



Health Workforce Initiative

Hi-Touch Healthcare: The Critical Six Soft Skills

Grab-N-Go Independent Training Module:

Leadership Management Skills

Delegation vs Dumping

HEALTH WORKFORCE INITIATIVE STATEWIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, CALIFORNIA
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Leadership Management Skills Delegation vs Dumping

Grab-N-Go Independent Training Module

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Leadership Management Skills

Delegation vs Dumping

Background Information

The Joint Commission (2015) has consistently listed communication among the most frequently cited causes of “sentinel events – resulting in death or permanent loss of function.”ⁱ In their most recent findings, the Commission also adds leadership and human factors as the top three causes. These causes, communication, leadership, and human factors, are intertwined. Indeed, in order to be an effective leader, one must also be an effective communicator. Many types of communication skills required for effective leadership and this module will touch on several. The specific focus, however, is training for one key area—delegation.

In the health care setting, individually completing ALL required tasks is simply not possible. Even leaders and managers need assistance in accomplishing their tasks and responsibilities. In addition, the world of healthcare often requires interchangeable leadership roles among nursing, dietary, security, and human resource needs and responsibilities.ⁱⁱ

There are many benefits to delegating required tasks. One essential benefit is the increased productivity that occurs when individuals with higher-level skills have more time to focus on specialized tasks and responsibilities. Delegation also allows for cross-training so during emergencies more than one individual is experienced in completing the required tasks. Moreover, job satisfaction increases through delegation because the transfer of responsibility acknowledges the confidence in and capabilities of an individual.

However, the skill of delegation is something many individuals have trouble learning. Too often individuals end up “dumping” a task rather than effectively delegating it. Understanding the difference between dumping and delegating is the first step toward successful delegation. Most often, the reasons for dumping include



ineffective time-management of a looming deadline, unclear directions, or the undesirability of certain tasks.

Quite frequently, delegation is mistakenly thought of as simply giving someone something to do. In fact, successful delegation is actually quite intentional and can be broken down into five steps.ⁱⁱⁱ The first step is realization. Realization is when the owner of the task admits that s/he does not have time to successfully complete all responsibilities. The second step is observation. This is simply allowing the person to whom the task is delegated to watch the task being completed. Third is collaboration which means actually completing the task together. The fourth step is evaluation. During this step the person to whom the task is delegated completes the task while the person who delegated the task watches and gives feedback. The fifth and final step is the actual delegation of the task under conditions in which the individual can successfully complete that task.

Proper delegation benefits all individuals involved. The person doing the delegating is able to be more productive and the person who is being delegated to is able to increase his/her skills and abilities.^{iv}

This module will include the definition of leadership and differentiate between effective and ineffective leadership. Several activities are included that will help develop and strengthen leadership skills.



Training



Overall Goal: Participants will learn how to successfully follow the steps for effective delegation rather than simply dumping unwanted tasks.

WIIFM: What's in it for me? What's in it for me? Because of the collaborative and complicated work required in a healthcare environment, healthcare professionals must be able to distinguish between delegation and dumping. This session helps participants to understand the benefits of thoughtful delegation.



Materials Provided:

1. Leadership Management Module PowerPoint
2. Activity #1: Musical Paper Bag
3. Activity #2: Pretzel Picture
4. Activity #3: Identifying Leadership



Directions for the Trainer: Activity preparation information is included in this document and/or within the PowerPoint presentation notes. Each PowerPoint slide, as appropriate, includes detailed explanations and instructions for the trainer. As with all Grab-N-Go Modules, you can use it all for a more detailed training, or simply use one or two of the many Activities—A la Carte style!



ACTIVITY #1

Musical Paper Bags



Goal: To get ALL participants balanced with both feet on the paper bags. This activity should reveal natural leaders.



