Are Your Delegation Tactics Actually Empowering Employees?

In our article on Why Excellent Managers Delegate Tasks, we covered the difficulties that come with being a manager — most notably, delegation. Delegation entails straying away from micromanaging, and instead, trusting and empowering your employees enough to accomplish deliverables on their own. The role of a manager does not require you to be *fully* hands-on, but to ensure that everything is executed excellently. Delegation is essential in empowering employees. This gives them agency, improves accountability, and allows them to think on their feet and make their own calls. If you are adjusting to the new role or are looking for ways to improve, it may be more difficult for you to measure how effective you are as a manager.

Here's what you can do to make sure your delegation tactics are empowering your employees:

Fostering transparency with regular feedback

Feedback is a two-way street, and it shouldn't just occur during mid-year or annual evaluations. An Entrepreneur article highlights how effective feedback could define trajectories if it is actionable and growth-oriented. When you delegate a task to an employee and they deliver, assess how well they were able to execute it. In the same way, employees should be able to evaluate their own performance and inform you of any hiccups they encountered along the way. Creating an environment of transparency means that they inform you if they are lacking any support, resources, or other information needed to improve. You can set quick catch-ups or even online meetings for feedback after a project has been completed. The more regular, the better — as this could even enhance your company culture.

Leveraging integrated platforms for mobile workers

More companies are starting to adopt a mobile workforce. Nowadays, leaders are encouraged to fully consider this strategy given the current situation. However, the concept of a mobile workforce has been around for a while — which could be a valuable asset for a modern organization. But without the right tools and resources, your business, workers, and clients may end up suffering. Research from Verizon Connect has found that the mobile workforce often has issues with productivity and efficiency. In order to successfully delegate and manage a remote team, you need to find the best software, tools, and integrated communications platforms for everyone to stay in the loop. These should be avenues for you to check-in throughout the day, have a public record of tasks, and allow for free-flowing communication for all teams. Operations will

become more efficient and transparent, and workers will now be able to stay accountable and get work done despite geographic and technological constraints.

Giving credit when and where it is due

HR and management consultant Susan M. Heathfield emphasizes the importance of managers demonstrating that they value their employees. If you remain quiet, workers may end up second-guessing themselves and the tasks that they have been doing, which could affect the outcome of their work. This then defeats the purpose of empowering employees through delegation. Giving credit where and when it is due is a good business practice that will supply employees with enough compensation and recognition to keep them motivated. The art of rewarding and recognizing is so significant that it could affect how much employees are willing to invest in your company.

At the end of the day, effective delegation can be measured not only by how well employees are able to handle assigned tasks, but how they feel about themselves after. The responsibility of a manager does not merely end with the act of delegating but should be constantly revisited even when the work has been completed.

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Science-Backed Memory Tips

How to Improve Memory and Recall

Memory, the process of maintaining information over time, is an essential part of life as it allows us to store the information we need to interact and adapt to the world around us. Without memory, we wouldn't be able to recall places we've been, the names of friends or family members, how to do our jobs or information we are taught in school. Understanding how memory works can help us protect and enhance the process.

There are three stages of memory: encoding, storage, and retrieval. Memory encoding converts information into a form that the brain can store. Information can be encoded as visual (picture), acoustic (sound), or semantic (meaning). Next, information is stored as either a long-term or short-term memory, impacting how we are able to access the memory later on. The final stage of memory, retrieval, allows us to access stored information.

Since memory is a critical part of life, it's important to protect against memory decline. The best way to do this is by living a healthy lifestyle. Additionally, there are specific techniques individuals can use to memorize and recall information. This piece offers tips for boosting brain health as well as science-backed techniques that can be used for memorizing and recalling information.

