GROWTH WITHOUT DELEGATION IT’S IMPOSSIBLE!
A SMART GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE DELEGATION FOR ENTREPRENEURS AND LEADERS

Inspire Results
BUSINESS ADVISING

ROGER & SUSIE ENGELAU
FOUNDERS OF INSPIRE RESULTS BUSINESS ADVISING
GROWTH WITHOUT DELEGATION IT’S IMPOSSIBLE!
A Smart Guide to Effective Delegation for Entrepreneurs and Leaders

CONTENTS

THE SINGLE BEST WAY TO GROW YOUR BIZ 2
IT’S TOUGH TO LET GO 4
JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN DOESN’T MEAN YOU SHOULD 5
EVEN MY MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBERS TELL ME I NEED TO DELEGATE MORE 6
WHAT SHOULD YOU DELEGATE? 6
IDENTIFY WHAT IT IS THAT YOU DO ALL DAY EVERY DAY 8
  DELEGATION TASK LOG 9
FOR SMALLER COMPANY BIZ OWNERS 10
FOR LARGER COMPANY BIZ OWNERS 10
SUPPORTING A DELEGATEE AS THEY TAKE ON THE NEW ROLE OR TASK 11
HOW TO DELEGATE 11
CONCLUSION 14
Whether you own a $500K business or a $50 million one, delegation is the way to grow your business without having to work harder and give up more personal time. Delegation of non-core tasks always makes sense.

**THE SINGLE BEST WAY TO GROW YOUR BIZ**

Delegation for business owners is the single most efficient way to run your business without having to spread yourself too thin. You don’t need to hire an army of employees or contractor staff to gain the freedom and growth that comes from effective delegation.

As a business advisor, I run into people who fall into one of 4 categories:

1. Those who believe they’re delegating but they’re not – This is the business owner who gives a project to a team member but gives them so many details about how to do it that the delegatee feels no ownership of it.

2. Those who don’t delegate, know they don’t delegate, and don’t intend to start – They know it makes them nervous to let go of things, they don’t like training someone else, and they don’t see the benefits of delegating.

3. Those who are over-delegating— These folks don’t have their finger on the pulse of important numbers like weekly sales figures, whether critical deadlines are really getting met, what the current inventory is or how old it is, and so on.

4. The true delegator—I’ve only seen a handful of these out of the hundreds of business owners I’ve coached. They rely on others to get things done but they’ve got a communication and follow-up system so they’re informed on it all but not doing it all.

*So if delegation of non-core tasks always makes sense, why are only a handful of business owners doing it?*
GROWTH WITHOUT DELEGATION IT’S IMPOSSIBLE!
A Smart Guide to Effective Delegation for Entrepreneurs and Leaders

IT’S TOUGH TO LET GO.

We all have strong and deeply-rooted motivations for not delegating. You might have one or all of them as one can pop up today and another tomorrow or next week….

- I can do it faster if I do it myself
- No one can do it as well as I can
- I’ll lead by example and do it myself
- I don’t have anyone to delegate to
- I’m too small a company; we all just pitch in and help where ever needed
- I’m uncomfortable asking

There’s another common comment I hear for not delegating as much as you can and it goes like this… “I go work on the shop floor with my people to show them that I’m not too good to do what they do.” There’s some nobility, some humbleness, in doing this and, while that’s nice, it can sometimes convey that you think you can do their job better than they can. Besides, your people want you to do what YOU do, not what THEY do. They get a sense of comfort and confidence when they see you taking care of your role. If you’re doing their role, no one’s doing your role. It’s OK to spend time chatting with your engineer in his cubicle or with a machine operator at her machine but the focus should be on what you can do to help them be more effective, to overcome obstacles they’re facing, and in general getting to know them and understand how you can help them. While I see this more with biz owners who’ve worked their way up from the shop floor, it’s a temptation for any biz owner wanting to get closer to his/her people.

Whatever your reasons for not delegating, they’re “overcome-able.” Delegation doesn’t come naturally to most of us. But its myopic thinking to keep doing it all yourself, whatever your motivations. You only have a limited amount of time no matter how hard you work. At some point, you max out on how many hours you can work in a day! It’s inevitable. And it’s at this same point that your business’ growth stagnates.

