

Overcoming The Seven Sins Of Delegation

Presented by Tamera Loerzel May 23, 2012







- In today's session, we will discuss:
 - The benefits of delegating
 - Ownership strategies to ensure expectations are properly set
 - Common delegation pitfalls and methods to overcome them





"Don't be a bottleneck. If a matter is not a decision for the President or you, delegate it. Force responsibility down and out. Find problem areas, add structure and delegate. The pressure is to do the reverse. Resist it."

~Donald Rumsfeld American Secretary of Defense







- Why don't we delegate to our peers or other team members?
- Why do we sometimes resist receiving delegated tasks?





Why Delegate?



• Delegating:

- Shifts tasks to the appropriate level in the business
 - Allowing you to focus on other important tasks
 - Allowing the team members receiving assignments to delegate to others as appropriate, too
 - More on this later!
- Motivates employees who enjoy increased responsibility and challenge







Why Delegate?



- Provides an opportunity for others to improve and learn
 - This is vital for succession planning
 - With the impending staff shortage
 - 76 million Baby Boomers plan to retire over the next 8-12 years with only 41 million Gen Xers to succeed them
 - You need to succession plan as you progress in your career so there is always someone being developed behind you

– And because no one person can do it all themselves!





Effective Delegation Is...



- <u>Specific</u> about the assignment who will do what, what they'll deliver and by-when
- Supported with the information needed and with access to the delegator for questions
- Likely a repeatable task to maximize the investment in training
- Allows for growth and development of others and should not require your direct involvement (over time)



Allow Commitment With Clarity



- Here is **WHAT** I'm asking you to commit to deliver (specifics of deliverable or performance)
- This is **WHEN** I expect you to have it to me
- These are the **RESOURCES I THINK YOU'LL NEED** to do it (hours, dollars, materials, people, etc.)



Don't Over-Commit And Under-Deliver



- If someone appears hesitant to commit (or they have a track record of not delivering, provide other choices:
 - Yes, I can commit to this as requested
 - Yes, I can commit to this but I can't tackle it until ALTERNATIVE DATE
 - I would really like to commit to this, but before I do, I have to check WHATEVER and I'll let you know one way or the other BY WHEN
 - No, I cannot commit to this at this time





Common Delegating "Sins" – And Ways To Get Better



Sins #1 and #2



- Sin #1 Not Managing Expectations and Sin #2 Failing To Communicate Clearly
 - <u>Lack of specific expectations</u> about the assignment, its objective, parameters, due date and preferred status methods is the number one reason for disappointment when delegating
- As the delegator, you own specifying these expectations ideally verbally and in writing
- After delegating, you are still "on the hook" for the end result
 - So you have to establish clear "return and report" procedures so you know that it has been completed or are aware when there are roadblocks that will prevent it from being completed



Define Ownership and Accountability



- Convey Ownership
 - <u>Give away</u> responsibility and authority
 - <u>Gain commitments</u> to own things from others
 - Assign by when dates to ensure good delegation
- Communicate
 - Ongoing, clear, and straight communication related to plans, assignments, and next steps
 - Consequences and repercussions when commitments aren't met
 - Disappointment when expectations are not met







- People treat things they own much better than those that they "rent"
- What's the difference between owning and helping at work?









- When you <u>own</u> something, you are the person who has to take care of it, fix it when it breaks, and keep it thriving
 - You know the opportunities and problems are squarely yours to deal with and you are totally committed to do so
- As the owner, you're the:
 - Go-to person for questions
 - Person we have to include in discussions and decisions on that "thing"
 - Person we can count on to be thinking about, planning for, worrying over, and driving the "things" you own

Person who is accountable for the success of your "thing"







- When you are <u>helping</u> with something, you decide the depth of your commitment and you can "cut out" at any time
 - Your behaviors are more those of a renter than an owner





Our Organizing Principles



- Ideally, you'll work to understand:
 - Who owns what at the firm and departmental level
 - What you own
 - Who owns what on the teams you manage
- This enables you to:
 - Understand the expectations of you and others on your team
 - Balance the work load across the team and leverage the strengths of each team member
 - Provide opportunities for increased responsibility and growth
- For instance, ownership roles grids in a tax department, tax client engagement, finance department and social media initiative, may looks like this...