Lifestyle Tips for Boosting Brain

Health

In addition to actively engaging your mind, such as with brain training games, to improve thinking skills and memory, living a healthy lifestyle can also help promote brain health. Individuals may be able to protect against memory decline by doing the following:

- **Engaging in regular exercise**: Doing aerobic exercise to get your heart pumping appears to boost the size of the hippocampus, the area of the brain involved in verbal memory and learning. Additionally, exercising regularly can help you maintain a healthy weight, reduce stress, and sleep better, all of which have a relationship to memory.
- **Reducing stress**: Since stress can interfere with memory, actively working to limit stress can be protective. If you are overwhelmed or struggle with negative thinking patterns, there are ways to retrain your brain for positivity and success. For example, engaging in self-care practices such as journaling or yoga can be beneficial for individuals. Meditation in particular has been shown to improve episodic memory, the memory of everyday events.
- **Eating a healthy diet**: Consuming a balanced diet, one that limits red meat and is full of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, can help promote against memory decline and dementia. Specifically, diets higher in mono- and polyunsaturated fats (opposed to saturated fat) may help to preserve memory.
- **Limiting alcohol:** Most of us are aware that alcohol can impact memory. Alcohol can disrupt the ability to form new long-term memories, and even at low doses alcohol can impair memory.
- **Getting enough sleep:** Since sleep plays a role in the consolidation of memories, it is essential to get enough quality sleep. Researchers hypothesize that slow-wave

sleep, which is deep, restorative sleep, plays a significant role in declarative memory, the knowledge of fact-based information, by processing and consolidating newly acquired information. Additionally, if someone is sleep deprived, it will be difficult for them to focus and learn efficiently.

8 Techniques for Memorizing Information

Not only is memory important in everyday life, but there are also situations that require individuals to be able to memorize and recall specific information. For example, when studying for an exam, preparing a presentation, or getting ready to deliver a speech.

There are a few ways to set yourself up for success when preparing for a situation where you will have to recall specific information. Before preparing, try to get rid of distractions and plan ahead so you are able to avoid cramming and take breaks. Additionally, evidence suggests that it may be beneficial to study before going to sleep, as well as sleeping between learning sessions, can help people consolidate memories and retain information.

When it comes time to begin studying the information you'll need to recall, there are science-backed techniques you can use to help retain information and improve recall. For example, using organizational strategies, such as the chunking method, visual cues, and handwriting notes rather than typing can be beneficial.

Additional strategies, such as using mnemonics, can be useful for storing information as long-term memory. Many of us likely remember the mnemonics we learned in school, for example PEMDAS (parenthesis, exponents, multiplication, division, addition, subtraction) teaches students the order of

operations.

The visual below from the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences outlines 8 science-backed techniques for retaining information and improving recall.

Click on the thumbnail below for the full infographic

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How to Help Employees Develop a Growth Mindset

Photo credit *Pexels*

The imperative to develop a growth mindset is critical. What is a growth mindset and why should you develop one and help your people do the same? Enjoy this guest post by Lisa B. Michaels and find out!

Simply put, a growth mindset is a firm belief that one's abilities are not cast in stone. It's the

belief that talent
can be nurtured and that intelligence can be fostered.

Think of it as an attitude that also
entails a sincere hope that leadership and creativity can be
developed. Note
that subscribing to a growth mindset is an imperative attitude
and not
particularly a skill.

Growth-oriented workplaces like Microsoft
and LinkedIn seem to have figured out what developing a growth
mindset is all
about. For example, Microsoft's CEO, Satya Nadella, stands out
here for several
reasons. He's credited with leading the multi-billion dollar
company through a
much-needed culture shift using a growth mindset strategy.

The company is now using the approach to
develop its next crop of leaders. LinkedIn CEO, on the other
hand, advises
employers to focus on skills, not qualifications, when
considering potential
employees.

Growth vs. Fixed Mindsets

Individuals with fixed mindsets firmly
believe that their skills and intelligence are intrinsically
linked to
themselves. Thus, rather than being motivated to develop
further, they view
constructive feedback as personal attacks. This often triggers
an emotional
reaction to feedback, which blocks potential personal gain.

People with growth mindsets are the exact

opposite of their counterparts with fixed mindsets. They see challenges and
obstacles in the workplace as opportunities to improve.

