



Olumuyiwa Akinrole Oludayo

Delegation: **The Unseen Engine of** **Greatness**

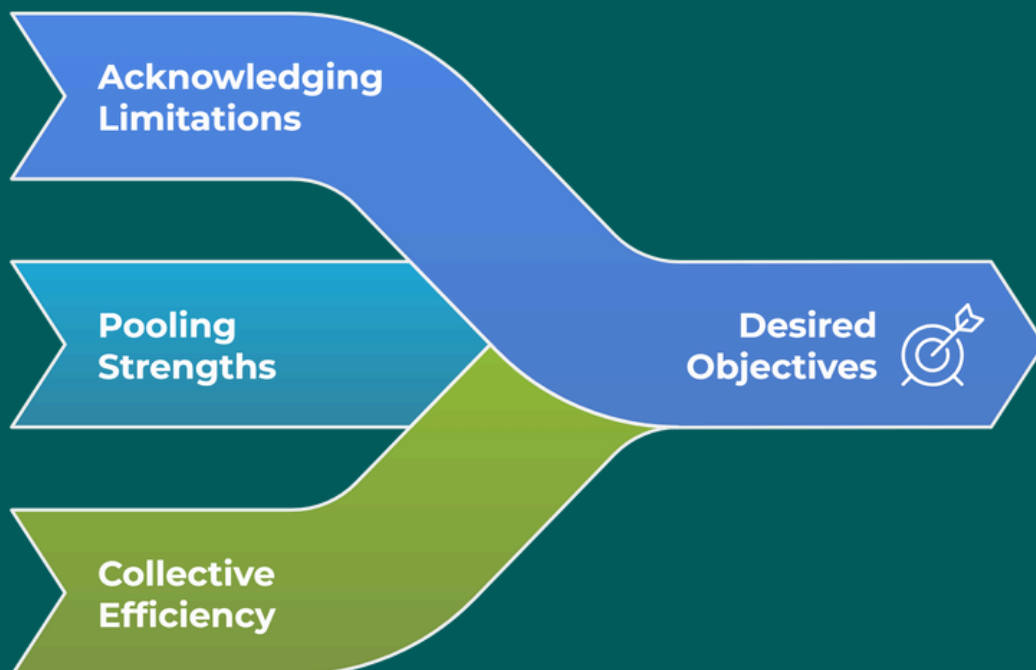
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Introduction

Success is not a solo journey—it is a symphony of capabilities and strategic collaboration. The belief that "I can succeed even when I don't have what it takes as long as I can collaborate with those who are skilled to produce my desires" underscores the power of delegation as a critical success factor. **This philosophy is not mere rhetoric; it is the foundational principle upon which empires rise, businesses scale, and civilisations thrive.** Many individuals and organisations fail not because they lack vision but because they don't leverage the expertise of others to bring their aspirations to fruition.

Delegation goes beyond assigning tasks; it is about acknowledging one's limitations, pooling the strengths of others, and championing collective efficiency to realise desired objectives. It is the silent force behind every revolution, every innovation, and every lasting legacy. Leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals who master delegation understand that their greatest power lies not in personal strength alone but in their ability to distribute responsibilities effectively.

The Art of Delegation



Let us explore how delegation serves as a critical success factor, highlighting its impact on productivity, leadership, innovation, and sustainable growth. It will look into the mindset shifts required to delegate effectively, the common barriers that hinder delegation, and practical strategies to cultivate a high-performance collaborative environment.

But when should one delegate? How should one delegate? Why should one delegate? And, perhaps most crucially, what should one delegate?



The Right Time: When Should One Delegate?

Delegation is not a sign of weakness; **it is a strategic manoeuvre engaged at critical junctures.** The right time to delegate is **when holding on to a task or responsibility would mean stagnation, inefficiency, or missed opportunities.**

Moses, the great leader of the Israelites, was taught this lesson by his father-in-law, Jethro. In Exodus 18, Jethro saw Moses single-handedly resolving disputes among thousands of people and then advised him, **"What you are doing is not good. You will wear yourself out... Select capable men... and let them judge the people at all times."** Moses, despite his divine calling, realised that his success depended on empowering others to share his burden. No one is too good to do things alone. Don't ever assume that because you do things so well, others cannot thrive there as well. Break down the tasks and assign portions of it to others.

