Delegating Responsibility

How can you help people in your organization prepare for future leadership roles and free up more time in your schedule so you can do other things? DELEGATION. Delegation is the key to a successful organization. Sharing responsibilities keeps members interested and enthusiastic about the group. You might be reluctant to delegate because you want to make sure the job is done right (your way). It might take longer than you to do it on your own, but it will help your mental well-being. It will also help your health while improving the quality of the end project. But you can make members feel unimportant and become apathetic if you don't share the responsibility of making the organization a success.

Reasons to Delegate
Group benefits:
o Members become more involved and committed
o More projects and activities are undertaken
o A greater chance that projects will be completed
o Increased opportunities for members to develop leadership skills
o More of a chance to fill leadership roles with qualified, experienced people
o The organization operates more smoothly

The leader benefits by:
o Not being spread too thin and therefore is less likely to burn out
o Gaining satisfaction seeing members grow and develop
o Acquiring more experience in executive and administrative functions

An Appropriate Time To Delegate Is When:
o There is a lot of work
o A member has particular qualifications for or interest in a task
o Someone can benefit from the responsibility
o Routine matters need attention
o Details take up too much time and have to be divided

The Time Not To Delegate Is When:
o The task is something you would not want to do (menial work)
o Someone is under qualified or overqualified for the task
o The work is your own specified responsibility
o The area is big or is an unsolved problem, issue or matter dealing with the

personal feelings of another or with confidentiality - the "hot potato"

Ways to Delegate:
o Ask for volunteers by a show of hands or passing a sign-up sheet.
(Interest is a great motivator!) However, this method can be impersonal
and you could be "stuck" if no one signs up.
o Appoint or suggest someone. Sometimes a member lacks self-confidence
and won't volunteer; appointing him/her demonstrates your confidence in
him/her.
o Assign through a committee. This takes the pressure off an individual and
reinforces organizational structure.
o "Best fit" of person with the task is the most effective. Try to spread the
enjoyable and responsible tasks around, giving more members status and
value.

Guidelines for Effective Delegation:
1. Choose the appropriate people by interviewing and placing your members
carefully. Consider his/her time, interest and capabilities. Specific
responsibilities to be delegated to a particular person must be appropriate
for the growth of that person at that time.
2. Explain why the person(s) was (were) selected for this task.
3. Delegate segments that make sense; not bits and pieces of a task, but share
the "big picture". People like to know how their segment will help the larger
program.
4. Discuss the task at hand. Discuss ideas; mutually set goals and objectives.
Whenever possible, give those who will be responsible for carrying out a
program a voice in the decision-making. Do not lower standards; don't insult
your members!
5. Define clearly the responsibilities being delegated to each person. Explain
what is expected of the person(s) and what the bounds of authority are. Be
sure agreement is reached on areas where the person can function freely.
The end result is important, not the various steps. Everyone accomplishes
tasks differently.
6. Find out how you will know when they need help. Make sure they
understand you are willing to assist but must first be told when and how you
can help. Give accurate and honest feedback. People want and deserve to
know how they are doing. This is both an opportunity for giving satisfaction
and encouraging growth. Allow for risk-taking and mistakes.
7. Support your officers and committee chairs by sharing information,
knowledge and plans with them. It is incredible how many errors are made
simply due to a lack of information. Share their failures as well as their
successes.
8. Delegate. Most responsible people do not appreciate someone looking over
their shoulder, or taking back parts of their assignment before they have a
chance to do it. As a leader, it can be hard for you to "let go;" you like being

the doer. Let them do the job! Delegating does not eliminate work, it simply changes it. As you delegate appropriately, a multiplier effect occurs.

9. Follow up. Check periodically to see if people have any questions regarding how a project is supposed to be done. This will also let you know how that individual is progressing on the task. There is a fine line between delegating and following-up.

10. Evaluation the importance of evaluation. You must not overlook the need to evaluate and measure the extent to which actions conformed to plans, if the plans went well or if the original plans were appropriate and worthwhile. Use appropriate feedback techniques. One of your most important roles as a leader is to help your members to learn and grow through both their successes and their failures! Your members are your greatest resource. Let them create and turn their creativity into action!