

# Delegation as a Leadership Style

## Tips for Effective Delegation

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Your leadership style is situational. Your leadership style depends on the task, the team or individual's capabilities and knowledge, the time and tools available and the results desired. In a recent article, I reviewed the tell, sell, consult, join and delegate leadership style model.

As a supervisor, manager or team leader, you make daily decisions about the appropriate leadership style to employ in each work situation. You want to foster employee involvement and employee empowerment to enable your team members to contribute their best effort at work. These tips for successful delegation of authority will help you help your reporting staff members succeed when they are most empowered.

### Leadership Style Tips

- Whenever possible, when delegating work, **give the person a whole task to do**. (If you can't give the employee a whole task, make sure they understand the overall purpose of the project or task. If possible, connect them to the group that is managing or planning the work. Staff members contribute most effectively when they are aware of the big picture.)
- Make sure the staff person **understands exactly what you want them to do**. Ask questions, watch the work performed or have the employee give you feedback to make sure your instructions were understood.
- If you have a picture of what a successful outcome or output will look like, **share your picture with the staff person**. You want to make the person right. You don't want to fool the person to whom you delegate authority for a task, into believing that any outcome will do, unless you really feel that way.
- Identify the key points of the project or dates **when you want feedback about progress**. This is the critical path that provides you with the feedback you need without causing you to micromanage your direct report or team. You need assurance that the delegated task or project is on track. You also need the opportunity to influence the project's direction and the team or individual's decisions.
- Identify the **measurements or the outcome** you will use to determine that the project was successfully completed. (This will make performance development planning more measurable and less subjective, too.)
- Determine, in advance, how you will **thank and reward the staff person** for their successful completion of the task or project you delegated.

Successful delegation of authority as a leadership style takes time and energy, but it's worth the time and energy to help employee involvement and employee empowerment succeed as a leadership style. It's worth the time and energy to help employees succeed, develop and meet your expectations. You build the employee's self-confidence and people who feel successful usually are successful.