



DO BUSINESS FASTER™

## **Jim's Profit Accelerator 228 Dump or Delegate?**

A seasoned colleague, Nicole Thibodeau (CPA, graduate school professor, and consultant), told me what she's noticed about delegation: "I see people delegate by dumping or doing instead of teaching and explaining how." My experience is the same, and I suspect that yours is similar.

Delegation seems as simple as wearing clothes, but it's rare to see it done with the skill and power that's available. It's an old tool that's taken for granted and overlooked by many successful leaders. Here's why:

### **Reason 1: I've always done my own work.**

When companies are small, leaders work directly with their few employees and get used to telling them what needs to be done. It's a habit that works until it doesn't. The habit doesn't grow well with the company. It can cause limited growth for key people and limited capacity for the company to handle more customers and enhanced services or sales. Even worse, because it's a habit, it can be invisible ("he's always done that").

### **Reason 2: You just tell people what to do.**

This has at least three problems: 1) Lousy results are likely because telling doesn't check for understanding. 2) Telling doesn't check for competence in the person to do the job. It's not enough to assume competence in the new assignment just because of general competence otherwise. 3) Telling doesn't also check for willingness in the do-er. Unwilling workers who are angry or afraid are unlikely to do the work well or consistently.

### **Reason 3: It's a way to react rapidly to real problems.**

Reactive leadership is sometimes needed, but it skips the more powerful expectation that leaders get their teams out ahead of situations. Getting out ahead requires as much data as possible, and multiple eyes and ears are likely still the best data gatherers there are. If the expectation is that action only comes in the face of a problem, the lesson for employees is to wait for a problem because then there'll be a space for action.

**SPEED BUMP:** Sloppy delegation means lost chances to excel.

Remarkably, in discussions I've had with leaders about delegation, they confess that they avoid it except for simple tasks—because it takes courage to take the risk to delegate!

**SPEED BUMP:** Not delegating is a huge risk to results.

Enhanced speed, agility, and capacity are the holy trio of successful companies. They are also reliable outcomes of leadership that delegates skillfully and often. How often?

As often as possible! It is almost always less work to guide a willing person who's taken on a new responsibility than it is to do the work yourself, before calculating the other work not done by the senior leader.

**SPEED BUMP:** Opportunity cost for misdirected leaders can be stunning!

**ACCELERANT:** What big task will you delegate this week?

For more information on how you can accelerate revenues and profits in your business, please call or email me.

A note on **SPEED BUMPS:** Use them to click quickly with an idea that can immediately be implemented in your life as a business leader. Think: "How can I use this today?" or "Who can use this?"

For more information, visit [www.grewco.com](http://www.grewco.com).

Jim Grew, the Business Defogger and Accelerator, helps leaders discover hidden opportunities within their businesses and exploit them for dramatic results. Jim has led 9 businesses, worked in 31 companies at C-level, and is an expert in strategy and executive leadership. He presents regularly to industry groups, mentors business leaders, and shares insights in his Executive Letter (above). Jim holds BA and MBA degrees from Stanford University. In his new book, *The Other Side of Succession*, he shares how to plan for the future by growing your business now.

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