

HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW BY WILLIAM ONCKEN, JR., AND DONALD L. WASS

A GUIDE FOR REFLECTION

Read the Harvard Business Review article "Management Time: Who's Got the Monkey". When going through this article it would be useful to keep the following in mind:

- Although first published in 1974, it is one of HBR's most reprinted articles, with great relevance in today's managerial world. However attention must be paid to Covey's addition with regards to the "gorilla" and the importance of empowerment
- Keep in mind scenarios where you have faced a delegation challenge as a leader or as a sub-ordinate. This will allow you to translate the teachings directly back to your space
- The section titled "The Idea in Practice" has great relevance and is able to take the detailed narrative and put the stories told into a very accessible and practical format

Print out the article and underline or highlight those parts that resonate with you, make notes and comments and share these with others in your team and organisation. Use this guide to reflect on important aspects related to your leadership practices.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

Harvard Business Review Articles:

- What Effective General Managers Really Do by John P. Kotter
- The Manager: Master and Servant of Power by Fernando Bartolomé and André Laurent
- Pygmalion in Management by J. Sterling Livingston

Harvard Business School Books:

- Harvard Business Review on Managing People

Additional Articles :

- The Empowerment Pro-cess: Integrating Theory and Practice JA Conger, RN Kanungo - Academy of management review

Additional Books:

- The Busy Manager's Guide to Delegation by Lueke & Mcintosh
- The One Minute Manager Meets the Monkey by Blanchard, Oncken & Burrows

SUPPORT

Should you struggle to delegate and empower your team, we will gladly help. You are also welcome to reach out to us to share your learning and experience of delegation and empowerment to enhance performance. Sharing best practice ideas in this way helps build a community of management excellence and continued performance enhancement.

SELF ASSESSMENT

DELEGATION QUIZ

For each statement, mark the column that best describes you. Please answer honestly, these results are intended for your own self-insight and development. Tally your total score once you have completed the quiz and turn over the page for

No.	Question	Not at all	Rarely	Some-times	Often	Very Often
1	I delegate work which is directly related to my own objectives and priorities					
2	I take time to plan task allocation well before it is to be actioned					
3	I will delegate highly critical work to others if I am not the best person to complete the task					
4	I would rather delegate larger projects to a team of people than do everything myself					
5	I am explicitly clear around what needs to be done when I give instructions for delegated work					
6	I delegate things in a timely manner					
7	I delegate to anyone in my team who I feel is able to do the work					
8	Confidential and sensitive work is delegated by me with far greater caution than general work					
9	My subordinates or team will not be blindsided by delegated tasks from me at the last minute					
10	I do not meddle in work that I have delegated, providing detailed directions upfront I will wait for expected results at agreed upon review points					
11	I question whether a task or activity absolutely requires only my input or go-ahead before committing myself to its completion					
12	I regularly review my time allocation relative to my workload					
13	I use delegation as a means of empowering others by working on core areas of their development					
14	I am very open about the consequences of non-performance and missing delivery expectations					
15	I trust my subordinates and team to complete the work I delegate to them as well as what I would do					
16	I prefer my subordinates come to me with solutions to their problems as opposed to having to continually provide more instruction and direction					
TOTAL						

DELEGATION QUIZ SELF ASSESSMENT SCORE INTERPRETATION

16—32	33—57	58-80
<p>You need to actively focus on improving your delegation skills. Currently you would likely only delegate as a last resort and may not always be able to see it as a way of developing your team. You may likely have a lower level of trust in others and feel reluctant relinquishing work. This may result in others taking advantage of you and knowing that they can easily “pass their monkey” over to you to deal with.</p>	<p>You are able to delegate as often as most and are showing signs of progress. You are able to understand the basic principles of delegation but may try to expedite things on occasion and find yourself saying “It would be so much easier if I could just do it my-self”. You need to consider being more proactive in your approach to delegation and look for opportunities to involve your team when and where you can. Ensure that when you delegate you also provide the necessary support to enable them to succeed. You likely have a small “troop” of monkeys to deal with and some may take more of your time than they should.</p>	<p>You likely delegate the right tasks to the right people and have a deeper understanding of what it requires of you and others. You take the time to ensure that the right “monkeys” are attended to and plan your time accordingly. Your subordinates likely know where they stand with you when it comes to their work and what is expected. Further to that you appreciate that delegation is a cornerstone of empowering and enabling others.</p>
MY “DO DIFFERENTLY”		
<p>What would you like to focus on with regards to delegation and “getting the monkey off your back”?</p>		