I had a $28 million dollar business owner and I was urging her to offload the creation of a weekly financial report to one of her stronger admin people. Every week I’d say, “Did you show Todd how to do the report?” Every week she’d answer, “It’s just 15 minutes. I
can knock it out myself.” True, it would take 90 minutes to train someone else but what happens when it comes up again? It’s 15 more minutes, and the next time it’s 15 minutes more, and each month its 1 hour she could’ve saved herself. If she’d trained Todd 6 weeks ago, today she wouldn’t have to be doing that report.

And here’s another benefit to handing off the report to Todd and it doesn’t have to do with the business owner. It makes Todd feel better about his job and his relationship with you. It tells him you trust him, have confidence in him, and want him around in the future. That’s a huge, unquantifiable benefit in this age of downsizing and rightsizing.

It also adds to Todd’s knowledge and skills making him a more valuable team member. It lets you know what he’s capable of, where his limitations are, and what development he could use.

**JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN DO THE TASK DOESN’T MEAN YOU SHOULD**

Let’s say you have a background in web design. You love it and you do it well. So who better to design and maintain your company’s website, right? After all, you know the best what needs to be on it. You can write the mission statement and the product descriptions off the top of your head. You can dictate the colors and layout better than anyone else. It just makes sense that you go ahead and do this one yourself, right? No.

While on the surface it’s easier to do it yourself than to explain the strategy and details to someone else, there are two key reasons that mean that it’s probably better to delegate the task to someone else:

- First, if you have the ability to conceptualize a website, chances are that your skills are better used further developing other marketing strategies. By doing the work yourself, you’re failing to make the best use of your time.
- Second, this is a task that’ll need regular care and feeding. It’s not a one-and-done. Chances are good that if you build the website, you’ll stay involved in the maintenance of it. Every time a product is updated or team member changes, you’ll be the one going out there to update the website.
EVEN MY MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBERS TELL ME I NEED TO DELEGATE MORE

If you’re like most leaders, you’re probably wasting some of your time on activities that a manager at your level should not be doing… and even your direct reports can see it. Or more likely, they’re the ones who see it best!

So get their input. Ask your team leaders, “Are there areas where I need to let go or delegate more to you?” and “Are there areas where I need to get more involved or provide more help to you?”

If you’re like most leaders, you’ll find that while there are some areas that you need to let go, there are other areas where your direct reports would appreciate more of your involvement. Tailor your delegation strategy to fit the unique needs of your staff members.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DELEGATE?

If you’re having trouble getting started, just delegate the tasks that are hindering you from increasing your revenue. Often as the business owner, you’re best at prospecting and bringing in new business so focus on what you do best and look at the rest of the tasks you’re doing and consider those for offloading to someone else.

Delegate the low-priority tasks so you as the business owner can focus on the high-payoff, revenue-producing tasks like networking, meeting clients/prospects, talking to strategic alliance partners or centers of influence, and expanding into new markets. High profile tasks that have a low tolerance for mistakes are best done yourself.

Tasks critical for long-term success are long-range, broad-reaching, and strategic activities. Things like recruiting the right people for your team, strategic planning, conducting seminars, creating new products or services, and industry discussions and discussions with other companies. These should be done by the biz owner.
Most all recurring tasks can and should be delegated:

- Answering the phone, returning calls
- Sending/returning emessages
- Handling mail
- Scheduling meetings
- Running errands
- Maintaining databases
- Doing research
- Bookkeeping and filing
- Creating daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly reports
- Doing payroll
- Website design and maintenance
- Social media daily/weekly posts, tweets, blogposts
- Eblasting, direct mail

You should keep any confidential issues or sensitive customer relationships on your plate. Employee performance issues should be handled by the employee’s direct manager and your HR person if you have one. Your management team and any supervisors should be equipped to deal with these without you. You should be informed but not involved. However, there’s a certain point at which you do want to be involved in employee issues. You should define this for your particular company. They would include things like safety issues, threats of any kind, theft or other illegal behaviors, and below standard performance that’s lasted longer than several weeks. Make sure employee issues are a regular item on your weekly meeting with each of your managers.