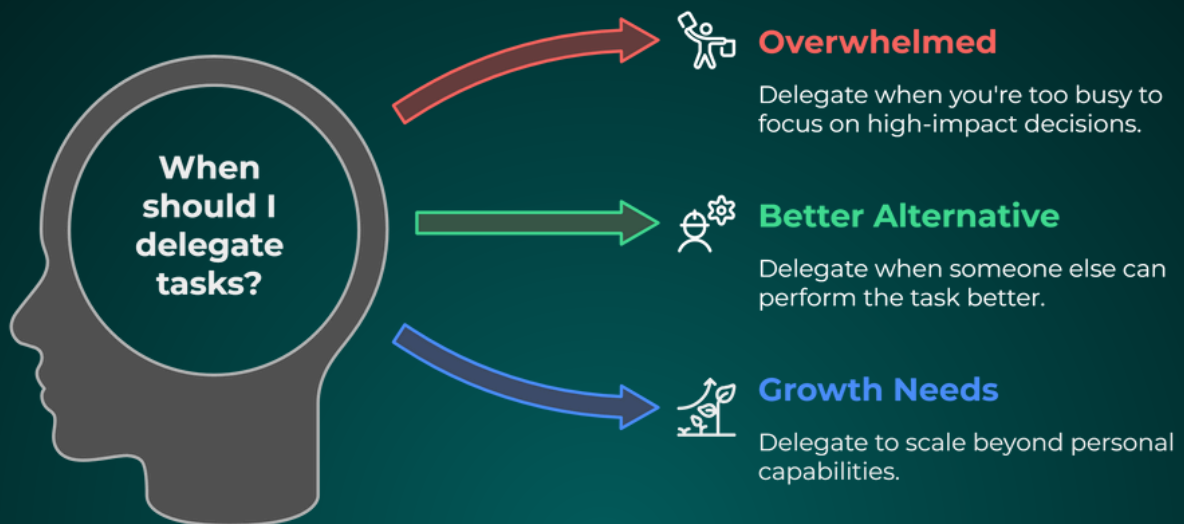
The right time to delegate is when holding on to a task or responsibility would mean stagnation, inefficiency, or missed opportunities.

Similarly, Steve Jobs knew when to delegate. Though a genius, he was not a lone creator. He entrusted Apple's technical development to Steve Wozniak, and later, to the likes of Jony Ive and Tim Cook. Jobs' ability to acknowledge his limitations in execution while holding the vision led Apple to become an unrivalled global brand. Delegate when critical points of your assignment requires focus. Not all tasks require your full attention. Let go of the ones that needs oversight while you pay attention to the ones that benefits from your expertise.



The right time to delegate is when:

- Your plate is too full to focus on high-impact decisions.
- Someone else can do it better than you.
- Growth demands that you scale beyond personal capability.



Greatness is not achieved by holding on; it is achieved by knowing when to let go.



The Art of Trust: How Should One Delegate?

Delegation is not abdication. To delegate effectively, one must:

Choose the right person – Assign responsibilities to those whose capabilities align with the task being delegated.

Communicate the vision clearly – Ambiguity breeds failure; clarity breeds excellence. Ensure there is perfect alignment with your intention and their perception of expectations.

Provide autonomy, but hold accountability – Micromanagement is the graveyard of delegation. Trust people to execute but hold them responsible for outcomes.

Effective Delegation



Choosing the Right Person

Matching tasks to individuals with the right skills and capabilities.



Communicating Vision

Ensuring clear understanding and alignment of expectations.



Autonomy and Accountability

Balancing freedom with responsibility for outcomes.



