gasp.

Speak slowly and take the time to breathe. Deep breaths will be easier if you maintain correct posture. Speak as you are inhaling and exhaling. Pause at the bottom of your exhale and top of your inhale.

Practice this exercise before your presentation to ensure that you are comfortable with the technique.

Finding Work/Life Balance in the Summer



Memorial Day is this weekend! This means, it is a three-day weekend for many of us. As you launch into summer it is important to develop a great work/life balance. A healthy balance helps you to spend more time doing the activities that you love.

The following tips can help you build a balance to enjoy your summer while working productively:

Schedule Your Day

We often fail to schedule our day or modify our schedules when we get distracted. To work efficiently, create a schedule (every day!) and stick to it. This could cut hours of work.

Tips to Schedule Your Day

1. Morning Ritual - Create a routine that makes you feel best throughout the day. Get up half an hour early to exercise or meditate. Eat a healthy breakfast.
2. Plan Your Daily Tasks- You can save time if you have a plan for the day. Know what tasks are a priority and create a Google Calendar to organize your day.

3. Plan Your Meetings in the Afternoon - Get the important tasks finished in the morning and save the afternoon for meetings and important phone calls.

Stay Healthy

Do you often miss your kid's summer baseball games or concerts in the park from working long hours? Maintaining a healthy body can help you cope with work's pressures to prevent working more than 40 hours per week.

Tips to Stay Physically Healthy

- Eat Healthy
- Avoid Stimulants
- Exercise Regularly
- Get Plenty of Sleep

Unplug After Work

Most of us are connected to our smartphones. We even use our phones as alarm clocks. However, when we are connected to our devices, it can prevent us from being present with our friends and family.

After you leave work, put your phone to the side. If you can't ditch your phone, turn off email notifications and put it on silent while you go on the mountain bike, golf game, or hike with your family.

Do not answer work calls after you leave the office. Your friends and family will appreciate your presence.

Delegate Your Tasks

We often take responsibility for tasks "just to get it done" or "because we can". Eventually, accepting too much responsibility leads to burnout. You will then get

stressed, tired, and overwhelmed.

It's okay to delegate tasks. Hire a contractor to avoid the costs of a full-time employee or for temporary projects. You can hire contractors online from websites such as Fiverr and Upwork. And if you are in Regulatory Affairs or Quality in the San Francisco Bay Area, I can help you find contract help as well.

Take a Vacation

It's summer! Have some fun! Go on that much needed vacation. A vacation helps you feel refreshed.

Encourage your employees to take a vacation also. Your employees will be more well-rested and energized to enjoy their work. Happy employees generate a productive company.

How-To Avoid Burnout at Work



When emails pile up, project are late, and the phone is ringing, you will probably get burned out. We have all been there. It's tempting to continue pushing through your work. However, pausing to take care of yourself can allow you to refresh your body and work more productively.

Robert Epstein of the American Psychological Institute found that "25% of our happiness hinges on how we manage our stress." If you are stressed from your work day, it's important to discover techniques to prevent burnout. The following

tips can help decrease stress from work load:

Schedule Free Time

43% of Americans don't use their vacation days.

Who can use your vacation days when there is so much work to do?

This is an unhealthy mindset! The human mind is not conditioned to work 10 hour shifts productively. Eventually, you will get drained.

Make time for family, friends, working out, traveling, or pursuing a hobby. Scheduling free time creates balance so you can enjoy your life and appreciate your work.

Take Breaks

We can easily develop tunnel vision when our work load is heavy. However, we need to break out of our routine to prevent burn out. Take a break. Go on a walk, meditate, take a long lunch, or work a half day.

Exercise

You have probably heard of "runner's high". This phrase is not a marketing scheme to sell athletic gear. "Runner's high" is the release of endorphins which is the body's feel-good chemical. Physical activity can help you unwind a stressful day.

According to WebMD, regular exercise has been proven to:

- Reduce stress
- Ward off anxiety and feelings of depression
- Boost self-esteem
- Improve sleep

Plan Your Day

Planning allows you to fight stress before it starts. Schedule your daily tasks to plan your day effectively. Designate time for checking emails and highlight crucial tasks. Schedule a mid-day break. A plan can help you preserve momentum and cut hours from your work day.