Timing can have a bearing on what you decide to delegate and what you keep for yourself. If you decide that you need a report for your meeting in two hours, since it’s so close to the time you need it, doing it yourself will probably save you time and stress you less than if you take 20 minutes to explain it to someone else.
Sometimes things just have to have your “mark” on them. You might want a strong team member to prepare a presentation for you, but if the words and thoughts aren’t yours, it may not connect with your audience unless you spend some time on it yourself.

IDENTIFY WHAT IT IS THAT YOU DO ALL DAY EVERY DAY

Now, having said all that, you need to know what it is you DO in order to systematically decide what you want to delegate to someone else. If you’re like most of us, you can’t name everything you do all day long, week after week; you just know you’re extremely busy!

If you’re anything like me, you’ll hate this next piece of advice but I promise it won’t take as long as it sounds and it’ll pay off big time as you continue toward this goal of growing your business. So here it is. Track what you’re doing for 1 week, maybe 2 weeks if there’s a lot of variety from week to week.

Here’s a simple tracking log…
DELEGATION TASK LOG

The most important goal in doing this is to capture a list of every single thing you spend time on... so at the end of the week, or 2 weeks, you can step back and look at the log and see where your time is going—and compare that to where you want it to go!

While you’re logging the task, make a note if you have an opinion about whether the task is one that should be delegated (listed earlier). If you have someone in mind who’s possibly a good one to do it, jot down their name.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>CAN IT BE DELEGATED?</th>
<th>POSSIBLE DELEGATEE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FOR SMALLER COMPANY BIZ OWNERS

Start by delegating to outside experts. Just because you can do website development or the financial reports doesn’t mean you should. A professional website designer will get the job done right as will one of the many virtual assistant resources in central Indiana.

Delegate tasks that require a specific skill set to experienced professionals, like marketing, accounting and financial reporting, human resources, sales, telemarketing, and computer support.

If you can’t afford a professional, hire a high schooler or college freshman to do your administrative work. Young people are especially good with facebook, Twitter, and other online and social media marketing. You can pay them less to start and as they develop skills and take on more responsibility your company’s also growing and you can afford to pay them more—or replace them with more highly skilled professionals.

As you grow, you begin bringing those outside resources in-house. The more you grow, the more you hire internally and eventually you build up a staff that gives you the capacity to have all or many inside resources as you progress to a $1, $5, $20 million and more revenue company.

FOR LARGER COMPANY BIZ OWNERS

Frequently I see company revenues stuck at $5, $10, or $20 million or more year after year. No matter the size company, you’ll hit a revenue ceiling.

One of the first revenue ceilings commonly encountered is due to the lack of a strong senior management team. Until you develop a strong team that daily business management responsibilities can be delegated to, the business can’t grow and you’ll likely be overextended and frustrated. And if you as the business owner are overextended and frustrated, your business will be stuck where it is.
You want to build your internal capacity for delegation. This is an area I frequently find myself working with clients on. Build a strong management team so that you can begin to delegate to them. Have each manager do the same with his/her team members.

By meaningfully involving other people in the project, you develop those people’s skills so that next time a similar project comes along, you can delegate it with confidence and less involvement.

**HOW TO DELEGATE**

To insure the work gets done the way you want it done, follow this 4-step Apprenticeship Plan process developed by Eric Dombach. In the first step, you DO while the apprentice WATCHES, next time you DO while the apprentice HELPS and so on until the apprentice is DOING on his own. It also makes sense for the delegatee to write down the step-by-step process for task completion. It helps them learn and creates a system that can be improved over time.

**SUPPORTING A DELEGATEE AS THEY TAKE ON THE NEW ROLE OR TASK**

How do you ensure that the delegation sticks and the delegatee continues to perform the task well? How do you encourage them to take the system they created during the learning process and improve it based upon their own knowledge, experience and continued learning? How much information do you continue to give? When do you check back in? Here’s a 5-step process for how to launch the delegatee with confidence—

---

GROWTH WITHOUT DELEGATION IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
A Smart Guide to Effective Delegation for Entrepreneurs and Leaders

1. Be clear about your expectations

You’ve trained them in the how, now provide them with the big picture in order to help your delegatee to have the same perspective that you have. Say WHAT you need accomplished and tell WHY it’s important. When the person knows the desired results, it’s more likely they can keep connecting the task to changing company goals.

