

# Law Matters Newsletter

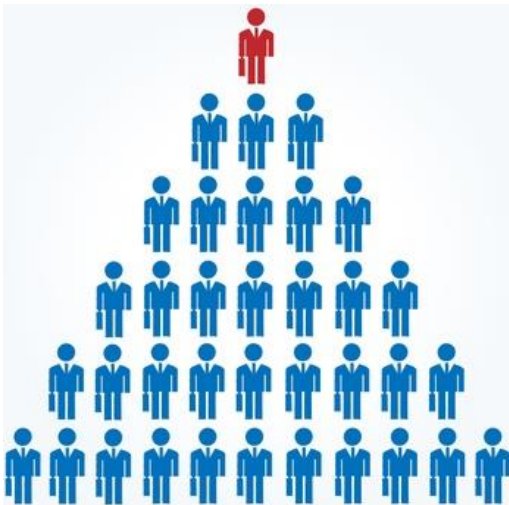
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### *Delegate, but Not Too Much*

## Delegate, but Not Too Much



One way of getting the most out of your time is to delegate some tasks to other staff. That should come as no surprise, and it is commonplace in any time management course. But the principle, however beguiling, requires forethought and planning. In other words delegation has to be made to work. Usually delegation is discussed in terms of one person to another (top tier to second tier in our pyramid). What is often forgotten is that the issue of delegation also applies between the CEO and the whole organisation (all the layers of the pyramid).

### **1. Do not abdicate**

You cannot wash your hands of responsibility for work by delegating it. It is still your responsibility to get it done, and done right, on budget and on time. That means taking responsibility at a deep level, not just superficially, but it does not mean micromanaging. For the CEO, looking at monthly reports is not enough. They need to find and address the real problems in their organisation, not make assumptions based on mere figures.

### **2. Give clear guidelines**

The person delegated to needs to know exactly what is expected of them, including any deadline. If they do not, they cannot justifiably be criticised if they do not meet expectations. Of course if there are existing expectations which are well understood, it will not be necessary to spell everything out. The CEO has an additional problem of communicating to large numbers of people, and through various different levels. That gives scope for considerable misunderstanding, even without any of the levels being obstructive. The “CEO Video” on a Monday morning can be effective, but can also breed cynicism.

### 3. Monitor

Keep any eye on progress, or lack of it. If there are problems, address them sooner rather than later. Make sure they are the underlying problem, not the superficial one. (See above).

### 4. Give the tools for the job

Ensure that the person or team delegated to has the technology, budget, equipment and capacity to carry out the task. Organisationally, this is equally important. The new product range requires factory space, machines, IT, materials and marketing to succeed. It is up to the CEO to ensure they are in place.

### 5. Train, coach, mentor

Ensure that necessary training is supplied, by formal training courses and/or coaching, particularly from you. A formal training budget may not be under your control, but your time is. For the CEO much of this has to be delegated (wonderfully circular).

### 6. Select the right people

Again, this may not be within your direct control, but getting things done, whatever they are, generally requires people who are good at getting things done. Of course, they also need to do the right thing – doing the wrong things really well is hardly a good idea.

### 7. Get the culture right

One person or one team can be managed. An entire department or firm is more problematical. A leader needs to ensure that the culture is oriented to getting things done, since they cannot do it all themselves. There are many companies which have taken the right steps to put a strategy into effect but have failed without the necessary culture of execution. Culture change is a complicated subject, but broadly reward appropriate behaviour, and frown on the inappropriate. Use targets and expectations. Most importantly, get the influencers in your organisation aligned with an execution culture, and remember that influencers are not all at the top of the pyramid. Indeed, they may have no formal power at all. Finding out who they are takes time and effort.

Subscribers to our newsletter will have noticed that some of these steps are the same as are used to avoid inflicting stress (Vol.6 No.2). In both cases, it boils down to managing an effective team that will perform and keep performing.

To discuss this issue further, contact us today.

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