Google Calendar is a helpful tool for scheduling. The tool is free and can be downloaded as an app on your phone.

Sleep

Sleep is an essential human function. According to the American Psychological Association, sleep deprivation can affect mood, judgement, and memory. Without sleeping seven to nine hours nightly, you might not have the focus that your job requires.

How To Achieve a Healthy Work Environment



A healthy work environment is important to your team and can be achieved fairly easily. It boosts productivity and happiness and increases employee retention. If you have not created a healthy workplace, then it is time to make that effort, especially in this tight market for talent. Learn what creates a healthy workplace

and start making improvements for the future of your company.

Offer Rewards and Incentives for Superior Performance

Rewarding employee performance is strategic. You must offer desirable incentives that fit the company's budget. If strategized correctly, rewards can lead to a more motivated and positive team.

There are many types of benefits that you can offer employees. This includes bonuses, gift cards, and event tickets. You may choose to reward an entire team or specific team member for achieving a goal.

See *20 Techniques for Acknowledging Your Employee's Good Work* for more ideas on rewards and incentives.

Choose Stimulating Paint Colors

The workplace can have a big impact on attitude, and colors can profoundly affect productivity. Angela Wright is a world-renowned color psychologist. She developed the scientifically tested color-affect system. According to Wright's research, the intensity of a color determines whether it is stimulating or soothing. More saturated colors are best for the office place.

Wright's theory states that blue is connected to the mind, green to balance, yellow to emotion, and red to body.

The most obvious answer to a productive work place would be blue. However, you might want to incorporate green trim to create balance.

Offer Stand-Up Desks

Stand up desks have become part of many company's employee wellness programs. For example, Google provides standup desks for all employees. Facebook also has more than 250 employees using standup desks. Even I use a flexible desk to allow sitting or standing.

Research by Texas A&M Health Science Service Center concludes that employees in a call center are 46% more productive when using a standup desk.

Benefits of Standup Desk

- Improves Focus
- Increases Energy
- Reduces Back Pain

Be Flexible on Timing

Different people are more productive during various parts of the day. Some people perform better with a morning workout. Others get in early but need a 1.5 lunch break to renew their day. If your company's processes allow flexibility with timing, give it to your employees. It also helps attract people that may have a longer commute when hiring.

Allow a 2-hour window for morning arrival. You can also allow extended lunch breaks. Figure out what is right for the company and be as flexible as possible to your employee's lifestyles.

Communication Skills

The ability to communicate effectively within a company is essential. The skill prevents misunderstandings, which leads to errors and missed deadlines.

In our digital age, companies often communicate over email, text, and phone. Do not underestimate the significance of meetings to prevent confusion.

Tips to Communicate Well

- Practice Active Listening
- Use Strong Eye Contact
- Explain Tasks and Provide Detailed Handout or meeting agenda with time targets
- Speak in a Friendly Tone
- Be Open-Minded to Other Opinions

- Accept and Encourage Feedback

Improve the Lighting

Studies show that office lighting can play a role in employee productivity.

“Effectively lit and attractive environments enhance your image, help you recruit and retain high-value employees, and increase the total value of your facility.”

Philips Systems

To effectively light your office, incorporate natural light. If your workspace does not have windows then use broad spectrum lightbulbs. Broad spectrum produces the most similar affect as natural light.

How-To Reset a Bad Work Day



We all have bad days at work. Sometimes, our bad days initiate from a missed deadline, late arrival, or office politics. You could also have just woken up cranky.

Before you get too discouraged, know that you can reset any bad day. The following five tips can help you reset your day.

Communicate with Person that You Have Had Problems

Poor communication is a frequent reason for stress. Miscommunication can lead to confusion and anxiety. If your stress is related to another coworker, start by confronting them with your issue. The issue might not be as bad as you think and by getting some resolution or understanding to the problem you decrease the stress.

Emails work if your stress is regarding clarifying a project. For greater problems, you should consider a one-on-one meeting where you use polite language and encourage feedback. A group meeting could be necessary for more serious conflicts.

Finish Your Priority Tasks

When we have stacks of work, we often forget to prioritize. Unfortunately, when we do not prioritize, we can miss deadlines and turn in insufficient work. Prioritizing is essential to decrease work related stress and improve focus.

