

That Darn “D” Word

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One of my favorite moments in a time management training program is when I require (well... strongly request) participants to evaluate what tasks they need to delegate to someone else.

Once they have identified one or two they are planning to delegate, I even have the nerve to ask them to talk with someone around them about their plans to delegate the tasks. You can sometimes feel their resistance while they are engaging in the exercise, but after the program is over, many participants comment on how beneficial it was.

In honor of all you “clingers or dumpers” when it comes to delegation (Quote by John Maxwell), here are the most frequent arguments I get to why people don’t delegate and my response:

“I don’t have time to train them.”

There is no question you will have to take more time to prepare them to take on the task, but once they are trained, your time with them should decrease. It might take you 3 hours to train them, but what if their work on the task saves you just 30 minutes per week at work. In the course of a year that’s 26 hours!

“They won’t do it right.” Is your answer based on previous experience with them or are you just guessing? If it’s based on previous experience, review the delegation process you took with them. Did communication happen as needed? Were you clear with expectations? Did they have the resources they needed? If you are just guessing about their ability to handle the task, reflect back on how good you felt when someone gave you a chance to

prove yourself. There’s also an old phrase that goes, *There is a difference between doing the job right and doing the right job.*

“I like doing the task.” Our workday should never be filled with a list of just things we HAVE to do. Hopefully our jobs are aligned with our passions so there are things in our schedule we actually WANT to do. You may like doing a certain task, but if there is something you could engage in that would be more beneficial in helping you accomplish your purpose, shouldn’t your time be spent there instead?

“I don’t have anybody to delegate to.” Even if you are your business, there are probably tasks that could be outsourced. You might also want to think about non-work tasks that take up a considerable amount of your time. Anything you could let go of in order to focus on more important tasks should be considered.

One final thought about delegation: Remember that you should control the deadline, outcome and communication and they should control the process. Once they know the resources available and any policies or guidelines associated with working on the task, let them do it. You have bigger tasks waiting on you.