



Special Olympics

VOLUNTEER TRAINING SERIES

DELEGATION

Facilitator's Guide



Special Olympics Volunteer Management Series

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Introduction:

Special Olympics staff and key volunteers are faced with a similar dilemma: they need and want to produce results often well beyond their individual capacities and time availability. And so... they need to share work through delegation to volunteers.

Delegation is the accomplishment of the mission and goals of Special Olympics through the efforts of others. It is the supervisor's or manager's most important and basic tool. But, as all who are engaged in responsible delegation know, it is complicated, requires hard work and involves unavoidable risks.

Unless we examine our personal and professional barriers toward delegation and learn some effective procedures and techniques to counteract these tendencies, we will continue to experience dramatic turnover and exhaustion in our human service endeavors. Delegation helps maintain the consistency of help a Program needs in its games, sports and area management teams.

In many ways delegation is the art of letting go while staying in charge. A good delegator gives volunteers the needed tools and support to do a job, including clear responsibility and authority for decision making, while maintaining just enough control herself to ensure that the agreed upon results are being accomplished. Not an easy task!

Good delegation frees individuals to do other work while empowering volunteers to grow on the job. A staff member or key volunteer who is reluctant to release significant work to others or is dissatisfied with volunteers' reliability and accomplishments, may find that the core of the problem lies with difficulties inherent in delegation.



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The **primary purposes** of this module are:

- ⇒ to explore the values of delegation,
- ⇒ to enhance the understanding of responsible delegation, and
- ⇒ to identify the procedures and techniques for doing it well.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Identify any personal resistance to delegation.
2. Appraise the values of responsible delegation.
3. Explain the differences between doing, directing, dumping and delegating.
4. Name the procedures and technical skills involved in delegation.
5. Propose appropriate levels of authority when delegating.



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General Notes to Facilitator:

1. This workshop is in a suggested format. Feel free, however, to personalize it with your own stories about your experiences working at Special Olympics.
2. This training should give participants useful skills in delegation that are transferable to any work, volunteer or home setting.
3. Using examples of delegation to children at home can often assist participants in quickly relating to the information. Use your own Special Olympics examples whenever possible. For your convenience, several Special Olympics scenarios/examples can be found in each section in italics.
4. Delegation is a core skill that will be useful for anyone who supervises paid or non-paid personnel and may, therefore, be a module to include early in new staff orientation, with committee chairs, all types of management team training and for Games Directors and Area Directors.
5. This workshop was designed to be “facilitator friendly” so that staff and key volunteers could deliver this module. Information is frequently best received when presented by a peer. Area Management training is best delivered by good Area Directors. Use peer facilitators whenever possible. However, before you empower someone to train, ensure you or someone you respect has seen them in action.
6. Because there are 4 key concepts to cover, presentations and facilitation must be crisp and timed if you want to stick to an hour session. This module is presented in an accordion format. It may be compressed into 55 - 60 minutes or by using the optional additional activities and the italicized examples it may be expanded to two hours. Each audience and their level of maturity in delegation skills will further dictate the time frame. The grid on the next page reflects a 55 minute version and does not include activities and examples.
7. Encourage participants to take notes, as this encourages active learning!



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WORKSHOP OUTLINE

SLIDE #	CORRESPONDING FACILITATOR GUIDE PAGE(S)	SECTION	TOTAL ESTIMATED TIME: 60 minutes
E-1, 2, 3, 4	7	Introduction Opening Exercise Introductory Comments Learning Objectives 4 Key Concepts	5 minutes
E-5, 6, 7, 8, 9	8-11	Concept 1 3 reasons for difficulties in delegation	20 minutes
E-10, 11	11, 12	Concept 2 Benefits of delegation	5 minutes
E-12, 13 14	12-15	Concept 3 Cardinal rules of delegation	15 minutes
E-15, 16	16-18	Concept 4 Level of authority in Delegation	10 minutes
	19	Summary/Wrap- up/Evaluation	5 minutes



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INTRODUCTION

- **Show Slide #1**

Opening exercise:

- **Show Slide #2**

Ask all participants to assess how they perceive their success at delegation to others. The descriptive work must begin with an M such as magnificent, mixed, miserable, murky, etc.

