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Mentorship

DELEGATION IS KEY

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Last week I wrote about a topic I see many new (and some seasoned) leaders struggle with - **letting go** of their past responsibilities and delegating them to others as they move up in the organization.

This week, I would like to dig a bit further into delegation and why it's so important to the success of any organization. How many times have you heard someone on your team say "ugh, I will just do <insert task here> myself because I can get it done faster"? This is a common phrase heard in just about every organization in the world.

It could very well be true that the individual making that statement could, in fact, do the task faster than handing it off another team member. That other team member could be more junior, less experienced, and perhaps has never done that task before. By "just doing it myself" you may get the task done

quicker. You might even save some time by reducing errors made by a newer team member.

Why then is this so problematic? There are two big issues with this approach:

First, one of the most important parts of mentorship is giving others the opportunity to take more responsibility. That means also giving them the opportunity to do a task that could take longer, have mistakes, and not be done "the way I would do it". New team members bring new ideas on how to do work. While it is important to teach them, it's equally as important to listen to them. What if they have a better way to approach a problem? How quickly do you think your team will become frustrated if you keep doing their work for them or don't listen to their good ideas?

Second, if you continue to do work that should be delegated, what aren't you getting to in your to do list? Presumably, there's more important things for you to be doing than this work that is targeted for others. If you continually keep executing on other's tasks, you aren't getting something of higher priority on your own list done. It actually doesn't matter if you got the other task done quicker, you've simply worked on something that wasn't a priority for you.

You've hired smart people that you believe can do the job you are giving them - let them do it. Embrace new ways of doing things, be patient with the learning process and help you and your team grow to be more successful!

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