



The Case Against Delegation: A Rebuttal

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A client recently afforded me the opportunity to develop a two-hour training module on delegation for inclusion in the company's management academy. In the course of researching the subject I came across various reasons that managers give when they are asked why they don't delegate more than they do. In a way, these reasons constitute a case against delegation. The 10 reasons listed below seem to be the most commonly given. All 10 are easily rebutted.

1. **No time.** That's short sighted and off the mark. One of the major reasons for delegating is to free up your time. If you're not delegating you're also not managing your time.
2. **It's too risky.** That's poor judgment on your part. It is far riskier for you to try to do everything yourself than it is for you to assign portions of your work to others.
3. **I can do it better myself.** So what? That's not the point. The point is to develop your people and thereby increase the capacity and capabilities of your work group.

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4. **It never occurred to me.** Okay, so stick a sign on your desk or office wall saying: Do it, Delegate it or Dump it.
5. **My boss wants me to do the work.** Maybe, maybe not. If it's work that's been delegated to you that might be true; if not, it's yours to do, delegate or dump.
6. **They can't do the work.** Then *you* have work to do because *they* should be able to do much of what you do. This isn't a reason or even an excuse; it's a self-indictment.
7. **They're overloaded as it is.** C'mon, get real. It's you or them and you're the manager; it's your job to get work done through others. If they're really overloaded, dump what you were going to delegate or have them delegate or dump some of what they're doing.
8. **It's more trouble than it's worth.** Then you're delegating the wrong things; indeed, you're probably delegating things that no one should do. Dump 'em.
9. **I tried it and it didn't work.** Then you probably did it incorrectly. Try it again and, this time, do it right.
10. **I don't know how to delegate.** Ah, an honest person. Be of good cheer. Delegating isn't rocket science. It's easily learned, easily done and a little research on your part will tell you all you need to know.

Contact the Author

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