Ask by a show of hands how many rated themselves as magnificent, mixed, etc., and ask for any new M words that surfaced.

Presentation

Most people are, at best, mixed in their self evaluation of success with delegation. Note that it is a difficult skill that involves hard work, patience, and unavoidable risks.

- **Show Slide #3: Learning Objectives**

Summarize objectives of this module and offer some introductory comments on delegation. Employ personal experiences and anecdotes.

- **Show Slide # 4: Key Concepts of Recognition**

This workshop is built on 4 Key Concepts. Indicate that during the workshop each concept will be examined more closely.

- **Show Slide #5: Key Concept 1**



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KEY CONCEPT # 1:

MANY DIFFICULTIES IN DELEGATION ARISE FROM:

- (1) ATTITUDES TOWARD RELEASING WORK,
- (2) NOT UNDERSTANDING WHAT DELEGATION IS, AND
- (3) LACK OF ORGANIZATIONAL REWARDS FOR EFFECTIVE DELEGATION.

- Show Slide #6: Why Delegation is Difficult...

Three Presentation Points:

- 1. Although we like others to delegate to us, many of us have some resistance to delegating to others.*

Activity

Ask group to answer...

Why do people have difficulty delegating?

Record answers on flip chart or transparency.

Suggest the following as possible reasons if the group does not suggest them:

- I can do it better.
- I enjoy it and don't want to give it up.
- I have no time to delegate.
- People will wonder what I do.



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- The volunteer may do it better than I do.
- I am responsible for the end results and don't want to lose control.
- I am a perfectionist and have had poor past experience with delegation.
- I won't get any credit for delegating.
- I am not sure what has to be done.
- I enjoy getting the direct credit.
- I won't be needed anymore.
- I won't have anything to boast/complain about.
- It takes less time for me to do it myself.
- I want it done my way.

Key Learning:

If we continue to allow these attitudes to affect our willingness to delegate, we will never become good managers. Good managers don't perform all work directly; they work through others (delegate) to get the job done.

- **Show Slide #7: Good Managers**

(Optional - See Expanded Delegation Activity #5)

2. There is much misunderstanding regarding what delegation is. There are four ways to get a job done:

- **Show Slide #8: Getting the Job Done**

1. **Doing** it all
2. **Directing** others
3. **Dumping** -- Often due to procrastination
4. **Delegating**

- **Show Slide #9: Delegation involves...**



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Assigning mutually agreed upon goals

- Sit down with volunteers, go over goals and assess them before beginning.

An understanding of the authoritative role of each party

- Does each person know their authority?
- Who may fire a volunteer?

Training and support for the volunteer

- Who gives technical assistance, who trains, who orientates?

Follow-up

- Schedule meetings with volunteers or staff to review progress.
- Even if you know the results - show interest and appreciation.

Presentation

Participants should begin to see the complexity of this skill. Assure them you will explore in detail these elements which are essential to good delegation.

3. If delegation is not rewarded... people tend to want to do it all!

Optional Discussion:

Who tends to get rewarded in Special Olympics - people who are the doers and/or people who delegate?

Key Learning:



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If your Program tends to reward and honor only people who do the most work, effective delegation may not be regarded as a valued quality. Staff may be recognized for their personal accomplishments rather than the means used to achieve their goal. Staff who work together (for example those on committees) often enjoy and experience more when working as a group.

- **Show Slide #10: Key Concept 2**

KEY CONCEPT 2

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF DELEGATION
—FOR YOU, FOR THE VOLUNTEER AND FOR THE PROGRAM.**

Activity:

Show Slide #11

Ask Participants... ***What are the benefits for you, the volunteers and the Program when you delegate?***

Facilitate and/or record answers.

