

# QUICK TIPS

## Why delegate?

Delegation is an ethical responsibility you owe to yourself, to those with whom you work, and to your organization.

### Yourself

- Allows time for planning
- Allows time for organizing
- Allows time for non-organizational pursuits
- Teaches valuable lessons in how to work with and develop others
- Builds trust
- Encourages open communication

### Members

- Motivates
- Builds self-esteem
- Encourages creative problem solving
- Stimulates initiative
- Trains future leaders
- Builds trust
- Facilitates communication
- Stimulates creativity
- Allows significant contributions

### Organization

- Promotes perpetuation
- Opens new avenues of creativity
- Promotes increased productivity
- Improves overall efficiency/effectiveness

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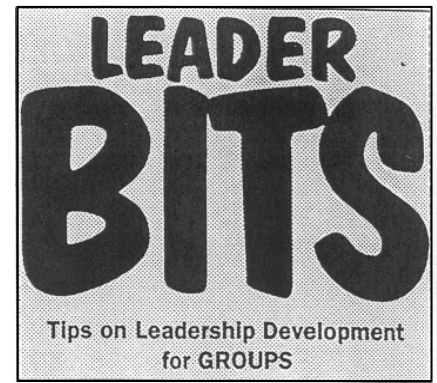
- Advising Groups
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BITS**

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### Delegation: A Parable

Once upon a time, there was a Little Red Hen who owned a wheat field. "Who will help me harvest the wheat?" she asked. "Not I," said the pig. "I don't know how." "Not I," said the cow. "I'm too clumsy." "Not, I" said the dog. "I'm busy with some other things." So the Little Red Hen did it herself. "Who will help me grind the wheat into flour?" she asked. "Not I," said the pig. "That is another vocation in which I'm untrained." "Not I," said the cow. "You can do it much more efficiently." "Not I," said the dog. "I'd love to, but I'm involved in some matters of greater urgency. Some other time perhaps." So she did it herself. "Who will help me make some bread?" asked the Little Red Hen. Again, all declined, so she did it herself.

That evening when guests arrived for her big dinner party, she had nothing to serve except bread. She had been so busy doing work that could have been done by others that she had forgotten to plan a main course, prepare a dessert, or even set the table. The evening was a disaster and she lived unhappily ever after.

Moral: A good leader will find a way to involve others to the extent of their ability. To do the job yourself is the chicken way out!\*

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A leader cannot do everything for an organization. There are only so many hours in a day and so many tasks one person can do. Besides, an uninvolved member soon becomes an apathetic, unmotivated member who most likely drops out of the group. A good leader learns to use the skill of "delegation" to help his/her organization develop to its fullest potential.

**Most leaders have difficulty delegating responsibility. Some common reasons for not delegating:**

"I could do it better and faster myself."

"I'm not handling my responsibility well if I have to ask someone to help."

"I'm too busy to delegate."

"People won't like me if I'm always asking them to do things."

"If someone wanted to help, they would tell me. I shouldn't have to ask them."

"No one has the skills to do this but me."

"I know it will get done if I do it."

"I would be giving up my authority if I let someone take my responsibilities."

"If they screw up, I'm the one who'll get in trouble."

"It just didn't occur to me to ask someone to help."

**Principles of Delegation**

Assigning responsibility to others does not lessen your responsibility. It gives you the capacity to handle greater responsibility.

Never assign tasks to a member solely because this task is unpleasant to you.

Delegate only if you have confidence that the member is capable of handling the task.

When delegating, be sure to back up the member when his/her authority is called into question.

Delegating allows another to complete a task his or her way, not necessarily, as you would have done it.

Even though you may be able to do the task better or faster, delegating allows for the growth of others.

Delegating sometimes involves teaching someone how to complete a task. How else will your members know how to operate the group when you've graduated?

Delegating can be a significant motivator in retaining members as it gives them a sense of accomplishment when a task is successfully completed.

Delegation is most successful when someone expresses an interest in the task, when he or she has a specific skill which would suit the task, or when he or she would benefit from the responsibility.

**Ways to delegate:**

Ask for volunteers in a meeting (show of hands, sign-up sheet)

Appoint someone (in meeting or after meeting)

Assign it to a committee (sometimes in a smaller group, people are less intimidated to volunteer)

Break up job into logical parts and spread the work to a few people

Find out your member's interests/skills/time commitment, and then find a task to suit them.

**Most of all let go and let them do the work. Follow up to make sure details are being taken care of, but don't jump back in and take over.**

Give feedback to members on their performance.