

StraightTALKING



Delegation will help you manage your time and therefore reduce your stress. But it is often when we are most stressed that we delegate least. It is too easy to panic and cut yourself off from your colleagues, therapists and other staff members when you need their support most.

But delegation isn't just about making your workload lighter by giving tasks to others, it is also about getting staff to take full responsibility for certain key functions. In order for a salon to grow and for therapists to find new areas of development, new staff must be employed to take over established functions, allowing others to develop different aspects of the business.

Step One:

Know when to delegate

Delegation is fundamental to management, so look for opportunities to do it, for example:

- When you have too much work to do
- When you don't have enough time to devote to all important salon tasks
- When it is clear that certain staff members need to develop and when therapists have the skills needed to perform certain tasks.

Snowed under!

Liz McKeon on the art of delegating tasks

Step Two:

Know what to delegate

- Delegate routine administrative tasks that take up too much of your time
- Delegate projects which it makes sense for one person to handle
- Delegate tasks for which an employee has a special aptitude or enthusiasm.

Step Three:

Know whom to delegate to

- Test your staff out with small tasks to help show you what they can do. For example, do they show good time management, keep a diary, make notes?
- Therapists who do effective work should not be overburdened
- Try to delegate tasks out among as many employees as possible.

Step Four:

Delegate interactively

- Think positive, it will not happen perfectly first time, your ability to delegate will improve with experience.
- Plan ahead. If there is no overall plan of what is going on, it will be hard to identify, schedule and evaluate the work you've asked others to do.
- Discuss the tasks and problems in depth with the person you are delegating to, and explain clearly what is expected of them.
- Set deadlines and schedule them into diaries. What has been agreed should be summarised and notes taken about what each employee is required to do.

- Support your therapists and employees. The degree of support you give will depend on the development of the person and your relationship with them.
 - Monitor progress - deadlines and objectives may have to be altered as the situation changes.
 - Review performance and reward achievement.
 - Mastering the skill of delegation will mean that everyone benefits - it will help you manage your time and it will aid staff development, improving overall productivity.
 - When you are under pressure, passing tasks on - to the right person - will save you time.
 - Delegate interactively - get to know your team, listen to their worries and discover their strengths. Successfully passing responsibility down the line is key to salon growth.
 - Delegate assertively. Your confidence will be transferred onto the person you're delegating to.
 - When you delegate, you remain ultimately responsible for the results of the work you have delegated.
- Delegation is not an easy option, but it does make business more efficient and effective - it is essentially a more interactive way of working with a team of people, involving instruction, training and development. You'll need to invest some time and effort to do it effectively, but the long-term benefits both to you and your salon will make it worth your while.

Liz McKeon is a Business Consultant, Coach and Trainer, specialising in the beauty industry. For further information on upcoming seminars and programmes call **086 386 1243**, www.lizmckeeon.com or see Liz's advert on page 46.

