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Delegation

– help for the overworked
committee member



Have you ever heard your president, secretary or committee member say, “I have too much on my plate – can’t get around to that”?

You may have heard your boss, or the general manager say, “I’m too busy”.

If you are a flat-out president or a snowed-under secretary, this pamphlet will remind you that your committee won’t collapse if you don’t do everything – no one is indispensable!

This resource highlights some common-sense steps to ensuring your workload will be lighter, that your group won’t have members who just ‘make up the numbers’ and that it will be seen as an effective team.

Delegation

Delegation is giving a job to someone, defining the parameters for accomplishing the job, and giving the person the authority to get the job done. Thus, delegating is never dumping.

Why delegate?

- To get the work done
- To share the work load
- To grow the club and grow the individuals that are a part of the club

What should I delegate?

- Jobs or responsibilities that someone can do better than you
- Jobs that someone can do instead of you
- Jobs that someone can do with better timing
- Any job that will help the club and/or the individual grow and develop.

We all say it’s vital, so why don’t we do it? Do you hesitate to delegate for any of the following reasons?

- “If you want something done right, do it yourself.”
- “There are too many problems in getting others to do it – might as well do it myself.”
- “I don’t like palming off the dirty work to others.”
- “I don’t like fronting up to people if they mess up a job I have given them.”
- “I don’t want to appear bossy.”
- “I like doing some things myself – I reckon I’ve earned the chance for recognition.”
- “It takes too long to explain how to do it. I just want to get on and do the job.”
- “I think you’re weak if you have to get others to do the job.”

Does delegation sometimes fail? Of course and it’s usually when we don’t prepare properly.

Delegation = proper preparation.

Here are steps you can follow to ensure that you prepare thoroughly before delegating:

Step 1

What precise job (or part of a job) do you want done? Define it clearly (ideally, write it down).

Step 2

What outcomes or results do you want? Identify them accurately.

Step 3

'Horses for courses' – pick the right person for the job. Consider the following:

- Has the person got time? (However, don't choose someone just because he or she has the time. This can be dangerous)
- Has the person got ability? (Go back to the job description and see what kind of person is needed).
- Can you appeal to the person's self-interest?
- Can you identify a challenge for the person?
- Can the person work with the rest of your team? Some people are enthusiastic, even very capable, but if they antagonise others on your team, they can be a menace.

Step 4

Having picked the right person:

- explain the job clearly, avoiding torrents of words
- don't underestimate the size of the job or, even worse, give the impression that it's not important
- check carefully that the person has understood you. This requires tact but it is essential.

Step 5

Wrap up the agreement:

- Agree on the time for finishing all and/or each part of the job
- Discuss and agree on the outcomes of the job
- Find out if the person needs resources or help of any kind.

Step 6

Keep your eyes open!

- Don't be a nag – but take a keen interest in progress
- Ask precise questions, not, "Is it going well?"
- e.g. How many? Who? Where?

Step 7

Review and reward!

- Look at the successes and shortfalls
- Identify the causes of the shortfalls (perhaps you didn't delegate thoroughly!)
- Try to give recognition – no matter how small.

Finally

Former IOC President, Juan Antonio Samaranch said "The cemeteries are full of people who thought they were indispensable." (The West Australian, 11 July 2001, p115)

Other resources

This resource is part of a series which provides assistance to Western Australian sport and recreation clubs and organisations to become better managed, more sustainable and to provide good quality services to members and participants.

Other resources in the series include:

1. Starting a new club
2. Planning for your club – the future is in your hands
3. Taking the lead! A guide for club presidents
4. The club secretary – the key to efficiency
5. Show me the money – a guide for the club treasurer
6. Effective club meetings – a guide for the chairperson
7. Making meetings effective – a short guide
8. Delegation – help for the overworked committee member
9. Problem solving – a guide for clubs
10. Promoting your club
11. Seeking and servicing a sponsor
12. Establishing your club rules
13. Risky business – a club guide to risk management
14. Clubs' guide to volunteer management
15. Member protection for clubs
16. How to be an inclusive club
17. Passport into schools – linking sports with schools
18. Youth sport – junior sport policy
19. Long-term involvement – junior sport policy
20. Physical growth and maturation – junior sport policy
21. Sport pathways – junior sport policy
22. Forming links – junior sport policy
23. People making it happen – junior sport policy
24. Quality coaching – junior sport policy
25. Making sport safe – junior sport policy
26. The law and sport – junior sport policy
27. Top 20 tips for officials
28. Top 20 tips for successful coaching

You will find the full series of the booklets on Sport and Recreation (WA)'s website:

www.dsr.wa.gov.au/clubs