Possible answers:

You:

- Frees time for you to do other things
- Adherence to timeline
- Public recognition for leadership
- Tasks can be broken down among many people and the loss or absence of one volunteer will not disrupt the flow

Volunteers:



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- Less burnout
- Volunteers mature when giving them more responsibility and authority
- Empowerment of volunteers and motivation to complete job tasks
- Job completion recognition

The Program:

- Increase public awareness of Special Olympics
- Save money and involve more people in the mission of Special Olympics
- Better planning

Ask participants to imagine where they would be today if no one had taken the risk to delegate to them.

Optional Activity –

Have participants think about what parts of their current job or volunteer assignment could be delegated to a volunteer. If everyone in the group holds the same position, this could really become an individual or partner activity. (A good follow-up workshop would be a “job design” in which you teach staff and volunteers to write new job descriptions based on the release of some of their current tasks.)

- **Show Slide #12: Key Concept 3**

KEY CONCEPT 3:
UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICING THE CARDINAL RULES OF EFFECTIVE DELEGATION
CAN ENHANCE YOUR CHANCE FOR SUCCESS.

- **Show Slide #13 & 14: Cardinal Rules of Delegation**



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There are 9 Cardinal Rules of Effective Delegation:

** Use example of a delegated job for a volunteer in your Program as you share key rules.

1. You must assess work requirements with the corresponding abilities and time availability of a volunteer.

- Do you have the right person for the assignment, not simply someone who has agreed to do it?
- Does he/she have the time and is he/she willing to give the time needed to get the job done?
- What is the person's motivation for considering the position?)

Examples:

Recruiting Area Directors, Local Coordinators or Games Directors - Review the job description and projected time commitment needed. Review how much staff support will be given. Can they do the job with the amount of time and resources that staff can give them?

1. Give the assignment in terms of results.

- Don't just give activities for volunteers to follow; share with them what is to be accomplished.

Examples:

- Games Director and Sports Management Team jointly decide the fall tournament should include Unified Sports® Soccer and Bocce. How the tournament is conducted the day of is up to the sports tournament director.
- Public Relations Chair meets with the committee and together they establish their goals and subcommittees.

1. Define the level of control.

- Indicate how much authority the volunteer has to make decisions without "checking in." (Note that this is a critical part of success which will be dealt with further in concept #4.)

Examples:

- If you are the Games Director, can you change the games location without checking with the Area Director?
- As the Area Volunteer Chair, can you choose the design and color of volunteer T-shirts? Can you order them on the behalf of Special Olympics?
- Area Public Relations subcommittees are allowed to make their own objectives and timelines to meet the goals of the annual plan.

1. Communicate any guidelines and assess volunteer's understanding of them.



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- Volunteers should be forewarned about any constraints that must shape their decisions or activities (e.g., confidentiality).

Examples:

- *For Games and Competition Directors - Who makes decisions on competition format, disqualifications, sending athletes home, etc.?*
- *For Local Coordinators and Outreach Chairs - Who makes decisions on eligibility questions and medical forms?*

1. Make resources and training available.

- It is important that volunteers have the assistance and resources needed to successfully accomplish their tasks. Ask volunteers what you can do to help assure their success.

Examples:

- *Conduct Games Management Training for Games Director and Committee. Send Games Director to other events to network and get new ideas.*
- *Send Area Directors and good Area committee Chairs to other areas to assist in Area Assistance reviews.*
- *Offer quarterly in-service to Area Directors and Local Coordinators on topics of their choice.*

1. Determine criteria for success.

- It is important that the supervisor and the volunteer reach an agreement on how results will be measured.

Examples:

Define with the volunteer what the measurable objectives will be based upon the previous year's successes or shortcomings:

- *games... add women's division in team sports.*
- *training... add 3 training schools to develop and promote a new sport.*
- *outreach... recruit 10 coaches for a new local program just starting.*

1. Set up checkpoints.

- To be certain that the job is progressing, times should be established to check progress or any need for change or additional support.



