

Effective Delegation

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Administrators working within volunteer organizations hold a very key role. They cannot afford to rely upon their efforts alone to move the organization forward. Nor can they allow themselves to become so elitist that they feel they are the only individual in the organization who "can do the job correctly." The administrator who fails to delegate effectively and efficiently not only holds down volunteers who can do the job but also hampers maximum organizational output as well.


Administrators generally fail to delegate for five very simple reasons:


- Fear of losing credit and recognition
- Fear of competition from volunteers
- Fear of own weakness being exposed
- Fear of not having the time or ability to provide necessary training
- Fear of volunteers not being able to handle the assignment


Most of those fears can be overcome if the volunteer administrator will design a volunteer delegation plan. This plan can be based upon a ten step process.


TEN ESSENTIAL STEPS IN DELEGATION


 *1 Explain the Importance of the Task.* The volunteer may feel that the job is important but if you explain the importance your volunteer is more likely to understand.


 *2 Check on Understanding.* You may feel the task is so simple that anyone would understand, but you should check, just in case. You may even ask the volunteer to explain the assignment as he or she understands it.

 *3 Offer a Challenge.* Explain the problem. Admit that you don't know if there is an answer, but you would like the volunteer to see if he or she can find a solution. Now the task becomes a challenge and the volunteer will go for it.


 *4 Check Confidence.* Make your volunteers know that you feel they are the ones for the task. Don't let them feel they are "just a warm body."


 *5 Be Reasonable.* Keep the goals for the group or individual's task within reasonable expectancy of what can be accomplished, both in time and in quantity.


 *6 Give Leeway.* Most people like to do things their way, including you. Where possible, keep this in mind, and let the volunteers do it "their way." If you allow volunteers to offer suggestions, they may come up with a better way and certainly will have more enthusiasm for the task.

 *7 Delegate Responsibility.* When you assign a task give the volunteer the responsibility that goes with it. If there are decisions to be made, money to be spent or people to be supervised, let the volunteer handle it without running back to you for every decision.

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 *Don't Delegate Unfairly.* Try not to delegate all of the good tasks to one or two people, time and time again. By the same token, don't use any volunteer as a "dumpster" repeatedly for the lousy jobs that need doing. Be especially careful to not dump all of the lousy jobs on volunteers; save some of them for yourself.

 *Don't Expect Perfection.* Before you delegate determine how important your perfection expectations are. If you expect everyone to turn out work as perfectly as you, you'll probably be disappointed. However, with training from you, over time, the volunteer may far exceed your expectations, even of yourself.

 *Give Recognition.* If someone does a good job compliment them, publicly. Be as specific as possible. Everyone needs a pat on the back and generally the more public, the better.