

Delegation process

Decide what is to be delegated

This could be a one-off task, a project, or an on-going activity. Consider the reason for delegating –is it to free up time to do more important or more complex work? Is it to provide a development opportunity to the delegatee? Is it to distribute work more fairly? It should not be done as a “dumping” exercise. What are the benefits to you the delegatee and to the team?

Decide who it is to be delegated to

Select a suitable person to take on the task – it could be someone who has particular skills, it could be someone who needs to develop skills, knowledge or understanding of the task. Consider people’s capabilities and capacities.

Set and agree objectives and standards

It is important that people understand what is expected of them in terms of what has to be done and the standard required.

Define levels of responsibility and authority

Make clear the level of authority that is assigned to the task and the areas for which they will be responsible and accountable. Remember that ultimate authority and responsibility lies with the delegator. If the delegatee does well, you can shine in their reflected glory , if they do not, then “the buck stops with you”.

Provide resources

It is essential that people have access to the resources they need to carry out the delegated task effectively, otherwise they will become frustrated and disillusioned.

Agree monitoring and review processes

Discussion about the task should include agreement about how its implementation is to be monitored and reviewed. For short straightforward tasks this may simply involve an end of task review, for longer more complex tasks such as a project, there may need to be specific monitoring methods and a timetable of reviews.

Provide support/guidance/advice as necessary

Be available to provide support. Do not provide all of the answers, encourage initiative and problem-solving as this is beneficial for development. However do not let the delegate struggle.

Monitor, review, and evaluate

Use appropriate monitoring methods, timetable reviews, and evaluate the process at the end. Reviews should focus on behaviour achievement of objectives and standards and should be developmental. Recognise and praise achievement and address areas where improvement is near. Bear in mind the learning elements of delegation.