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Delegation – Getting Unstuck!

Leaders struggle with delegation.

> > It's easier to do it myself.
> > If I want it done right, I will need to do it myself.
> > My people are already too busy.
> > I don't have time to delegate.

Subconsciously, many leaders struggle with control issues, an inability to let go. Fear is often at the root of control.

As you consider the above, these collective reasons and mindset point to a self-centered focus. Aside from leaders' desire to protect their people from experiencing overwhelm, most of the things that get in the way of delegation point to self.

Leadership is, however, an other-centered responsibility—a selfless commitment, in part. If we were to flip a coin and reframe the above reasons and mindsets about delegation, it might sound something like this:

> > I owe it to my team to delegate responsibilities, to support their growth and development.
> > I trust my team to do things right, and if I am concerned, I will have a conversation about what the desired outcome needs to look like.
> > We are all busy, but I can't retain the work as a protection mechanism.
> > I have a responsibility to schedule time to lead, just as I schedule time for project work and meetings.
> > My time needs to be spent directing the work of my team. This involves delegating work, following up, and ultimately ensuring accountability for results.

Leaders who effectively delegate to others free their schedules to do work that is strategic in nature. A Gallup analysis of the entrepreneurial skills of 143 CEOs on the Inc. 500 index revealed that companies led by leaders who effectively delegate responsibilities grow faster, yield more profit, and generate more employment.

To delegate seems like the prudent choice.

If you are committed to strengthening your delegation capability—getting unstuck—below are six steps that can get you started.

1. **Brainstorm a list of the work you do.** Consider both recurring projects and tasks, as well as current-time projects. To assist your brainstorm process, you could look at daily, weekly, and monthly work.

2. **Flag the work that could be assigned to another person;** identify who—on your current team—could fulfill that work.

3. **Meet with members of your team** to propose recurring work you'd like to delegate to them, get their reaction, and determine training and development necessary to equip them for the work.

4. **Provide clear instructions and expectations for what success looks like.** Consider timeframes for completion of work, as well as quality of finished product.

5. **Be clear about the level of authority you are giving this person.** Where do you need to be involved? In what ways can they work autonomously? Do you need to be informed along the way? Do you need to sign off?

6. **Determine, in collaboration with your team member(s), how you will monitor progress along the way.** Strike a balance between your need to validate and their preference for autonomy.

I encourage you to schedule a one-hour meeting with yourself to complete the first two steps. Getting started is the first step toward getting unstuck.

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