

# Harness the skill of delegation to get more tasks done

By [Futhi Cabe](#)

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Given the importance of this topic to you as a business owner whose successful results depend largely through and with the actions of others, here we share some important tips on how you can hone your skill of delegation, and in so doing, develop your staff and get more tasks done.



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Some managers and business owners still believe that the best way to get something done, and done correctly, is to do it themselves. The reality is that no matter how productive you think you are, if you do everything yourself you will, at some point, reach your limit. Beyond that tipping point, your outputs will decrease and your stress levels will increase. Added to this, the skills levels of your team members will start to atrophy as a result of not being challenged, and you could run the risk of losing your key talent who may feel underdeveloped.

In brief, to ignore delegation is to mismanage. Period. If you choose to embrace delegation as an effective management tool, here are seven strategies you can adopt:

## 1. Become delegation conscious

I suggest you spend a day or two taking stock of the things that you do on a daily basis. This should be followed by the following important questions:

- Are there tasks that *only* you can do?
- Are there tasks that others could and even more importantly, *should* do?
- Is there any training required for those tasks, or can they be performed by others without the need to train them first?

Recognise that some team members are better qualified than you in certain areas. Be responsive to this reality and acknowledge that you don't have all the answers. You might be surprised by how much of your own work can be delegated.

## 2. Stop postponing projects

All of us have tasks that we continually ignore or postpone for one reason or another. No matter how much we postpone or ignore these tasks, the reality is that they will not go away. At some stage, these tasks have to be done. If you find yourself in this predicament, you need to learn to delegate these tasks to team members, thereby freeing yourself up to get on with other tasks.

### **3. Allow yourself some relaxation time**

Successful managers and leaders of people can maintain a hectic pace while they are at work, but they give themselves regular periods for relaxation. If you have no relaxation time, you should consider delegating some of your work to capable members of your team. You must establish harmony between work and relaxation. This is important not only to maintain your own sanity, but also for your effectiveness as a business person.

### **4. Have faith in others**

Do you withhold assignments from team members because you don't have faith in the quality of their work, or because you think you can do a better job? Perhaps you feel insecure, fearing that your employee might perform the task better and outshine you as delegator. These are deep, incisive and introspective questions that you must face as a leader, if you want to free yourself from tasks that you could delegate.

### **5. Pay attention to staff development**

Staff, or as I prefer to refer to them, your team members, may be unwilling to offer to do some tasks because they feel they lack the required skills to successfully complete such tasks. This could also be a reason for your reluctance to delegate. At the initial stage, take the lead and arrange the appropriate training programmes for your team members. I say initially, because it is vital that your team members understand that they must take personal responsibility for developing their skills.

### **6. Always be available for advice**

Ensure that your team members understand your availability as a resource, to assist and support them when required. In saying this, resist the urge to be over helpful - your staff members need to learn and grow from the opportunity, even if they make mistakes. Train yourself to revert any problems raised by your team members to them, with focused questions. Refrain from giving easy answers. Let your team members develop on the journey.

### **7. Only if you must, do intervene**

If you see that a delegated task is heading for disaster, intervene immediately. Call an emergency meeting and lay all your cards on the table. State where you see a danger area developing, why it is flagged as danger, and offer the team member an opportunity to respond to your concerns. Provide clear guidance, encouragement, support and assistance where required. Remember that it took you many years to acquire your experience and accumulated knowledge. These are valuable resources that should be shared with your team.



## 7 tips to developing delegation skills

Futhi Cabe 28 Aug 2020



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Final thoughts: The process of learning the art of delegation may take time. The amount of time you invest will be repaid many times over as your team members grow and develop in competence and confidence. You will also reap the benefits of being more relaxed about delegation, both personally and for the success of your business.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Futhi Cabe, WesBank Head of SME Segment

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