

# THE MODERN ART OF DELEGATION

Extract from BOOST – By Chris Wisdom

It *is* a modern art because you are probably working in a much flatter, less hierarchical organisation than 10 or even five years ago. Delegation used to be about assigning tasks to subordinates for them to complete. Achieving projects is now about successful collaboration and teamwork with diverse, interrelated parts fulfilling their role. It isn't a case of telling people what to do, but skilfully engaging them so that they own achieving results with enthusiasm.

Use this simple R3 approach to make sure you aren't left to pick up the pieces. Use the coaching approach discussed in Chapter 13 rather than a 'tell' approach

## R1 Result

- Describe the context, or ask them to, and then agree what is the result that needs to be achieved.
- Discuss expectations about what a good result looks like, including deadlines.
- Agree where the lines are drawn in terms of their authority to decide and when they need to ask you.
- Most of it should come from them with you commenting and asking questions so that you have confidence you are going to receive what you want.
- The amount of time and detail will depend on the ability and experience of the person in the project.

## R2 Review

Agree when you will review progress and how (written or verbal). It must be clear that the responsibility to put this in the diary, run the meeting etc. is theirs not yours. The review should include progress report, any difficulties encountered and their plans for resolving any hiccups, next steps etc.

## R3 Resources

Check what they are going to need to get this done. What do they need help with? What will you do? How can you help them get their own help? Focus also on the personal and professional developmental aspects of them doing this.

**See others in a different way** In the 1960s, Douglas McGregor put forward his theory of motivation and management which involved Theory X and Theory Y styles of management. Theory X managers see people as workshy, lazy and irresponsible. Theory Y managers see people as hardworking, responsible and problem solvers. People will tend to respond in accordance with the way that you see and treat them. If you view them as incapable, you will treat them that way and they will act accordingly. If you view them as people with the potential to take responsibility and do well, they will respond to this positively. Many studies since have backed up this general approach.