



Leading from the ground up



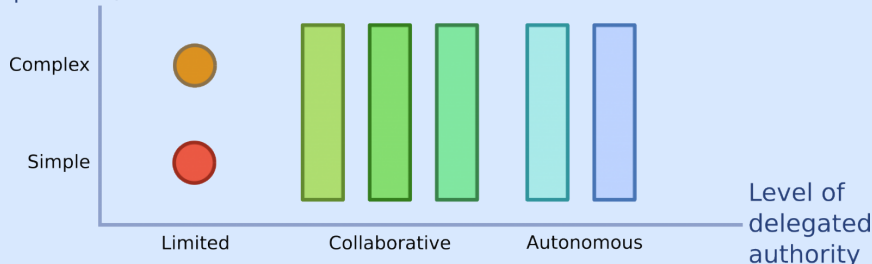
For new or renewing leaders

The practice of delegation

Effective delegation doesn't happen accidentally. It requires deliberate choices about how you manage your work program and how the team will share responsibility. Here we look at four important elements of delegation: choosing the type of delegation, the process of delegating, and leadership oversight of the delegation arrangement.

Types of delegation

Delegated process / task



- Delegate implements a defined task as directed by delegator
- Delegate explores options, reports to delegator, and gets approval to act
- Delegate and delegator act together
- Delegate acts with support from delegator
- Delegate acts and only seeks input/help from delegator if needed
- Delegate authorised to undertake specific actions and report when they see the need
- Delegate authorised to explore, decide, act, and report regarding broader outcomes

The type of delegation and competence

The level of autonomy granted to the delegate is the main difference between types of delegation. The next factor is the level of complexity of the delegated process or tasks. Combined they indicate the levels of competence and attributes the delegate needs if the delegation is to succeed.

The delegation process

Delegation is a process, not a single act. It is part of the way a leader uses their authority and responsibilities to maximise performance. Better delegation means better performance for all. So it is important that the delegator applies an effective process to make sure it goes well.

Here we have a sample that highlights some of the key elements of a delegation process.

The delegation process

Business Case

Clarify what drives the purpose for delegating.
Nominate the benefits.
Define the type of delegation.
Describe clearly what is being delegated.
Nominate the people / teams involved.
Confirm the validity of the arrangement, including its legality and your freedom to delegate.

Implementation

Specifications of the delegation
The type of delegation, the intended outcome, the deliverables.
Core processes for the delegation
Communication between parties, triggers for escalation to delegator, notifying other parties about the arrangement.
Time frame for the delegation
When it starts and finishes, whether it is ongoing, when it is reviewed.
Enablers
Capabilities (already available and to be developed), resources, networks.

Resolution

On completion, review and learn from the experience.
For ongoing delegations, set periodic reviews to learn, improve the arrangement, and confirm its continuation.
If an escalation is triggered, review, learn and determine the future of the delegation and whether it needs to be modified.

Ongoing oversight

Delegation does not erase the leader's responsibility for the function or outcomes delegated. This means the leader has to have a method of oversight to meet their responsibilities. You can't delegate and run.

Currency

Keep the business case current and update delegations when needed.

Quality

Track the progress of the arrangement to make sure it is delivering good results.

Performance

Integrate it into your ongoing performance management of your team.

Accountability

Remember, you can never offload your responsibility. The buck still stops with you.

Socio-emotional factors

Delegation is a relationship that must be maintained.

Trust

Delegators need people they can trust, who have good will, ability, and integrity. It is important to foster these in your team so you can delegate.

Recognition

The efforts of delegates must be recognised. This builds their confidence and adds integrity to the relationship.

