

PIVARO Spark – Leadership & Management

Delegating

“I delegate – and yet everything still ends up back on my desk. What am I doing wrong?”

At first glance, delegation appears straightforward: a task is handed over, and that should be the end of it. In practice, however, the picture is often rather different. Tasks return, results fall short of expectations, or the leader feels compelled to keep stepping in and correcting course.

Interestingly, the root cause is rarely a lack of professional competence among team members. Far more often, delegation is held back by internal attitudes: the need for control, insufficient trust, or the belief that “by the time I have explained it properly, I may as well do it myself”. These convictions act like invisible brakes in day-to-day leadership.

That is why successful delegation does not begin with the question “How can I delegate better?”, but with honest self-reflection: **“What is preventing me from truly handing over responsibility?”**

Two approaches – a comparison

Scenario: A project plan changes at short notice, and three months’ worth of work now has to be completed in six weeks.

Leader A responds with control. She prepares detailed overviews, allocates tasks in a one-hour meeting using a slide presentation, and expects implementation. One week later: very little progress, low morale, and team members who have not yet started. A concludes that even more control is required – and from then on works late into the night herself.

Leader B presents the same situation – and then asks the decisive questions: “What ideas do you have? How do we want to approach this? What would you suggest?” The team develops its own scenarios, identifies risks and creates new project plans. Issues emerge that B would never have considered alone. Motivation is high – because the ideas being implemented are the team’s own.

What makes the difference

The decisive difference lies in how delegation is understood. Genuine delegation is not about simply passing tasks down the line. It is built on trust and on the willingness to transfer responsibility with clarity and consistency.

Team members who are invited to contribute their expertise and develop solutions independently take ownership at an entirely different level. They do not merely execute; they think with the process, shape the outcome and actively contribute to the result. Constant control becomes unnecessary – not because control matters less, but because trust has increased.

This also fundamentally shifts the role of the leader: rather than acting as an instructor, the leader becomes an enabling presence. The focus is less on prescribing the path and more on creating the right framework and asking the right questions: **not “I will tell you how to do it”, but “What do you propose?”**

PIVARO Takeaway

Delegation does not work as the distribution of tasks – it works as a relationship of trust. Leaders who trust their team members to develop solutions not only gain time; they also enable something that cannot be mandated: genuine ownership. Step by step.