

**Volume 38****The Question**

My team and peers gave me feedback that I need to delegate more. Where do I start?

**A Perspective**

This seems like a simple issue, and it is from the standpoint that it is focused on all the things you control as a leader: your work and your time. But to quote the futurist Paul Staffo – “Never mistake a clear view for a short distance.” In the past 24 months 90% of my coaching assignments been with leaders that need to focus on this.

Based on my experience here are the three barriers to delegating work:

1. The work you are being asked to delegate is your favorite work (issue: Need to answer the question – Do I want to be in a leadership role?)
2. Your team has people in key roles that have not demonstrated the capacity to handle the work you need to delegate, so you don't trust them.
3. You are so busy your habits of saying “Yes” or “I will just do that” have taken over and you can't change without 3-6 months of help.

**Your Action Plan**

Being able to step back and name the barriers that are getting in the way of success is a key capacity leaders need to develop. The first step in solving this issue is determining which barrier is the root cause of your delegation issue. In my experience, here are the three root causes of a delegation issue:

1. I want to do the work not lead others in doing the work.
2. I don't have the right people in the right seats on my team.
3. I accept tasks that I shouldn't be doing.

Pick what you think is the issue, then ask for input from 3 other people: Someone that works for you, a peer, and your leader. Here are steps to address each barrier:

**Do I want to lead or do the work?** Read the article, *Managing Oneself* by Peter Drucker (Harvard Business Review) and focus on the questions: How do I perform and how do I produce? This will get to the heart of the question as to whether you want to lead, and at what level.

**Do I have the right people in the right roles on my team?** I use a strategic planning process called the Entrepreneurial Operating System® because it places answering this question at the beginning of the process. EOS® uses a two-step process. First, define the roles needed to run your business and the five things each role is accountable for. The second step is to put a name in each box (and put your name if you are doing the work today) and answer three questions: Do they GET the role? Do they WANT the role? Do they have the CAPACITY to do the role?

**How do I break out of the spiral of saying YES to everything?** First, read the article *Management Time: Who's Got the Monkey?* (Oncken and Wass) and commit to spending 4 weeks addressing part of this issue. Week one will be observing yourself as a leader in situations where you find yourself saying YES to something you should be managing and not doing. In week 2 thru 4, pick one relationship, meeting or habit (like walking around your office) where you want to stop accepting monkeys. Week 4 is reflecting on the change and restarting the process. Find one person you trust to meet weekly with for 30 minutes to reflect on your progress with each step and help you think through how you can be more effective based on what you observed and learned. This accountability partner should also read the article and be someone who will be in a position to observe you working.

Remember, *never mistake a clear view for a short distance.*



*Strategic People  
Reminders for the  
Busy Executive*

People-centered leaders delegate well because delegation requires trust, which is the foundation of a healthy relationship. Listen . . . Lead. Repeat often!

**Do you need some coaching to make the shift? Contact me.** [Scott@thetrugroup.com](mailto:Scott@thetrugroup.com)  
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