They are open to feedback and criticism.
To them, critique and feedback open up avenues that can fuel their performance
and output.

How Leaders and Managers Can Help Their Employees Transition from a Fixed To a Growth Mindset

Think of it as a gradual process, so be
patient. Understand that individuals adapt to change differently. The following
tips can help you expedite the process:

Encourage Employees to Learn and Set Their Own Development Goals

Many employees crave for this kind of
freedom. It comes in handy when transitioning from a fixed to a growth mindset
for pretty much obvious reasons.

Your employers will set their own
development goals based on what they are good at. They'll also set the goals
based on how fast they can get projects done. Be sure to allow them to choose
their teams. More freedom means more output. It is a win-win situation.

Ask Your Employees for Their Opinion on Solving Some Issues

Think of your workplace as a big classroom where everyone is a teacher and a student at the same time. In other words, you can learn a lot from each other.

For that to happen, ask your employees for their opinion on different things. Find out what they think about trying out a new system, working hours, and everything and anything that affects them.

Provide Learning Opportunities

This is, by far, the best way to impart a growth mindset at the workplace. Provide numerous learning opportunities at work time and again.

Be sure to make the process fun. Bring onboard experts and have them train your employees on the best practices in the market in your field of work.

Be Transparent About Challenges and Failures

This applies to both management and employees. It's one of the most effective problem-solving skills in any work environment. It's also an excellent way to diffuse bureaucracy and protocol issues that often bar employees from reaching out to their bosses.

Accountability and Independence

One of the most effective strategies to
develop a growth mindset at the workplace is to make employees
accountable for
their work and give them sufficient independence.

But before giving them all the autonomy they need, train them
to stay productive, and to manage their time. Train them to
prioritize and identify how their work can contribute to
company goals and objectives.

This is precisely where time management
strategies come into the picture. To succeed at it, use the
following
procedures:

Discourage MultiTasking

Many employees fall into the multitasking
trap without even realizing it. They try to do multiple
projects at once and
end up not getting anything done at all. Assign single
projects to your
employees. Give them room to brainstorm on ideas that can help
them execute the
task with minimum ease. Note that research shows multitasking
decreases
productivity.

The rule here is simple; focus on each
task separately.

Break Down Bigger Tasks into Smaller Tasks

It's easy to get overwhelmed by big
projects sometimes. You can find it hard to know where to

start.

To confront this, take the whole project
and break it down into smaller tasks. You can also try to
batch smaller tasks
together.

To-Do Lists

Create a list of things you need to do in
advance. Invest in software that can do this easily. The
software should be
able to make it easy for your employees to create their to-do
list.

Remember, though, that the traditional pen
and paper to-do lists are still useful. Encourage your
employees to use them.

Prioritize

Train your employees to evaluate their
responsibilities based on urgency and importance. Besides, you
should emphasize that they complete their projects, starting
with the highest
priority.

Remember that this process calls for
effective communication between employees and their
supervisors. This will
ensure that priorities are adequately and appropriately
aligned with
departmental and overall company goals.

Organize

Every second lost because of a misplaced
document or file is time that could have been used to complete
a task. Insist

on personal space as well as personal organization at the workplace. This will
not just help you save time; it'll go a long way to improve your employees to
maximize their output.

Create a Favorable Working Environment

Make your employees feel excited to
report to work. The environment should stay productive throughout the day. This
doesn't just apply to workspaces.

The printing room, washrooms, and even
the waiting lobby should all be comfortable. Where possible, incorporate an
element of fun at the workplace.

Be Open to Ideas

Be approachable. Often, employees have ideas
on how to get work done faster. Unfortunately, bureaucracy and protocol make it
hard for them to air their views.

By all means, avoid this at the
workplace. The rule here is simple: listen to your employees all the time.

Final Thought

Encouraging employees to have a growth
mindset is about creating a favorable environment for them to express their
ideas independently. If done correctly, it can boost

productivity and reduce
staff turnover.

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