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Examples:

If you are a director, regularly scheduled individual meetings should be set up with Games Director, Training Director, Outreach Director and Local Coordinator to review goals and pre-established benchmarks for your goals.

8. Provide feedback and recognition along the way and at the completion of a project.

Examples:

*- Start regularly scheduled meeting with "good news."
- For Games Director or Area Director - let committee chairs proclaim their progress and accomplishments first then recognize and encourage their efforts. Should offer feedback continuously. May have to offer coaching. Coaching builds confidence in people.*

9. Watch out for REVERSE DELEGATION.

- Define reverse delegation as follows: When you delegate a job to a volunteer and he/she brings problems back to you to solve! Instead, try to problem solve with them, but let them keep the job. Most people can share experiences with this behavior. Be sure to ask for some examples.

Optional Activity:

In groups of three, ask participants to role-play a meeting where an assignment is given to the volunteer. Have one person take the role of a staff person who is delegating a job to a volunteer (role two). The third person is the observer who will give feedback as to the delegator's effectiveness in releasing the job. Use several types of examples, that is area management, sports management, and game management. Use different levels of jobs within a category meaning Director of Volunteers for passing out water, housing check-in, volunteer registration, staffing, award, etc.

- **Show Slide #15: Key Concept 4**

KEY CONCEPT # 4



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THE KEY TO EFFECTIVE DELEGATION OFTEN LIES IN DECIDING ON THE PROPER LEVEL OF AUTHORITY AND CONTROL TO RELEASE WHEN DELEGATING A JOB OR TASK TO SOMEONE.

Presentation:

Most problems in delegation arise from either *over* controlling or *under* controlling. The important thing to know is what level of control the volunteer needs to have in the task given to him/her.

There are essentially 4 major levels of control to choose from:

- **Show Slide #16: Levels of Control in Delegation**

Level #4 – Volunteer has NO authority for self-assignment

This is really not delegation. The volunteer would not be permitted to make any decisions on the project. Only the very immature or unqualified would fit in this category. You do not want to put people into jobs for which they have no qualifications or motivation to succeed such as Gopher positions where people may get bored if they are more creative thinkers.

Level #3 – Volunteer is allowed only the authority to *recommend* self-assignment

Volunteers have the authority to recommend self-assignment - the lowest level of authority. They must bring suggestions to you for your approval before they can move ahead.

Activity

Ask the participants... **Under what circumstances would this level (level 3) of delegation be appropriate?**

Possible answers:



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1. New volunteers for whom you have no record of reliability or ability. (If they prove to have good ideas, move them quickly to level #2.)
2. Volunteers who are inexperienced in this activity. They might function at level #2 or even #1 in other activities. (Example: Volunteers whom you would like to train as volunteer recruiters. They are inexperienced at this so you would ask them to give you an outline of their speaking presentation and, if inexperienced at public speaking, you would give them an opportunity to rehearse or receive additional training.)

Level #2 - Authority for self-assignment, provided regular progress reports are received

This authority is given to a volunteer who has proven him/herself capable in this area. You trust his/her judgment to make decisions without always coming to you for approval. You do ask for a report indicating actions they have taken so that you maintain control. If the person repeatedly makes poor decisions, return them to level #3 in delegation.

Offer an example where you may have to demote a volunteer one level?

Example:

A local track & field Competition Coordinator has been given an approved budget. Any expense outside that budget must be obtained through in-kind donations. If the Coordinator disregards approved budget, in the future, all expenses will have to be individually approved using purchase orders.

Level #1 - The authority for self-assignment

This, the highest level of delegation, is where you have full trust in a person's competence and commitment to a task or job. You ask for contact with the volunteer only if he/she has a problem or if there are circumstances of which you need to be notified.