HR Recruiting Roles Grid



| Contract Recruiters | Offer Letters | Scheduling | Screening Processes/Refere nce Checking |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------------|---|
| Advertising | Staff Level | Experienced Staff | Web site and Collateral |
| Premium "Gifts" | LinkedIn | Facebook | Designated U |
| Designated U | Designated U | Designated U | Other |



HR Retention Roles Grid



| Fun | Mentoring | Benefit Administration | Performance Appraisal Process |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Training | CPE Tracking | EE Surveys | Suggestion Box |
| Flex Programs | Other | Other | Other |
| Other | Other | Other | Other |



Tax Department Roles Grid



| Tax Strategy | Corporate Tax | 1040 Business | Tax Marketing |
|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Tax TQM | Tax Technologies | Tax Processes | Tax Planners |
| Tax Update Communications | Tax CPE | Tax Compliance and Legislation | Tax Research |
| Other | Other | Other | Other |



Finance Department Roles Grid







| GL | AP | PR | Billing |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Collections | Financial Reporting | Tax Management | Systems |
| International Compliance | Contracts | Pricing | U.S. Regulation Compliance |
| Board Interface | Month End Closings | Internal Auditing | Other |



Tax Client Engagement Roles Grid







| Coordination with Audit Team | Tax Provision Review (FIN 48) | Scope, Timing, Budge, Deliverables | Obtain Engagement Agreement |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Staff Scheduling | Request / Obtain | Return | Federal Return |
| | Tax Data | Preparation | Review |
| State Return Review | International Reporting | Final Review and Sign | Processing Tax Return for Delivery |
| Delivering Tax | Analyze WIP and prepare invoice | Identify Projects | Other Wrap-up |
| Return to Client | | for Follow-up | Matters |



Social Media Initiative Roles Grid







| Develop Firm Strategies and Objectives | Project Management | Facebook | LinkedIn |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Twitter | Blogs | Staff Communications | Training |
| Technical Support and Questions | Documentation | Client Communications | HR and IT Policy Development |
| Other | Other | Other | Other |



Ownership In Project Delegation



- Always assign ownership of each "thing" to only one person
- Always be clear what owning the "thing" means to you in terms of actions, results and communication
- Make sure all items in the organization have an owner:
 - Clients
 - Projects
 - Initiatives
 - Engagements
 - Events
 - Meetings
 - Actions from meetings



Clearing Up Communication



- Get in the habit of writing e-mail recaps of delegation conversations
 - Ideally, delegate meeting recap writing to others in the conversation!
- The recap will tell all readers:
 - What's going to happen
 - Who owns getting it done (item by item)
 - By when each item will be completed
 - How each person will return and report their status
 - Next steps or meeting date
- Establish clear reporting for status method and frequency!



What Kind of Owner Are You?



- Take the Ownership Assessment
- Explore what you learn by identifying:
 - What do you think you're doing well?
 - What do you think you can improve?
- Be prepared to share!





#3 - Believing Our People Are Not Ready Yet



- Sometimes we all must learn by failing (or at least struggling)!
- If we convince ourselves that our people are not ready – or we are afraid to challenge and perhaps frustrate them – they may never develop the skills they need to grow and take on more





#4 - Being Unwilling to Invest the Time



- Delegating tasks requires some preparation and sometimes re-work of the assignment afterward, but the learning is invaluable!
 - Come from the mindset of doing what is best in the long term for you and the one receiving the project



Strategies To Improve As A Delegator



- Let's explore the following questions:
 - How can you begin believing in others and delegating to them?
 - What ideas or strategies could you explore?
 - What actions can you take to make the time to delegate?
 - What benefits will you realize when you do so?
- Be prepared to share!





#5 -The "Do It My Way" Syndrome



- When you don't delegate for this reason, you risk:
 - Becoming a bottleneck
 - Being viewed as controlling
 - Stifling organizational creativity and motivation
- Why do we do this?





#6 - Abdicating, Not Delegating



- This is the opposite of the "do it my way" approach which is delegating without the proper support
 - This can feel like "dumping" work and often leads to a failure in the assignment or negative feelings
- "Delegating work works, provided the one delegating works, too."
 "Robert Half





#7 - Taking It Back



- Sometimes it is tempting to take an assignment back when there is uncertainty or struggle
- This can have negative consequences for the new owner:
 - They are "trained" to give up instead of digging in
 - It can feel like a failure, which inhibits their confidence in completing future tasks
 - They may not trust that they truly own anything in the future, which can perpetuate the problem with the delegator not seeing true ownership from them!