2. Establish checkpoints

Determine what the key milestones are in the task or project and establish those as the times at which you’ll check back on progress. You can also ask your delegatee to put it on his/her calendar to provide you with a progress report at those key times. The 2 factors that help determine how frequently to do check-ins are A) complexity of the task and B) the skills and capabilities of the delegatee. Whatever you do, don’t go to one extreme or the other by either checking back every hour, every day or by not checking back at all and finding out at the end of the task that their learning didn’t stick and there are missing or incorrect steps. Also, don’t appear to be too busy when your delegatee tries to check in with you.

3. Focus on the results, not your old process, i.e. the WHAT, not the HOW

Your goal through this process is to hand off the task and encourage the delegatee to continue to improve the process as their knowledge increases. It’s tough for them to do this when you as the boss delegated the task and taught them how to complete it—they don’t want to offend you by improving your process! So it’s vital to focus on ensuring they know WHAT you want accomplished (and WHY) and encouraging them to determine HOW to go about improving the process to take advantage of the way that works best for them. If you get into their how-to’s, that’s micromanagement and it undermines the delegatee’s ability to do good work. If you’ve got a less experienced individual, you’ll ask them to follow your methodology until they successfully complete the task consistently. You have to give the reins to a more experienced delegatee earlier and trust them to improve the results desired utilizing their own “HOW.” In either case, make it clear you expect them to improve on your “HOW.”
A common mistake I see is the biz owner who wraps their ego around the “HOW” and continues to dictate every step—“Did you do it this way?” “Remember, when you get to this point, you need to do X, then Y.” People learn from their mistakes and part of leadership is knowing where you can take risks by giving people a chance to “fail forward.” Don’t take away the delegatee’s opportunity to learn and to improve the process. People learn much more by experiencing failure and correcting their mistakes than they’ll every learn listening to you talk. If you don’t encourage this behavior you’ll find employees following long-outdated processes because of their fear of changing the boss’ methodology!

4. Define your role

Be clear on what level of support you’ll provide and tell your delegatee what that looks and sounds like. Where should s/he make decisions or wait for your instructions? Should they come to you with questions any time? This too, depends on the task complexity and the individual. Strive to give as much authority as you possibly can.

5. Define the consequences, good and bad

If the delegatee does this well, what will happen both in terms of the effect on the company and rewards to them? We’re not necessarily talking money or an extra vacation day as reward here. It might be a sense of accomplishment and success or something they can put on their resume. If they don’t do it well, what will happen to the organization? Unless you’re using the delegation of this task as a step in a corrective action process (which is another matter with other implications), I don’t recommend attaching any artificial consequences. By consequences I mean let the delegatee know what you see as the natural outcomes, or consequences, that’ll occur in the organization if the task fails or comes in poorly.
When delegated work is delivered back to you, act appreciative by giving time to review it thoroughly. Try to only accept good quality work. If you accept work that you’re not satisfied with, you train your delegatee to give you less-than-good work the next time, and the next time. Worse, you wind up doing the work yourself which defeats the reason you went to the time and trouble to delegate to start with. Conversely, remember to recognize and reward good work and process improvements.

CONCLUSION

As a leader, get in the habit of catching your employees doing something right. This builds confidence and willingness and leads to a team of people that take nearly as much ownership in the business as you do.

Delegating. Without it, the company you’ve given your heart and soul to fails to grow. It’s that simple.

Once you get the habit of doing it effectively, you’ll be rewarded with more time, a calmer existence, an empowered and satisfied staff, and steadily increasing profits. Delegation is the path to freedom and growth.

Roger Engelau is central Indiana’s sought-after coach to business owners in every industry. He applies his significant business expertise to help business owners improve their business, income, and lifestyle. His clients enjoy record profits. Go here http://bit.ly/timewithRoger to book a free phone meeting to discuss your unique business needs with him.

Roger and Susie co-founded Inspire Results Business Advising in 2010. Roger is Owner, CEO, and Certified Business Coach and Susie is Co-Owner and Marketing and Operations Manager.

Roger@InspireResults.com  317-908-05809