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Consider the case of John D. Rockefeller, the oil magnate, founder of Standard Oil. His brilliance was not in refining oil by himself but in creating a system where others refined oil under his strategic oversight. He delegated operational functions to capable executives and, by doing so, built Standard Oil into a colossus. His success was not in doing but in directing. He evaluated things with a leadership bias, knowing where the greater value lie in the process of building a world class organisation.



The same principle was at played in the life of military genius of Napoleon Bonaparte. He delegated battlefield execution to his marshals, men like Davout and Ney, while he focused on grand strategy. His empire stretched across Europe not because he fought every battle personally, but because he entrusted execution to capable hands.

Great leaders focus on what influences outcomes the most. What seems to be the core is what they bring to the fore. They know where their input is needed the most and they learn to stay there. They have also learned the great skill of developing the pipeline. Once you can develop people, you can multiply your results.

Delegation is an art—**a fusion of trust, clarity, and oversight.**



The Higher Purpose: Why Should One Delegate?

The refusal to delegate often time is traceable to ego. A belief that no one else can do it better. This is one great enemy every leading professional should conquer. Leaders who want to do more, achieve more and succeed more must learn to delegate. Refusal to delegate is the death of scalability.

Delegation serves three higher purposes:

- **Multiplication of Impact** – Jesus Christ, the greatest leader in history, did not carry out his ministry alone. He equipped 12 disciples, empowering them to spread his message to the ends of the earth. His impact multiplied because he delegated. He could never have reached the number of people the disciples reached if he went all by himself. They simply replicated his miracles, signs, and wonders wherever he sent them. Train, equip, and deploy your team and they will multiply your impact.
- **Creation of Legacy** – If you must always be present for things to function, then your system is fragile. Delegation ensures continuity beyond yourself. The Roman Empire lasted centuries because its leaders did not centralise power in one man, but created institutions that could govern even in the absence of an emperor. Walter J. Lippmann has said that the final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men, the capacity and the will to carry on.
- **Personal Elevation** – The greatest minds understand that their highest value lies not in execution but in ideation. Bill Gates stepped away from day-to-day operations at Microsoft to focus on philanthropy. Warren Buffett entrusts much of Berkshire Hathaway's decision-making to lieutenants, allowing him to focus on big-picture investing. Tasks become mundane to the leader that has other strategic tasks to do but has failed to get on them.



Benefits of Delegation in Leadership



Personal Elevation

Focus on strategic tasks and growth



Legacy Creation

Ensures continuity and institutional strength



Multiplication of Impact

Expands reach through empowered teams



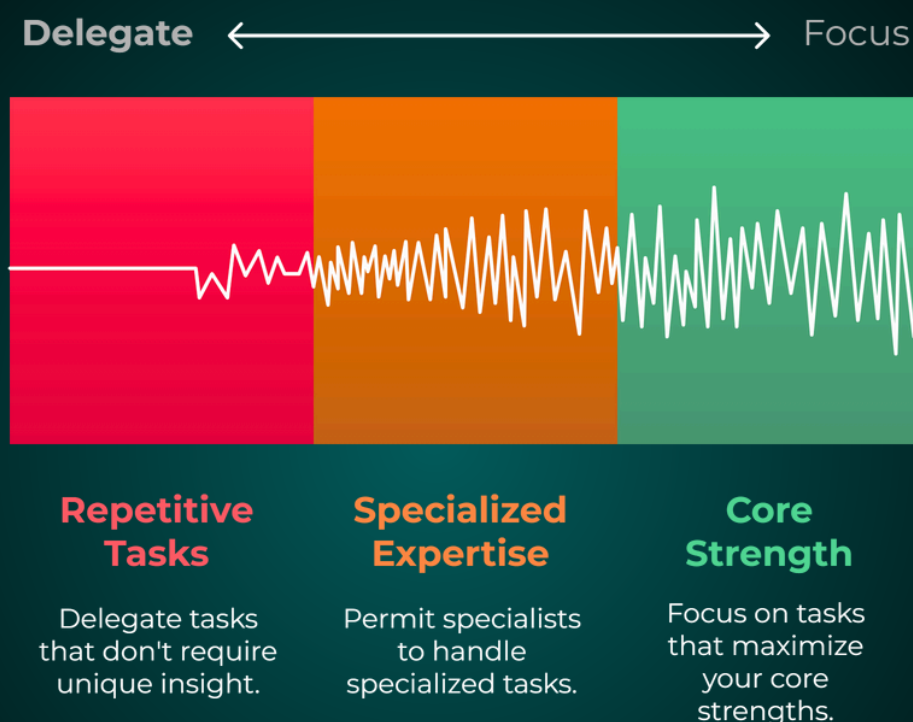
If you desire to scale, you must delegate. If you desire to last, you must delegate.

