

Learning to Delegate Can be A winning Difference

Time is one of a leader's most valuable assets. Also, it can become a relentless enemy. Mastering both the art and the discipline of delegating determines how well a leader succeeds. Knowing when and what to delegate is a key factor in this element. In large organizations the delegation of authority is done in a systemic manner where leaders delegate duties and responsibilities that are of a recurring nature. It is a multiplication process that allows the leader to spread his authority across an organization, and frees up his time to address larger strategic issues that, if ignored, can impede or thwart progress.

The focus of this letter is on delegating those tasks that a leader must delegate because time constraints demand it. When done effectively, there are immediate and tangible benefits such as increased morale, confidence, and productivity of subordinates.

An effective leader often must demonstrate a level of artistry in delegating work because it can have negative consequences. He or she should know as a matter of course not to delegate responsibilities that everyone knows he or she should be doing. Tasks are delegated because the work is important. If it is perceived that the leader is delegating work that unimportant, or perceived as simply unpleasant, subordinates will conclude the leader does not value their work.

Effective leaders know how important it is to tell a person why you have chosen him or her to execute the work on his behalf, why he or she believes their talents are best suited for that project or task. The goal is to instill a sense of purpose in the one doing the work that allows him or her to take ownership of the desired outcome.

One of the most compelling reasons for delegating and doing on a consistent basis is it teaches the leader how to pick the best

people. Leaders learn, often by trial and error, that choosing the best people increases the probability of success, as opposed to assigning work to people the leader is most familiar with, which can result in a less positive outcome.

On scale and what it means.

In last month's issue, I introduced the acronym PIINACLE (with two i's), and discussed the first two letters in that acronym. This month I want to continue with that discussion by speaking on the second "I" which means Invoicing, and its corollary, Payments. The life blood of any company is cash flow, and for small and mid-sized companies this is especially true.

When smaller companies attempt to scale up and swim with the bigger fish, it is very important they understand getting paid is more than simply sending in the invoice at the end of the month. Larger companies and public agencies routinely include language in the contract terms that, among other things, requires that the company's invoice be reviewed before formal submittal to verify it contains all of the information requested by the contract. In addition to the information shown on the face of the invoice, a company is often required to submit significant amounts of supporting information with the invoice. These requirements can be onerous if not adequately planned for, particularly if the contract terms call for progress payments.

For example, larger companies and public entities often require that the company providing the product or service transfer rights and title to equipment and material in proportion to the payment amounts being

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released, and establishing these submittals in an acceptable format can and does delay payment. Not only is evidence of expenditures by the company required, but a company is frequently required to include information from sub-tier suppliers as well. Therefore, it is of paramount importance when making the decision to scale up and bid on larger scopes of work that the obligations necessary to obtain timely payment be clearly understood, even to the point of contacting the company or agency and discussing these issues thoroughly before proceeding.

Thought for the day.....

On the subject of Judgment our readers should consider the following: Beyond the formal meaning found in a dictionary, judgment is more than just the ability to make good decisions about what should be done. It begins by thinking carefully and critically which are skills that are learned through practice. You cannot acquire them by going to a conference or a seminar.

For a wide range of resources from the small business community I recommend:

www.servicesca.org,