

DELEGATION SKILLS

How are you at delegating? Do you often have to settle for the results of your delegation even if you are not pleased? The problem may lie partly in your delegation skills. And there are definite skills involved! Here are some ideas to help you in your next delegation.

1. Communicate the results you want, not the details of exactly how to do it. Everyone will approach something a little differently. And that's good! Tell them that you want the information on your desk by Thursday next week by noon and let them figure out how they want to do it. Sure, you can make some helpful suggestions and be a resource, but refrain from detailing each step of the process.
2. Don't take the monkey back. When someone encounters a problem with something, do they often come running to you for answers and therefore put the task you delegated back on you? Sure, it is ego-inflating to have people ask for your advice, but all it does is make more work for you. Avoid taking the problem or "monkey" onto your back. Teach others to solve problems themselves.
3. Turn questions around. When someone comes to you with a problem (often an attempt to get you to take on the problem yourself), first ask him for possible solutions. Lead him through the problem solving process and help him find the answer himself. This is a great coaching technique that will help develop all the people you come in contact with.
4. Establish specific objectives for the delegation. People will feel more comfortable acting on their own if they know the final objective. Ask questions to make sure the person understands specifically what is to be accomplished. This also works well at home with children!
5. Establish specific reporting times. Be cautious about just "dumping" the project with no check-up dates before the final deadline. You need to keep tabs on how things are going before you are presented with the final project. (It's often too late at that point to change anything you don't like.) Instead, schedule definite reporting times at various points in the delegation.

In addition, keep track of your delegations. Make sure that you have matched the delegation to the skills of the delegate.

This information is part of my time management classes. If you would like more information on these programs, please contact me at peggy@peggymorrow.com or 281-280-8190, 800-375-1982.