To reset a stressful work day, make a list of all the tasks that you need to complete. Figure out what needs to be completed immediately. To avoid this problem again, prioritize your tasks at the beginning of the week. You can keep track on Google Calendar or iCal.

Get Some Vitamin D

Vitamin D, or the “happy vitamin”, is essential to improving mood. The essential vitamin can be obtained from the sun. An estimated one billion people in the United States are Vitamin D deficient. If you work in a cloudy climate or have long office hours, you probably do not receive the vitamin D that your body needs.

To reset a bad work day, go on a walk outside during your lunch break. “Approximately five-to-30 minutes of sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. at least twice a week to the face, arms, legs, or back without sunscreen” is sufficient, according to the National Institutes of Health’s vitamin D fact sheet. You should always wear sunscreen if you are in the sun for a prolonged period of

time.

A vitamin D supplement can also help severe deficiencies.

Listen to Music

Next time you are in a bad mood at work, put on headphones and listen to your favorite song. Music arouses emotions and stimulates your mind.

Valerie N. Stratton, PhD, and Annette H. Zalanowski, of Penn State University, Altoona, studied college student's responses to music when studying. The students kept a two-week music listening diary that included their moods.

The findings of the study concluded that students were more optimistic, joyful, friendly, and calm after listening to music. Every positive mood, except mood, was elevated according to their study.

Smile

"Fake it until you make it!" We hear that phrase in business often. However, faking a smile can also improve your mood, reduce stress, and lower heart rate.

When you are stressed at work, force a smile on your face. You may feel strange at first but smiling activates areas of the brain associated with reward and triggers release of neurotransmitter dopamine, which is released when happy.

Everyone has bad work days. However, you can make small changes to improve your mood and boost productivity. Try these tips to reset your bad work day.

How-To Not Land the Job



You have revamped your resume, applied for hundreds of positions, and you still do not have a job. What gives?

The problem could be your interview skills. There are a variety of nonverbal and verbal cues that can immediately turn off potential employers. As a recruiter, I have seen highly experienced candidates ruin their chance of getting a job with inappropriate social cues. It's important to know what these traits are because they can be very easy to avoid.

Answering Phone Calls or Texts

Most of us are hooked onto our smartphones. We rarely leave the house without them. While this is appropriate during our personal time, it is not acceptable to text or answer a call during an interview. The employer could feel as though the interview is not a priority. Therefore, the job is not important to you. Turn your cell phone on silent before entering the interview.

Timeliness

We are all late occasionally. However, do not be late for an interview! If you are late for an interview then chances are that you could be seen as being late to meetings or on projects.

Tardiness can be recoverable. Call as soon as you realize that you are going to be late. Take an extra minute to compose yourself and apologize when you get to the interview.

Confidence

The feeling of sitting across from a hiring manager can make your heart race. Nevertheless, to get the job, we need to collect ourselves and act confidently. If you panic during an interview then you will probably never land the position.

Confidence is an essential quality that many candidates fail to exude. Even if you do not feel cool, calm, and collected, there are a few ways to make you appear that way.

- Take Deep Breathes
- Sit Still
- Make Eye Contact
- Slow Your Speech and don't ramble
- Think Positively
- Don't speak negatively of current or former employers/bosses

Interview Attire

Leave the jeans behind when you are dressing for an interview. The first impression you make will be by your attire. Dress in a way that is professionally appropriate.

Attire for Interview

- For men: A suit- matching jacket and pants, dress shirt, tie and formal shoes (shined)
- For women: A pant suit or mid-length skirt, or dress and formal shoes
- Avoid loud colors and strong perfumes or colognes
- Clothes should be clean and wrinkle-free
- Hair should be neat, clean, and conservative

This is the proper attire for the first interview. Your second interview should still be professional but may be more relaxed depending on the company and position.

Cursing

Cursing is risky move during an interview. Some people do not mind the occasional curse word but for others, cursing is a deal breaker. Be safe and do not curse during your interview.

As you prepare for interviews, keep in mind that you are showcasing how you will act with co-workers in the office. Present yourself professionally for the best chance to get the job.