

Delegation Check-In For Managers and Leaders - True Or False?

By **Jessika M. Ferm**

You may have heard the expression: "You MANAGE systems and LEAD people." To be an effective delegator, you need systems that keep you organized and structured. They will free up time, prevent performance confusion, and ensure that your team is working at maximum capacity. Take a moment and check in on your delegation skills. Is your answer "true" or "false" to the following questions?

I can, without hesitation, state my top 3 performance expectations.

True: Great. Have you shared them with your direct reports, supervisors, clients, vendors, and/or peers? If not, do so right away and check for increased effectiveness, reduced conflict, and heightened awareness.

False: If you can't easily state them, chances are that your people are confused about what you expect. A lack of standards and expectations is often the source of conflict and stress in the workplace. On a piece of paper, list three non-negotiable standards that you can share with your direct reports, supervisors, clients, vendors, and/or peers. Keep it short and sweet. Here is a great example: Deadlines are not arbitrary. When we have agreed on and have promised to deliver on a deadline, the recipient can trust that it will get done.

When my team isn't performing, they know exactly what the consequences are.

True: Wonderful. You have com-

municated your standards and are probably experiencing few misunderstandings or miscommunications. Remember to reinforce and share them with new employees, vendors, peers, etc.

False: Even when we have been perfectly clear in our delegation, we often forget to share how a lack of performance affect the end result. Review your non-negotiables and state the appropriate consequences for failing to meet each. If we take the deadline example previously stated, we could add: If more than two deadlines per quarter are not met, it will affect the responsible person's annual performance evaluation.

When I delegate work to others, they know exactly what is expected of them and by when the job needs to be completed.

True: Perfect. Keep setting deadlines and delegate responsibilities appropriately. Don't forget to share this skill with your team members.

False: Most managers and leaders think they are clear when the truth is that most of the time they are not. Work on being crystal clear and always assign deadlines. The following statements are not effective responses when your delegates ask you by when you want something done: "When you get to it." "Soon." "When you have a free moment." These statements are too vague and imply that the delegated activity isn't very important. Instead, be specific and state a date and time

for review.

No one is born a perfect manager or leader. To do more with less time and resources require excellent delegation skills. Keep practicing and remember to share your new strategies with your team for maximum impact.

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