

BUDGET YOUR TIME - DELEGATE

Most people are familiar with the concepts of budgeting their money and spending it in ways that give them maximum benefit. But too many "money-smart" people are spend-thrifts with their time.

One of the prime offenders is the manager who has forgotten that a good manager is one who has trained his staff so well that he could walk out of his office at any time and be assured that routine decisions will be made. The superintendent who understands this and who has trained his staff to take care of the day-to-day mechanics of running a golf course is the one who has time and energy to devote to trouble shooting and long-range planning. The key to effective delegation of routine decisions is to make it clear to your employees just how well informed you want to be about the actions they take on responsibilities you have given them. How much independence you give a particular person should depend on the skill and experience he has.

Another form of delegation is to ask a staff member who has brought a problem to your attention to explore various ways of solving the problem, evaluate the alternatives, make a decision, and tell you what he has decided. You will then have a chance to discuss the situation in more detail if necessary. This is an excellent way to assess an employee's ability to make good decisions.

Effective delegation lets you win in two ways. You save your valuable time by not getting involved in minor decisions others can handle, and you also take an important step in training your staff. This on-the-job training increases an employee's value to your organization and contributes to good morale and teamwork.

Be aware, though, that no matter how good your system is, mistakes will occur from time to time. The test of a good delegation system is how the situation is handled. On one hand, don't ignore the problem and hope it won't reoccur. But don't make such a fuss over it that a potentially valuable employee loses all confidence in his ability to make good judgements. Use this opportunity to initiate a discussion about what the proper actions would have been and why.

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