

Delegation Checklist

(for the dentist to evaluate his/her propensity to delegate)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1. I work longer hours than my auxiliaries and have little time for any activities outside the office.	_____	_____
2. I am frequently interrupted because others feel they should come to me before making any decisions.	_____	_____
3. I have unfinished jobs accumulating or have difficulty meeting deadlines.	_____	_____
4. I am too conscientious with details that are not important for the main objective of our practice.	_____	_____
5. I have the feeling that a successful dentist should be rushed in order to justify his/her fees.	_____	_____
6. I neglect to ask team members for their ideas about problems that arise in their work.	_____	_____
7. I do not know which tasks to delegate or how to direct auxiliaries to do them.	_____	_____
8. I ask a team member to be responsible for an activity or area and then hang over his/her shoulder to be sure it gets done to meet my standards.	_____	_____
9. I lack confidence in auxiliaries' abilities to make proper decisions.	_____	_____
10. My tendency is to place blame rather than trying to understand why a mistake was made.	_____	_____
11. I dread regular team meetings and avoid frequent one-on-one discussions with individuals to hear about problems and/or progress in their work.	_____	_____
12. I am hesitant to allow time for a day-long planning retreat at least yearly.	_____	_____
13. I fear losing control of my practice.	_____	_____
14. I am limited by the "I can do it better myself" fallacy.	_____	_____
15. I am particularly interested in details of work in our office and want to do it myself because I get satisfaction from this personal involvement.	_____	_____
16. I am "wishy washy" with decisions and change my mind frequently with little reason.	_____	_____
17. I believe that I must do all interviewing and provide all training for new auxiliaries.	_____	_____

Scoring:

0 - 3 Yes's — You are probably comfortable with delegation to staff.

4 - 6 Yes's — You are hesitant to delegate but believe to do so would be in the best interest of the practice.

7 - 9 Yes's — The idea of delegating may appeal, but you need lots of practice.

10 Yes's or more — The thought of delegating probably makes you panic. Decide why and try to eliminate those feelings and habits or seek counseling from a person skilled in the art of delegation. An experienced manager in mid-to-large businesses may be a good source of advice about delegation.

To improve delegation the dentist can:

- Forget the fallacy frequently taught in dental school, "If you want something done right, do it yourself."
- Classify responsibilities and tasks for delegation:
 - Can be done by an untrained person
 - Can be done by a person with some training
 - Can be done by a well-trained, experienced person
 - Can be done by the dentist only
- Train auxiliaries; trust; turn loose.
- Be available to counsel rather than to direct. When a staff member comes to ask a question, answer with a question, "What do YOU think should be done in this situation?"
- Critique individual auxiliaries privately so that she or he understands your expectations and how to handle particular situations correctly the next time.
- When a staff member accepts delegated tasks, praise frequently. Remember, that which receives praise gets repeated.