

EMPOWERMENT (EMP)

Empowerment is the ability to share responsibility with individuals and groups so that they have a deep sense of commitment and ownership. People who practice empowerment participate and contribute at high levels, are creative and innovative, take sound risks, are willing to be held accountable and demonstrate leadership. They also foster teamwork among employees, across government and with colleagues, and, as appropriate, facilitate the effective use of teams.

<i>This Means...</i>	<i>This Doesn't Mean...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• drawing on the skills, ideas and viewpoints of other team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• preferring to be left alone to get on with your own work
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• supporting and encouraging team members; reassuring them after a setback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• engaging in win-lose competition with other members of the team or telling other people what could have been done differently but not the employee
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• speaking about team members in positive terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• making negative comments about other team members
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• actively seeking out work opportunities that will challenge your team and will enable them to grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• assigning work that you know the person will do well and efficiently because they have done similar assignments many times before
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• letting others lead and make mistakes in a non critical setting; trusting their judgment and showing respect for their intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• controlling everything; second guessing your team all the time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• fully delegating the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• delegating the task and defining how to complete the task

**DEVELOPMENTAL
ACTIVITIES**

Level (1-2) Activities

Recognize good performance.

- Encourage high performance by giving your employees positive feedback and rewarding their more productive efforts.

Conduct a self-audit.

- Monitor the way in which you speak about members of your team.
- Check yourself to ensure that you speak positively about the strengths and capabilities of others and refrain, whenever possible, from criticizing others in your conversations.
- Strive to deal directly with individuals with whom you are displeased rather than complaining to others.
- Refrain from engaging in conversations with others who do not follow these guidelines, withdrawing from discussions about the weaknesses of team members.

Reflection Tip:

- * Do you actively promote your team?

Increase the amount of positive feedback you provide.

- Record the number of times you provide positive and negative feedback to others over the next two weeks.
- Make a concerted effort to steadily increase the amount of positive feedback you provide so that ratio of positive to negative is about 3 to 1.

Reflection Tip:

- * Check to ensure that you speak positively about the strengths and capabilities of others and refrain, wherever possible, from criticizing others in your conversations.

Identify someone within, or external to, your organization who is effective in delegating.

- Talk to this individual about what they do and apply those techniques you think would be helpful for your situation.

Review your current workload and identify routine tasks that could be delegated.

- Make a practice of delegating routine tasks.
- Ask your team if your instructions are clear and understandable.
- Recognize your employees for work well done.

Reflection Tip:

- * Do you create an environment that supports delegation?

Level (3-4) Activities

Give recognition its due.

- Make a practice of recognizing particular efforts made by others in department meetings, noting the contribution of the effort to the overall goals of your group.
- When looking at performance to recognize individuals, be sure that you are including all individuals who participated in the success, such as peers, those who provided back up, etc.
- Select a key strategic project to publically recognize someone who just completed a key strategic assignment.

Seek out unique development opportunities.

- Seek out unique development opportunities, both inside and outside of your department, that will stretch the capabilities of your employees. Following are some examples:
 - ⇒ Have team members participate in cross-functional task forces, temporary lateral assignments, job rotations.
 - ⇒ Ask your team to prepare a budget that would represent the goals and priorities of the department and the overall business.
 - ⇒ Ask your team to recruit and select the next opening available with the group. Offer some selection interviewing training as development experience.

Reflection Tip:

- * Do you create a culture that supports risk taking?

Show willingness to support team decisions.

- Identify one of your ongoing issues which would particularly benefit from involving others working together as a team.
- Identify which individuals are or will need to work together on this issue.
- Organize a team meeting for the express purpose of deciding how the issue will be tackled. Prior to the meeting obtain two flipcharts or a room with a whiteboard.
 - ⇒ At the beginning of the meeting, ask the team to generate a list of the key decisions that need to be made and write this list on one of the flipcharts or on one side of the whiteboard.
 - ⇒ Make certain that you contribute your own views to the list but, in general, say as little as possible. Rather, focus on our contribution on encouraging each member of the team to contribute to the discussion.
 - ⇒ Next, ask the team for their views on the best answers to each decisions.
 - ⇒ Record their suggestions on the other flipchart or the other side of the whiteboard. Again, say as little as possible about yourself and encourage others to speak. Where you agree with the advice, say so and personally endorse the decision. Where you disagree, explain why and provide a more effective answer.
 - ⇒ In the end, however, support your team decision even when it is different from your stated point of view, unless it has serious implications. When the meeting is over, make a brief note of the decisions that were made and give a copy to everyone who was at the meeting.

Solicit other points of view.

- Solicit input from your colleagues regarding how you can best realize your strategic vision, priorities and objectives.
- Ask your colleagues for their ideas, thoughts, feelings and concerns after you have created the point of focus.
- Allow your colleagues to have an impact on priorities, objectives and approaches, but you should initiate the focus, communicate your views and set the agenda.
- Communicate when rapid changes are occurring and conduct a session to get people's buy-in before implementation.

Grow the talent pool of your direct reports by providing developmental challenges.