HANDY TIPS FOR DELEGATION

WHAT

Choosing what to delegate...

Know that this is the starting point when it comes to delegation, without this the rest will not fall into place.

Ensure you delegate work that :

- Is appropriate for the individual
- Should not be done by you
- Is not “mission critical” if you do not have absolute confidence in an-other's ability to deliver on results that you will be held accountable for. Consider if the task is critical or important. Important tasks can be delegated with confidence, however critical ones you may need to spend some time on yourself

Ask yourself: “At the end of the day who will be held accountable for this?”

WHEN

Choosing when to delegate...

One the most important parts of delegation is in fact effective time management. Should you take the time to plan your work day, week and month you will be able to identify what you can delegate and when to do so.

A good rule of thumb would be sooner rather than later. Consider the amount of time you have available delegate the work. This refers to:

- The actual amount of time it will take to fully explain—you need to give this the right amount of attention and support
- The amount of time reasonably required for successful task completion by your subordinate

In addition ensure you know your teams availability , it doesn't help delegating work when no one has capacity to de-liver.

WHO

Choosing the right person to delegate to...

Not everything that lands on your desk should be done by you. You need to delegate to the RIGHT per-son, this means taking the time to understand:

- The organisational structure—delegate to those that report to you. In a matrix structure ensure you delegate to those on your team or whom you have influence over. Don't go above another managers head and as-sign work without consulting them—this creates unnecessary problems
- Employee buy-in—does the staff or team buy-in to what you are doing, do they have excitement and passion for it to go that extra mile and be invested in the outcome
- Team and individual dynamics—you might need to delegate a complex task to a group of individuals on a piecemeal basis as opposed to just giving everything to one person (which also smacks of favouritism)

Ask yourself: “At the end of the day who will be held accountable for this?”

HOW

Choosing how to delegate...

How you actually handover the task to someone else is an enormous contributor towards the final outcome.

Ensure that you attend to:

- Clarity of expectations—ensure you are as explicit as possible
- Check for understanding—do not just ask for yes or no responses, but ask open ended questions that will let you know if they have grasped what is re-quired of them, push the initiative on to them
- Monitor progress and agree on regular check-points
- Unless the individual is completely inexperienced, delegate the end result and NOT the process or way of getting there—micro management is not conducive to a positive outcome
- Ensure that they know what your role is and what support you will provide
- Be very upfront on consequences of non-performance

At the cornerstone of effective delegation is the TRUST issue—if you do not have trust in your team you will not ever be able to get the monkey off your back. Remember trust is a reciprocal relationship and as such your team also needs to trust you, that you will not put them in a compromising situation or delegate tasks for which they are set up for failure

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Consider these questions with your coach or a mentor in your workplace.

Take the time to really unpack your responses to the questions and importantly, what you are going to do differently...

- How is the way you spend your time distributed across the three categories of management time?
- Do you feel that you are currently allocating your time to the most appropriate source/category?
- Reflecting on a typical work week, how often do you have to “put out the fires” of your subordinates?
- How effectively would you say you are able to transfer the initiative to your subordinates?
- What type of delegation challenges do you face in a networked, global organisation?
- Reflecting honestly on your behaviour as a leader over the last 6 months, would you say you delegate or empower your subordinates? Do you favour one or the other approaches to “managing the monkeys?”
- What types of communication do you use when giving instructions to others and delegating work?
- How best can you apply the learnings in this article to your everyday life at work?

“Before developing initiative in subordinates, the manager must see to it that they have the initiative.”