

## Top 7 Tips for Effective Delegation

Many small business owners become jacks-of-all-trades and do a little bit of everything when it comes to managing their businesses. This versatility can be a tremendous asset when first starting a business.

As time goes on, however, the small business owner who continues to do everything him or herself will hit what I call the success stopping point. Until a team is developed and some of the daily tasks and business management responsibilities are delegated, the business can't grow, and the business owner will likely be overextended and highly frustrated.

There are a lot of decisions and processes to consider when it comes time to build a team and delegate, and there are steps to be taken early on in the process to make it more effective. Here are the top seven tips for effective delegation to get you on the right track.

### Analyze Your Needs First

Knowing what to delegate and who you need on your team to do it effectively, requires a clear picture of everything you have on your plate. The best way to figure out where your time is going, especially time that's going where it shouldn't be, is by [tracking your time](#) - all of your time, for both billable and non-billable work.

If you kept track of everything you do during your workday, I bet you'd be surprised to see where your time is going and what qualifies as your biggest time drains. This alone can be a powerful tool for identifying potential tasks to delegate, and even tasks to eliminate from your business.

### Explore Your Options

Delegation can take many different forms, and each option depends on your business and your needs. The most effective delegation system is one that you can trust and will grow and change as your needs grow and change.

Two of the most common delegation options include [hiring an employee](#) and outsourcing to an independent contractor such as a [virtual assistant](#). There are many facets to consider when [deciding between an employee and an independent contractor](#).

### Document Everything

Before you even begin delegating, you will need to start tracking all of the information, knowledge and processes that make your business run like a well-oiled machine. This may be a challenge because you probably don't think about this data often; you just do what needs to be

done. But having comprehensive and clear documentation is essential in order to delegate effectively.

In general, all of your processes and systems should include a clear written summary so any future member of your team can jump in and pick up where you left off. These [process documents](#) and any other information needed should be located in a central location that is accessible by everyone.

### **Develop a Prioritized Assignment Plan**

After your processes have been documented and you've created a system for sharing that information, you will need to think through your top delegation priorities and how you will assign, track and manage the delegated work.

Focus on your biggest priorities first. You can identify a list of potential high-priority delegation items by answering these two simple questions:

1. Does this need to be completed now?
2. Do I need to do this task myself or can someone else?

### **Use Technology**

Technology can make delegation easy and help teams overcome many different challenges. And all teams can benefit from using technology, whether it's for file sharing, scheduling or even online training opportunities.

If you are building a virtual team with members in different geographic locations, technology can make it feel like all of your team members are sitting in the same room. [Explore the technology](#) you have available to you before delegating so you can create a system that makes information sharing and collaboration easy.

### **Communicate Well and Often**

Good communication is vital for every type of team. Without it, there isn't a team. When it comes to effective delegation, not only does communication need to be clear, concise and consistent, but you also need to make sure each team member has access to the same information.

One of the ways to accomplish this is by scheduling ongoing face-to-face meetings, or [team-focused teleconferences](#), if your team members are in different locations. These sessions should be focused on collaboration, information sharing and team building. It's also important that you remain accessible in between team meetings to answer questions, provide guidance and help solve problems when necessary.

## **Cultivate Trust**

Trust is one of the most important factors when it comes to delegation, and it goes both ways. You [need to trust](#) that your team members will complete the work they are responsible for, and your team members need to trust that you are giving them all of the information they need to do the work and that you will be available to back them up when necessary.

You can create a team based on trust by:

- Being respectful of each other
- Listening and hearing what others are saying
- Focusing on consistent communication
- Saying what you'll do and doing what you say
- Being honest

Effective delegation can be the answer for the time-challenged small business owner who is struggling to find the time to grow his or her business. And when you take measures to set yourself up for an effective delegation process, you're not only giving yourself time to focus on your most vital business activities, but you're alleviating some of the pressure of always doing everything yourself.

### **Related Reading**

- [Delegation Don'ts](#)
- [How to Get into a Delegation Mindset](#)
- [The Great Debate: Employee vs Independent Contractor](#)

### **More Small Business Resources**

- [Tech Solutions for Small Business](#)
- [How to Reduce Small Business Costs](#)
- [Teleconference Services for Small Business Owners](#)

### **Management and Time Management**

- [How to Take Your Small Business to the Next Level](#)
- [How to Get into a Delegation Mindset](#)
- [What Not to Do When Delegating](#)