

## Delegate & Move up

**Delegation** is an integral part of every employee's work. **Delegation** is independent of the size of the organization, and an employee requires either upward or downward delegation, based on his/her position in the organizational hierarchy. Delegating downwards is more commonplace and it stems from the employee's position in the hierarchy. Though the concept of delegating upwards is not popular, it forms an essential aspect of **Delegation** at the workplace.

Delegation is used for the following reasons:

- ❖ To tap into the skills and resources already within the group
- ❖ To avoid burning out a few leaders
- ❖ To get things done
- ❖ To prevent the group from getting too dependent on one or two leaders
- ❖ To enhance the functioning of the team
- ❖ To allow everyone to feel a part of the effort and the success
- ❖ To groom new successors
- ❖ To enable new skill development in the team



In this article the point of focus will be the grooming of new leaders in a group or Succession Planning.

Succession planning is a dynamic, ongoing process of systematically identifying, assessing and developing leadership talent for future assignments and tasks. It provides a pool of talented and skilled personnel who are ready to take up advanced roles and bigger responsibilities. As in the case of any effective delegation, it is important to plan ahead and chalk out an exact plan for the identified individual, in order for him/her to assume the responsibilities of the next role.

### Delegation Process

As succession planning is an offshoot of effective delegation, the steps used in the Process of Delegation will be used to explain the steps that need to be followed for grooming an individual for the next role.

#### Stage 1: Investigate

As a delegator, it is important to identify the tasks that need to be delegated as this helps the delegatee in gearing up for the next role. The delegator has to sort his/her tasks in such a manner so as to suit the delegatee's development plan.

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By applying the Pareto Principle the delegator can decide if the task that is to be delegated can help the delegatee for succession planning or if it saves time for the delegator.

The figure below represents the above concept.

Let us consider an example to explain the above figure. The task is to design a training module of a project. In this, the core task would be of formulating the design to implement the task.

Hence, designing of a training module of a project, can further be broken down into the following stages:

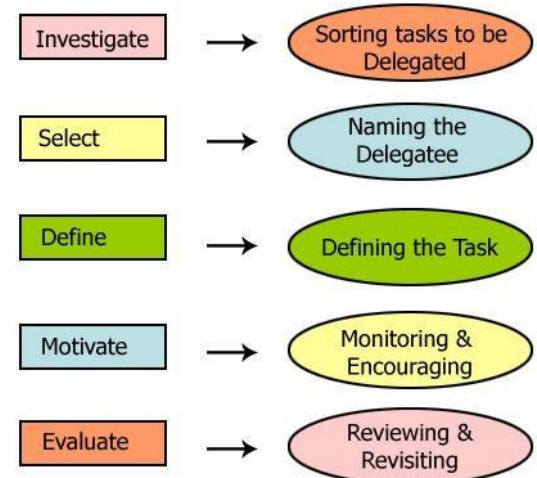


Fig. 1 - Stages of Delegation

- ❖ Formulating the design (A new challenge)  
The 20% of efforts that produce 80% of the results
- ❖ Formatting the artifact with basic details (Routine job)  
The 80% of efforts that produce 20% of the results

If the aim of the delegator is to prepare the delegatee to come into the next role (Succession Planning), then the delegator shall assign sub-task (a), i.e., formulating of the actual design. This task requires 20% of the efforts and yields 80% of the results and hence forms the crux of the whole project. Also, this is a job which is not so common and is a challenge to learn.

According to Figure 2, if the aim of the delegator is to save time then the delegator would delegate the sub-task (b), i.e., formatting the artifact with basic details, to the delegatee. This task takes 80% of the time to complete but gives only 20% of the results. Hence, this task should be delegated to manage time. These kinds of tasks, primarily, have routine activities and can be learnt easily but are also essential for attaining the end objective.