Improving As A Delegator



- Let's explore the following questions:
 - How can you let go of your attachment to a specific approach or final deliverable?
 - What do you need to communicate to the new owner?
 - What can you do to ensure you're not dumping?
 - What do you need to do to support the new owner?
 - What expectations or communications plan could you put in place to reduce your desire to take something back once you've delegated it?
 - What else could you do to trust that your assignment will get complete and meet your expectations? What benefit is there if someone fails?
- Be prepared to share!









- Evaluate your own delegation style (or lack thereof!)
- Complete roles grids and ownership lists for each area that you own
- Increase your specificity when delegating by providing:
 - Adequate project background and other specifics
 - By when dates and methods to return and report status
 - Expectations about deliverables or other results
 - And any other expectations
- Invest in your team by teaching them how to effectively delegate



Your #1 Sin AND Your New Commitment



- Identify your number one delegation sin
 - What actions or new behaviors could you take to improve it?
 - Choose one behavior, change, or action that you will commit to go back to your office and apply
 - Write it on your One Commitment Form
 - Set a by-when date for when you'll complete that action
 - Tell someone on your team who can help hold you accountable for the one idea you committed to
- Be prepared to share









• Contact me at any time and connect with me:

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Exercises and Resources




ConvergenceCoaching Resources



- ConvergenceCoaching's **web site** includes information at:
 - www.convergencecoaching.com
- Read our **Coaching Concepts** newsletter:
 - <u>http://www.convergencecoaching.com/CoachingConcepts</u>
- Visit our **blog** for posts on these topics:
 - www.convergencecoaching.com/blog
- Visit our **learning center** for access to additional courses:
 - <u>http://www.convergencelearning.com</u>
- Visit us on Facebook:
 - <u>http://www.facebook.com/convergencecoaching</u>



Accountability And Team Building Reading



- <u>Accountability</u> by Rob LeBow and Randy Spitzer
- <u>Breakthrough Teams for Breakneck Times</u> by Lisa Gundry and Laurie LaMantia
- <u>Extraordinary Relationships A New Way of Thinking</u> <u>About Human Interactions</u> by Roberta M. Gilbert, M.D.
- <u>Nuts!: Southwest Airlines' Crazy Recipe For Business and</u>
 <u>Personal Success</u> by Kevin Freiberg
- CoachingConcepts Newsletter Partner Performance And Accountability – Issue 25 Winter 2010
 - <u>http://www.convergencecoaching.com/coachingconcepts/</u>



Accountability And Team Building Reading



- <u>The Five Dysfunctions of a Team</u> by Pat Lencioni
- <u>The Accountability Factor: The Buck Stops Here</u> by Alan M. Dobzinski
- "What Does It Cost To Keep A Problem Partner?" by Jennifer Wilson
 - <u>http://www.cpa2biz.com/Content/media/PRODUCER_CONTENT/New</u> <u>sletters/Articles_2010/CPA/Jun/ProblematicPartner.jsp</u>







- <u>www.aicpa.org/pcps</u>. The AICPA's Private Companies Practice Section Human Capital Center web site with tools and resources on HR
- <u>www.cpaadmin.org.</u> Association of Accounting Administration site that allows members to access resources and exchange information about learning and other topics
- <u>www.hr.com</u>. HR.com is an online resource that covers the entire scope of HR issues
- <u>www.hrpowerhouse.com.</u> HR Powerhouse offers online tools, free appraisal forms, practices, process maps and more







- <u>www.jobdescriptions.com.</u> This site provides position description templates for a fee
- <u>www.shrm.org.</u> Society for Human Resources Management
- <u>www.dol.gov</u>. U.S. Department of Labor
- <u>www.workforce.com</u>. Resources for recruiting, training, HR management, compensation and legal issues





- "Are Mandatory Saturdays A Thing Of The Past?" by Jennifer Wilson
 - <u>http://www.convergencecoaching.com/blog/2011/11/are-mandatory-</u> <u>saturdays-a-thing-of-the-past/</u>
- "Are You Ignoring Spinach In Someone's Teeth?" by Jennifer Wilson
 - <u>http://www.convergencecoaching.com/blog/2010/07/are-you-ignoring-spinach-in-someones-teeth</u>
- "Build A Team Of Successful Players," by Tamera Loerzel
 - <u>http://www.mncpa.org/publications/footnote/2011-10/build-a-successful-team.aspx</u>