- Talk to each of your direct reports to get a sense of where their interests lie, as well as where they believe they can add more value to the division than they are currently doing.
- Refer to their most recent performance appraisals as an indication of the sorts of activities they could become involved in, based on their experience and capabilities.
- Look for challenging assignments that will provide them with greater exposure in the organization and opportunities to develop their skills and abilities. This could include standing in for you at meetings, acting on cross-functional task forces or becoming involved in special projects. Remember that these opportunities may exist outside your division, as well, and could benefit the broader governmental mandate.
- Propose these opportunities to your direct reports, giving an explanation of why you think it is important for them to develop in these areas (be as specific as you can), and encouraging them to take a risk if they are unsure of their abilities.
- Ensure that you are available to support them throughout the activity with time and advice.
- Give corrective feedback when appropriate. Foster the belief in your department that talking about mistakes and learning from them is a way to encourage responsible risk taking and self-development.

Reflection Tip:

- * Consider what your employee's long-term goals are, before giving assignments.
- * Monitor the employee's reaction to, and progress with these opportunities.

Demonstrate cooperation in working with others.

- Even when engaged in task-related discussions or meetings, place extra emphasis on listening actively, drawing out the interests, concerns, needs and objectives of others.
- Demonstrate that you are listening and taking others seriously by restating what you are hearing and reflecting back your understanding of what others are communicating.
- Seek points of agreement between your position and theirs, making an effort to point out the similarities, not just the differences.
- Avoid taking control of the agenda, or being first to make suggestions, share the different roles played by the group.

Involve others in the decision-making process.

- When you have a decision to make that will have an impact on members of your work group or those outside your work group, include them in the decision making process by explaining the situation or opportunity to them and soliciting their points of view on pro's and con's of the issue.
- Clarify at the beginning of the meeting that you will make the final decision (if that is indeed the case) but that you want to make sure you have considered all implications before doing so.
- If there is dissent among individuals about the final decision, try to deal openly with the issue and engage those involved in problem solving to make the decision palatable.

Level (5) Activities

Delegate some meaningful “stretch assignments”.

- Consider areas where information is perceived as being over controlled and work through what it takes to share this information openly.
- Let team members identify the process. Let them come up with solutions.
- Don't limit the assignments to operational tasks.
- Encourage independent behaviour on a new innovative project.

Analyze your effectiveness in pushing decision making to the lowest possible level within your team by asking yourself the following questions:

- Who do I delegate to/depend on?
- Am I restricting myself to one or two people?
- Am I making all the decisions?
- Can I delegate more accountability to my team members?
- Do I interfere by offering unsolicited input to individuals I have given accountability to?

Reflection Tip:

- * Before you ask someone to do something differently or new, think through the reasons why it is in their best interest and the organization's best interest to do it that way.

Provide learning opportunities.

- Review your current workload and assess which tasks could be delegated to a subordinate.
- Select an employee for the assignment who demonstrates the competencies required for the task.
- Make clear that the purpose of the delegation is to make the subordinate more comfortable with increased responsibilities, not simply to do your work.
- Provide clear direction and parameters for action.
- Monitor and coach regularly.

- Anticipate and tolerate some mistakes.
- Keep a record of the decisions you make.

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Reflection Tip:

- * What is your goal in giving responsibility to this individual for this task? Is it a test? A developmental opportunity? A recognition that they are capable of more?

Let employees stand in for you.

- Have an employee represent you at a meeting and present the results back to the other employees.
- Rotate the leader/facilitator role among all team members at your next staff meeting.

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Reflection Tip:

- * Did you provide enough support for this to be a success?

Contribute to the identification and development of strategic talent.

- Consider the following questions in your assessment of what will constitute strategic talent.
 - ⇒ What are the most important strategic business issues facing the Organization right now and in the next one-three years? Any similarities and differences?
 - ⇒ Are there any unique trends happening in the Organization that create opportunities for strategic talent to be utilized?

- ⇒ How do these business trends affect what the key strategic positions should be in your Organization?
 - ⇒ Are key managers currently in these strategic positions and ready to move to another role?
 - ⇒ What are the most important leadership skills needed to be successful within these strategic positions?
 - ⇒ What range of skills (Managerial/Leadership/ Financial/Government/ Technical/etc.) might the organization need to use right now that would give strategic talent high visibility in their contribution to the business?
- Keep a list of potential candidates for key strategic positions.
 - Consider both client assignment and internal initiatives that these individuals could participate in, in order to develop appropriate skills and expertise.

Reflection Tip:

- * Discuss your evaluation of trends, needs and opportunities for leverage with your colleagues. Think about aligning your collective coaching efforts with the strategic paths you have identified.

Foster an environment where your direct reports take ownership of the development of their respective teams.

- Schedule regular individual discussions with members who have engagement, management or performance counselling responsibilities to discuss the progress of their teams and the achievement of their own personal goals.
- Ask your direct reports to provide you with regular updates on their progress. If a key result is falling short of target, work with them to identify specific actions to get it back on track.
- Set challenging but realistic objectives and target deadlines with your direct reports.
- Start with objectives where there is a high probability of attainment to build momentum and the individual's confidence in his/her own abilities.
- Remember that you are acting as a role model, as well as a coach for this member. Consider how you are asking questions, assigning responsibility and monitoring the member's success. They may very well use this format as the model to which they refer when they are in similar coaching situations.

Reflection Tip:

- * Address such issues as:
 - ⇒ What are their personal and team goals?
 - ⇒ What skills must they personally develop to reach their team goals?
 - ⇒ What do you see that supports or contradicts these goals?
 - ⇒ Are their goals challenging enough?
 - ⇒ What can you and the organization do to help direct reports achieve their goals?