Materials Needed (Quantities vary by how many in the group)

- A room large enough to have several paper bags laid flat in different places with room enough for participants to roam around
- 4 or 5 large paper bags
- Music that can be turned off and on (danceable or upbeat music is suggested)
- PowerPoint slides 7-8



Procedures:

- Instruct participants that when the music starts, they are to mingle around (dance if they wish). The goal of this activity is to work as a team to ensure everyone gets on a bag! (It is not like Survivor!)
- When the music stops, each person has to have both feet on a paper bag. Tell participants you will countdown 3-2-1 after the music stops and they must have everyone on a bag when you get to “1”.
- When the music starts again, one or two paper bags are removed. Participants walk around again to the music and repeat the process. (Just like musical chairs.)
- As bags are removed, you will see people work harder to get everyone on a bag.
- Usually there is some clever person in each group that asks, “Hey can we rip the bag to make it bigger? Or rip it in small pieces so that each person can stand on a piece?” Respond by saying, “We never said you couldn’t.”
- Sometimes the group has one bag left and is struggling to figure out a solution. If needed, you can give them a hint such as asking: “Is there any way you can think of to increase the space on the bag?” or “Can you think of any way to spread out the people but still have everyone touching a bag?”
- Review the reflection questions on PowerPoint slide 8. Allow some discussion as different individuals answer these questions.
- Point out that you noticed that one or more people arose as the leader/s and ask how that person got others to follow his/her directions.
- Reflect: what leadership characteristics were revealed by this person and/or activity?



ACTIVITY #2

Pretzel Picture



Goal: Participants will learn the importance of precise instructions by experiencing vague and incomplete instructions.



Materials Needed:

- Paper towel for each participant
- 15 thin small pretzel sticks for each participant
- PowerPoint slides 13-14



Procedures:

- Pair up with another person and sit back-to-back. Place a paper towel down flat in front of each person. Give each person 10-15 pretzels.
- The pair decides who will be the communicator and who will be the receiver. The communicator will go first and make a design/shape on their paper towel with the provided pretzels.
- The communicator will then explain the design/shape by describing one pretzel at a time. Example: “I placed my first pretzel stick vertical in the middle of the towel.”
- The receiver of the information cannot ask any clarifying questions—the receiver must simply interpret the direction to the best of his/her ability.
- Once the activity is completed, examine how closely matched the pretzel designs are.
- Now it is time to switch roles. The receiver now becomes the communicator, but this time the receiver CAN ask clarifying questions.
- Once the activity is completed, examine how closely matched the pretzel designs are.
- Reflect and discuss:
 - What was it like for the receiver to follow directions and not be able to ask questions?
 - Was either partner frustrated? Why or why not?
 - Did the communicators have any trouble or know that the receiver was having trouble?
 - What does this activity teach us about delegation?



ACTIVITY #3

Identifying Leadership Activity



Goal: Allows participants to identify leaders that had an impact on them and to envision developing those leadership skills for themselves.



Materials Needed:

- Piece of paper for each participant
- Writing utensil for each participant
- Slide 20 of the Power Point presentation



Procedures:

- Instruct participants to identify three leaders that they admire most.
- Have participants select one of those leaders, to close their eyes, and to imagine living a day in the shoes of their chosen leader. This is considered a guided day dream. (5-7 minutes.)
- Instruct participants to write down all the leadership characteristics that describe their chosen leader. (5 minutes.)
- Next, have participants circle the qualities that they also possess.
- Underline the qualities that they need and want to further develop.
- Share with the group.
- Ask participants if they are willing to commit to working on one of the areas they identified.
- Develop an action plan—what will participants do in the next week, month, year, to learn and/or strengthen their desired skills.
- If time, have volunteers make a pledge about part or all of their action plan.



References

ⁱ Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. (2016). Patient safety systems chapter: Sentinel event data root Causes by Event Type, 2004-2014. *Sentinel Event Alert*. The Joint Commission website. Retrieved from: https://www.jointcommission.org/sentinel_event.aspx

ⁱⁱ Macedo, S. (2016). Power Tool: Delegating vs. Dumping. International Coach Academy website. Retrieved from: <http://coachcampus.com/coach-portfolios/power-tools/silvia-macedo-delegating-vs-dumping/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Macedo, S. (2016). Power Tool: Delegating vs. Dumping. International Coach Academy website. Retrieved from: <http://coachcampus.com/coach-portfolios/power-tools/silvia-macedo-delegating-vs-dumping/>

^{iv} Macedo, S. (2016). Power Tool: Delegating vs. Dumping. International Coach Academy website. Retrieved from: <http://coachcampus.com/coach-portfolios/power-tools/silvia-macedo-delegating-vs-dumping/>