

Delegating Can Begin With Small Steps

By Donna Rawady

Some of us naturally approach our work with an eye for opportunities to delegate. Others may struggle with doling out significant tasks and/or projects. To delegate effectively:

- **Become fully aware of all your direct reports' activities and capacities.** Schedule one-on-one sessions with them to explore opportunities to delegate and accept help. Ask about their current work volume and pace, perception of their capacity for more, and/or where they might like to take on more responsibility.
- **Activate accountability through non-arguable outcomes and specific target dates.** Follow up soon after the deadline if the assignment is not received. With this level of prompt follow-up, individuals will realize that you're serious about target dates.
- **Offer interim coaching** or status meetings, as needed.
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- If you're hesitating to delegate a project, **ask yourself if you might be able to delegate a component of a project.** This approach may keep it more manageable for you and the person you're delegating to.
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- **Ask for creative input.** To kick-start a creative project you've been putting off, ask one of your direct reports to come up with the first draft of a project plan or an informal set of ideas from his or her perspective. Use it as a springboard to further your own strategic thinking about the project.

Still struggling to delegate? Take a small step today. Open a possibilities log on

your desktop. While you're working during the next couple of weeks, jot down those items, tasks or projects you think you may be able to delegate at some point.

Originally published in the Democrat and Chronicle on Jan 3, 2010