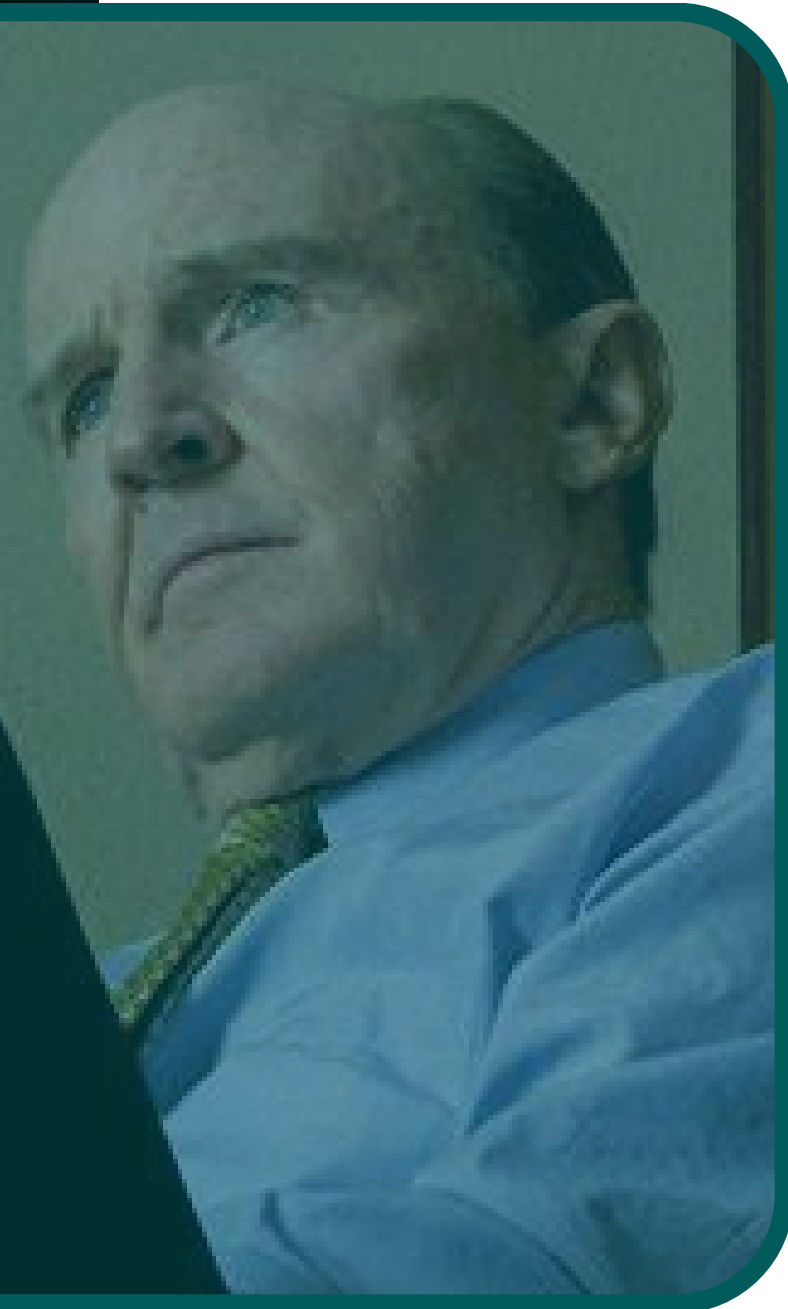


The Right Things: What Should One Delegate?

