



Hesitation about Delegation

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Delegation is usually most difficult for leaders who are quite skilled at the task they're trying to delegate—or when they really enjoy the task. In both situations it's natural to be reluctant to let go. However, as organizations grow, leaders need to utilize the talents of every team member. Leaders find they must delegate some tasks to find (for example) the time to plan, begin new projects and develop new initiatives. Let's take a look at some of the reasons leaders consistently give me in my **Positive Power™ Leadership—12 Steps to Success** program, for disliking delegating. And we'll also look at how to overcome any *hesitation about delegation* you might be experiencing.

I can do it better!

Leaders often need to delegate tasks they know they do can more effectively and/or more thoroughly than anyone else. However, they must acknowledge that even if they are better at some tasks, to be effective they will need to concentrate time, energy and thought on other tasks. To get this obstacle out of your way, take a hard look at the big picture of your objectives, then look at the actual time this task takes you. Say to yourself, "Of course I can do this better, but is it really how I should be spending my time?" The answer will probably be **NO!** Delegate it.

It's really quicker for me to just do it myself.

You've probably heard it called reverse delegation, when a leader takes back a previously delegated task out of frustration, impatience or mistrust. Reverse delegation is not always the intention of the employee in these cases. In fact, most employees find they feel better about themselves and their jobs when they learn new things and take on new responsibilities. Though **doing it yourself** might be quicker in the short run, in the long run it causes everyone on your team to be less effective. And you'll end up working more hours and accomplishing less.

They'll just make mistakes and cause bigger problems.

Yes, they will make mistakes. When you delegate a task, expect the employee to get some or all of it wrong three times. Approaching delegation with this expectation will cause you to be more inclined to allow your staff to try new things and to learn from their mistakes. You'll then be prepared to coach them rather than criticize or blow up at them. As long as you handle their mistakes with understanding, support and clarity about how and why to avoid the mistakes, this coaching will increase their confidence and build trust.

Of course, it's important **NOT** to put an employee in a position to make a costly mistake or irritate a customer. Check everything they do until you're certain they're confident in the task. Coaches don't just train their players and skip the game—expecting them to play without any guidance and help. Coaches carefully watch from the sidelines and give help throughout the game, whenever their players need it.

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