- "Get Your People Engaged," by Jennifer Wilson
 - <u>http://www.cpa2biz.com/Content/media/PRODUCER_CONTENT/New</u> <u>sletters/Articles_2011/CPA/Aug/EngageStaff.jsp</u>
- "HR's New Mandate: Be a Strategic Player," by Dave Ulrich and Wayne Brockbank
 - <u>http://hbswk.hbs.edu/archive/4861.html</u>
- "How Employers Can Win the Talent Quest Book Summary On <u>Keeping the People Who Keep You in Business,</u>" by Leigh Branham
 - <u>http://www.businessweek.com/smallbiz/content/jan2001/sb2001014</u>
 <u>851.htm</u>





- "How Flexible Is Your Firm?" by Jennifer Wilson
 - <u>http://www.cpa2biz.com/Content/media/PRODUCER_CONTENT/New</u> <u>sletters/Articles_2010/CPA/Oct/FlexibleFirm.jsp</u>
- "Is Your Firm Old School or Cool," by Jennifer Wilson
 - <u>http://www.cpa2biz.com/Content/media/PRODUCER_CONTENT/New</u> <u>sletters/Articles_2011/CPA/Nov/FirmOldSchoolOrCool.jsp</u>
- "Midwest A Victim Of Rural Brain Drain" by Matt Vasilogambros
 - <u>http://www.huffingtonpost.com/matt-vasilogambros/rural-brain-</u> <u>drain-iowa_b_830352.html</u>





- "People Development: More Important Than Business Development" by Jack Lee
 - <u>http://www.convergencecoaching.com/blog/2011/09/people-development-</u> <u>more-important-than-business-development/</u>
- "The Changing Role of Human Resources/Assessment Professionals: Adding Value in the "New" Organization," by David A. Dye, Ph.D.
 - <u>http://www.ipacweb.org/conf/99/dye.pdf</u>
- "The Lowdown on High Potentials" by Yasmine El-ramly
 - <u>http://www.journalofaccountancy.com/Issues/2011/Dec/20114579.ht</u>
 <u>m</u>







- "The Role of HR in a Recovering Economy" by Peggy Castellano
 - <u>http://wwww.examiner.com/x-13667-LA-Workplace-Issues-</u>
 <u>Examiner~y2010m2d21-The-role-of-HR-in-a-recovering-economy</u>
- "Top 10 Reasons Why Large Companies Fail To Keep Their Best Talent," by Eric Jackson
 - <u>http://www.forbes.com/fdc/welcome_mjx.shtml</u>



HR Feedback Resources



- <u>Breakthrough Teams for Breakneck Times</u> by Lisa Gundry and Laurie LaMantia
- Change Your Questions, Change Your Life by Marilee G. Adams
- <u>Extraordinary Relationships A New Way of Thinking About</u> <u>Human Interactions</u> by Roberta M. Gilbert, M.D.
- <u>Feedback Toolkit: 16 Tools to Better Communication</u> by Rick Maurer
- Love 'Em or Lose 'Em by Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans
- Practice What You Preach by David Maister
- The Five Dysfunctions of a Team by Pat Lencioni





- To help people become ready for more responsibility
 - Consider breaking potentially overwhelming tasks into smaller pieces and delegating them in "bite sized" pieces (more on this shortly)
 - Understand your people's desire for increased responsibility and challenge and their learning styles
- In addition, future "like" assignments can also be delegated, freeing up more of your time
 - Be cognizant to delegate tasks that are repeatable for the best investment in your training time





- Instead of being attached to your approach, specify your intended outcome, but allow the new owner to devise the approach to use to achieve the result
 - There are many paths to reach the end game!
- To help ensure a successful outcome when delegating, the one receiving the assignment will need:
 - Time both upfront and if they have questions as they proceed
 - Details about the assignment and any supporting information
 - A by-when date (see our next "sin")
 - Any other expectations you may have so nothing is left to interpretation – which can lead to potential let-down





- Be clear on the expectations for each task you delegate
 - Who owns it no helpers!
 - Your expected outcome, deliverable, result or action
 - How and when to report the status
 - Due date
 - To whom they should report the outcome (and by when to report)





- Instead of taking the assignment back, coach the new owner to solve the problems and encourage them to commit the time and energy to complete the assignment successfully
 - Being positive about the process will enable the new owner to do the same, so be mindful of coming from a positive interpretation of their abilities and willingness to accept the project
 - Remember, your goal is for them to learn and grow!





- When delegating, be clear about your expectations for reporting on status and when you would like a report
 - Others on the project will know who to go to with questions - and will supply support to this individual when needed, too
 - A longer term project may require a few check-in points to discuss progress
 - You may need to adjust other priorities, budget, or timing, too