Not everything should be delegated. Some matters demand personal attention. So what should be delegated? There are 3 considerations you should make before letting go of tasks and responsibilities. Let these criteria serve as a guide when you are at a crossroad of delegation.

- **Repetitive Tasks** – Anything that does not require your unique insight should be offloaded. Amazon founder Jeff Bezos delegated logistics and operations, focusing instead on strategy and innovation. If others can do it well without you, don't pay attention to it anymore.
- **Specialised Expertise** – You don't need to be an expert in everything. Kings of old relied on advisors for military, finance, and diplomacy. Today's leaders do the same. Permit specialists do their work. Moses got the blueprint for the tabernacle but Bezaleel and his team built it.
- **Anything That Prevents You from Focusing on Your Core Strength** – If you are a CEO, spending time on administrative paperwork is a waste. If you are a leader, immersing yourself in trivial matters weakens your ability to lead. Identify areas where you get the maximum return for your efforts and focus on those things.





Delegation is about ruthless prioritisation. The legendary Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric, once said, **"I was never a manager. I was a conductor of talented people."** He delegated the right things and focused on what mattered most—strategy, culture, and vision.

The legendary **Jack Welch**, former CEO of General Electric,



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Conclusion: Delegation as the Master Key

History has shown that those who master delegation master success. Whether it was Moses structuring leadership, Rockefeller systemising oil, Napoleon entrusting battle, or Jobs focusing on vision, the principle remains unchanged: You don't need to have what it takes; you only need to collaborate with those who do.

Delegation is the difference between a leader who burns out and one who builds a legacy. You don't have to lead from emptiness. Delegation is the bridge between personal limitation and unlimited impact. It is the hidden force behind every great empire, business, and institution.

Those who rise are those who release. Those who delegate are those who dominate.





Profile for Dr. Olumuyiwa Akinrole Oludayo

Dr. Olumuyiwa Akinrole Oludayo is a transformative leader and consultant with a distinguished career across higher education, human resource management, and organisational development. His professional journey reflects an enduring commitment to influencing impactful change and advancing practices that drive growth and excellence at both individual and organisational levels.

With a strong foundation in academia, Dr. Oludayo has contributed extensively to higher education as a Member of Faculty for Human Resource Management, guiding the next generation of professionals and leaders. His roles as Dean of Students, Registrar, and Director of the African Leadership Development Centre have enabled him to influence institutional leadership and capacity-building across Africa, crafting learning environments that are centred on holistic development and resilience.

As a Research Fellow with the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria, Dr. Oludayo has made notable contributions to HR practice in Nigeria. His publications and development of frameworks have significantly shaped best practices within the industry, equipping HR professionals with contextually relevant strategies that address both contemporary and emerging challenges.

Organisations that engage Dr. Oludayo's consulting expertise benefit from a wealth of experience and a bespoke approach to people management. Through his work, he has supported a diverse range of organisations in optimising their talent strategies, enhancing leadership capacity, and creating resilient teams. His consulting work is marked by a commitment to solutions that are analytically robust and deeply aligned with an organisation's unique culture and objectives.

By partnering with Dr. Oludayo, organisations gain access to innovative approaches to talent development and organisational effectiveness. His strategic guidance encourages a culture of resilience, adaptability, and continuous improvement. His proven ability to integrate strategic insight with a people-centred approach makes him an invaluable asset for organisations striving for sustainable growth and a competitive edge.

In bridging the realms of academia, research, and practical consulting, Dr. Oludayo offers a holistic perspective that is both visionary and results-driven. His contributions go beyond enhancing performance; they cultivate lasting organisational value, enabling businesses to thrive through a stronger, more cohesive approach to human capital management.

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