**Myth:** Employees don’t want responsibility.

**Truth:** Most employees want a chance to prove themselves and develop a higher level of job competency.

**Benefit:** Supervisors who learn how to delegate effectively end up with a well-motivated staff and an increase in productivity and quality

**Attitude Check for Supervisor:**

* “It takes more time to explain a task than to do it myself”—Of course it does, but taking the time to explain policies and procedures will pay off in the long run. Explaining how to do something once or twice is less time consuming than doing the task each time yourself.

**Note: Your responsibility is to accomplish tasks through other people.**

* “Employees lack the necessary experience”—That is true, but they will not gain experience unless you give them a chance. As a result of you giving employees a chance, you will have a more motivated work force because you gave employees an opportunity.
* “Workers could make costly mistakes”—Absolutely, but so can you. Provide thorough training for your employees to reduce the potential for error. We learn from our mistakes more than from our successes.

**Developing your Staff:**

* Delegation does not mean abandoning all of your responsibilities to your employees. Just abdicating to your employees would be asking for a job to be completed improperly or not at all if you do not follow through by teaching employees how to do a task. In that case, you can’t place blame for the failure on the employee because they did not understand or were not trained/prepared to perform a complex task.

**Effective Delegation:** Relinquishing some of your responsibilities and offering guidance when needed.

**How do you decide who will do which task?**

Before you begin to hand out tasks, take a moment to consider your staff—looking at employee strengths to match to job needs.

* Which of your employees want more responsibility?
* Who do you feel based on your observations of work ethic and skill level could do the job best?
* Which of your employees can spare the time?
* Who of your employees would be able to perform the task with the most efficient use of time?
* Who would gain the most in growth from this assignment?
* Can the task be redesigned so that a less experienced person can handle it?

Once you reflect on these questions, you should be able to make your assignments as to who is best suited to perform which identified task.

**Guidelines for Delegating Tasks:**

* **Be specific**—instructions should be clear and to the point. Wordy explanations will only confuse the employees.
* **State goals**—Once the task is assigned, tell the employee exactly what is expected. This will facilitate the employee focusing on the result and may possibly make the task easier for the employee.
* **Explain assignments**—If the task you assign is meaningless to the employee, they ma y respond with indifference. It is important to explain *why* the task is important or needs to be accomplished.
* **Obtain Feedback**—This two-way communication offers three positive elements:
1. It enables you to obtain other opinions about the task at hand.
2. It helps to increase workers’ self-confidence.
3. It helps close the communication gap and strengthen employee/supervisor rapport.
* **Offer assistance**—Delegation is a mixture of employee’s skills, potential, and abilities and the supervisor’s guidance, advice, and assistance. You can keep up your end by offering and/or providing materials and resources that may make the job easier for them. It is also important to be available during any “rough” spots. Providing moral and technical support during critical times is very important. It is also a good time to conduct an informal review of the work already accomplished.
* **Grant authority**—Never delegate responsibility without granting the authority to get it done. If, for instance, the job requires that the employee gather information from the other employees, make sure that the other employees know that. In addition, be prepared to back up your employee with your own authority, if needed.
* **Tread lightly and thoughtfully**—Smart supervisors individualize delegation. Delegate based on job needs, employee interest in taking on responsibility, and constantly re-evaluate that the level of delegation is satisfactory for you as well as employees. Delegation develops your employees and improves moral. It’s all up to you.