



8 Ways to Handle Employee Objections when Delegating Tasks

If you have delegated tasks to employees, you know that everyone is not thrilled about taking on added work. Some objections may be mild and some hostile. In either case, you want to respond to objections (or questions) in a way that minimizes resistance, defuses anxiety, and encourages cooperation.

You can do that by anticipating employee objections and by having valid responses. This article offers you ways to respond to eight typical objections employees have when receiving delegated assignments. And while a different response is offered for each objection, many can be used for more than one objection.

Objections

1 Why should I do your work?

Do not get into an argument about “your work”. Instead, explain the process you use for delegating tasks. Show that your approach is fair.

2 How long will I have to do this?

Be clear about the length of time the employee will have to perform the delegated task. If it is a permanent assignment, say so and explain the reason. Perhaps the person should have been performing the task all along, but you were handling it until they were more experienced. Or maybe staff shortages dictate that you delegate more.

3 How will doing this task help me?

Highlight how doing the delegated task may benefit the person's career or contribute to the development of desired skills. Employees want to know "What's in it for me?" If I do a job that you (the manager) usually do. So be ready for this reaction and explain the benefits.

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4 How am I supposed to do my own work and this task too?

Suggest ways to combine the newly delegated task with current tasks so that it does not create an excessive workload. This shows the person that you have considered their workload and that you want to help make the assignment transfer as smooth as possible.

5 Why don't you assign it to _____, who does not have as much work as I do (or who is better at doing this type of work)?

Do not become sidetracked by talking about another employee's workload or skills. Instead, explain why you have chosen to delegate the task to this person.

6 I can do this task, but I cannot do it by the deadline you want.

Consider things like adjusting the deadline or breaking the task into parts, which can be due at different times.

7 I can take on this task, but I cannot do all of it.

Consider breaking the task into smaller parts and assigning only one or two parts. Or consider assigning some parts of the task to other employees.

8 I don't know how to do this task.

Determine what the employee feels they lack in terms of knowledge or expertise. You have already decided to delegate the task to this person, so you know (or should know) that the employee can perform the task. Be prepared to highlight the skills needed to perform the task and to show that the employee has those skills. One way of doing this is to provide specific examples of similar tasks that the person has successfully performed in the past. Bottom line: Communicate confidence in the employee's abilities and emphasize the support you will give as a way to put them at ease.

Effective preparation equals effective delegation

When delegating, you will inevitably encounter objections. But do not become involved in a tense discussion: You are

the manager, and you have decided to delete the task. Still you need to explain why someone else should do a task that you previously did. You can do that more effectively if you anticipate the objections you might receive and prepare a valid response. Start with the eight in this article.

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