### Stage 2 : Select

It is important to select the right individuals and then groom them for the next role. The delegatee should be evaluated based on:

- ❖ Experience and knowledge
- ❖ Preferred work style
- ❖ Current workload

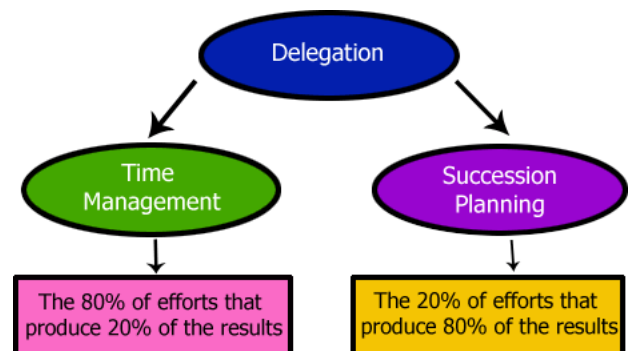


Fig. 2 - Delegation and the Pareto Principle

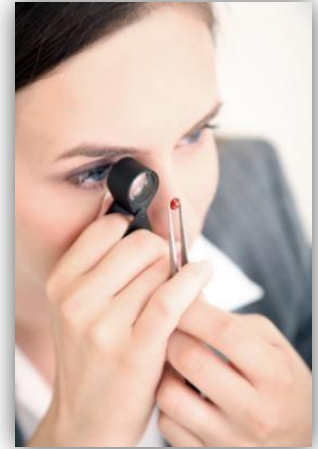
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When doing succession planning, the above factors need to be considered when delegating the tasks identified in Stage 1.

### Stage 3 : Define

Based on the task decided to be delegated as per the succession plan, the delegator ideally should follow these steps:

- ❖ Plan briefing
- ❖ Define objectives
- ❖ Set boundaries
- ❖ Communicate effectively



When implementing a succession plan, it is crucial to gain the delegatee's agreement in principle on the task, discuss any reservations and then push for commitment.

### Stage 4 : Motivate

Motivating and monitoring are keys for successfully implementing the succession plan. Some aspects that a delegator should focus are:

- ❖ Setting a reporting system in place
- ❖ Encouraging out of the box thinking
- ❖ Reviewing progress
- ❖ Using only Macro management
- ❖ Intervening only when absolutely necessary

### Stage 5 : Evaluate

Once work that is delegated is delivered to the delegator, there should be enough time set aside to evaluate it thoroughly and if possible, to accept only good quality, fully-complete work. If the delegator accepts work that he/she is not satisfied with, the delegatee does not learn to do the job properly.

It is crucial for the delegator to maintain an open-door policy when grooming a person to succeed in the next role. As a delegator, one should encourage solutions and concentrate on:

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- ❖ Regular constructive feedback
  - Recognize delegatee's efforts, as and when required
  - Reward excellence

These five stages of delegation should be applied in all organizations, as succession planning is an integral contributor to an organization's growth.

Salient points of Succession Planning from an Organization's Perspective

- ❖ It increases employee motivation and resulting in greater retention. The concept of promoting from within is an indicator of how the organization regards its employees.
- ❖ It encourages continuance of good leadership policies and strategies.
- ❖ It leads to the creation of a pool of ambitious, talented and skillful individuals within an organization.
- ❖ It provides an effective way to integrate performance and development during performance appraisals.

### References:

- Essential Manager's Manual, Heller and Hindle
- Who's next? Succession Planning, Management Quarterly, Summer, 2008, by Michael Maginn.  
Link: [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_hb3266/is\\_2\\_49/ai\\_n28574252](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb3266/is_2_49/ai_n28574252)

### Author Bio:

**Vikas Vinayachandran** is a certified Coach and Leadership Facilitator. His ability to establish a deep connection with the participants gives him the unique skill to leave an indelible mark in the lives of his trainees. He has over 15 years of experience conducting training programs for various levels of management in Fortune 500 companies. He has an MBA from the prestigious Lancaster University Management School, UK.

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