What are the possible pitfalls of this level?

Optional Activities:

See Additional Delegation Activity, #2

See Additional Delegation Activity, #3



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Note to Facilitator...

To augment understanding of Concept 4, offer the following analogy:

A great example to help people understand these levels of delegation is to discuss a parent's supervision of a teenager as the parent gradually "lets go."

Level 4 - "You will be home tonight at midnight. No discussion."

Level 3 - "What time do you think is reasonable for you to be home?"

Level 2 - "Wake me up to let me know you got home safely."

Level 1 - NEXT DAY - "So, how was your evening?"

You may want to use a Special Olympics example in addition to or instead of those above.

This is a scenario of a staff person's conversation with a volunteer Games Director:

Level 4 - "I have scheduled a meeting and this is the agenda."

Level 3 - "I have scheduled a meeting and would like you to submit your ideas for an agenda."

Level 2 - "Please schedule the meeting and add my items to the agenda."

Level 1 - "Please give me a copy of the agenda. See you at the meeting."



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Summary/Wrap- up/Evaluation

- In closing, offer the group some reminders of principles for successful delegation.
- Close with a review of the 4 Key Concepts.
- Remind participants that delegation isn't easy, is often complicated and involves taking a risk.

Optional Closing Exercise:

A good closing exercise is to ask participants to get into pairs and answer the question:

As a result of our discussion on delegation, what will I begin to do differently to enhance my skills in this area?

Direct the group to the evaluation form at the back of their *Participant Handbooks* and ask participants to fill out the form before leaving.

END VOLUNTEER DELEGATION MODULE



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ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Suggestions for expanded activities when conducting sessions over 55 minutes

1. Have participants think about what parts of their current job or volunteer assignment could be delegated to a volunteer. If everyone in the group holds the same position, this could really become an individual or partner activity. (A good follow-up workshop would be a “job design” in which you teach staff and volunteers to write new job descriptions based on the release of some of their current tasks.)
2. If a new Manager enters the organization, there are most likely problems with levels of authority in delegation, particularly if people have progressed to a trusted level with the former Manager. When a new Manager enters, staff are often placed in a lower level while the Manager assesses their working style and develops some trust in their relationship. This may be an appropriate topic to add if your Program has recently undergone personnel changes at the management level. It is helpful to have everyone understand that this is not a mistrust issue, but one of learning people's styles.
3. After the presentation on levels of authority (Concept #4), have participants think about a situation where they put someone in the wrong level of authority (too high or too low) and had difficulties supervising the person. Brainstorm with group as to how it could have been done differently.
4. In groups of three, ask participants to role-play a meeting where an assignment is given to the volunteer. Have one person take the role of a staff person who is delegating a job to a volunteer (role two). The third person is the observer who will give feedback as to the delegator's effectiveness in releasing the job. Use several types of examples, that is area management, sports management, and game management. Use different levels of jobs within a category meaning Director of Volunteers for passing out water, housing check-in, volunteer registration, staffing, award, etc. (See Concept #3 to review elements.)
5. Ask people to think of a person in his/her life who has significantly and effectively delegated to them. Ask them to remember the qualities of the person and why they regard them as a superb delegator. (Remembering people who took the risk to trust you will help you become better able to “let go.”)



Resources on Delegation

On-Line Resources:

<http://energizeinc.com> Energize, Inc. is an international training, consulting and publishing firm specializing in volunteerism. Their goal is "to connect leaders of volunteers with resources, information and ideas generated from around the world."

<http://www.iave.org> IAVE is "the only international organization with the mission to promote, celebrate, and strengthen volunteerism worldwide." The International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) worked in close cooperation with the United Nations Volunteers and was a major contributor in establishing the International Year of the Volunteer.

<http://e-volunteerism.com/> The "Electronic Journal of the Volunteer Community," e-Volunteerism is a quarterly online publication that caters to volunteer leaders and managers.

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