

# DELEGATION

## Concept of Delegation

Delegation is the process where a manager divides the work assigned to him so as to get help from others in accomplishing the same. It involves the following four steps that are indivisible:

- The determination of results expected
- The assignment of tasks
- The delegation of authority for accomplishing these tasks
- The exaction of responsibility for their accomplishment

We find differently that these four steps have three elements such as- the responsibility, the authority and the accountability.

Delegation is the entrustment of responsibility and authority to another and the creation of accountability for performance.

# Components of Delegation

There are three main components in delegation, which are-

- **Authority:** In context of a business organization, authority can be defined as the power and right of a person to use and allocate the resources efficiently, to take decisions and to give orders so as to achieve the organizational objectives. Authority must be well-defined.
- **Responsibility:** Is the duty of the person to complete the task assigned to him. A person who is given the responsibility should ensure that he accomplishes the tasks assigned to him. If the tasks for which he was held responsible are not completed, then he should not give explanations or excuses.
- **Accountability:** Means giving explanations for any variance in the actual performance from the expectations set. Accountability cannot be delegated.



## Steps of Delegation

For achieving delegation, a manager has to work in a system and has to perform following the steps mentioned herewith as follows:

1. Assignment of tasks and duties
2. Granting of authority
3. Creating responsibility and accountability

Considering the fact that delegation of authority is the base of superior-subordinate relationship, we may have a brief discussion on these steps as follows –

1. Assignment of task and duties: The delegator first tries to define the task and duties to the subordinate. He also has to define the result expected from the subordinates. Clarity of duty as well as result expected has to be the first step in delegation.

## Steps of Delegation

2. **Granting of authority:** Subdivision of authority takes place when a superior divides and shares his authority with the subordinate. It is for this reason, every subordinate should be given enough independence to carry the task given to him by his superiors. The managers at all levels delegate authority and power which is attached to their job positions. The subdivision of powers is very important to get effective results.

3. **Creating responsibility and accountability:** The delegation process does not end once powers are granted to the subordinates. They at the same time have to be obligatory towards the duties assigned to them. Responsibility is said to be the factor or obligation of an individual to carry out his duties at the best of his ability as per the directions of superior.



## Principles of Delegation

Delegation is one of the important elements in organisation process. There are certain principles followed as guidelines for effective delegation. They are-

- Principle of delegation by result: The purpose of delegation is to get work done by another more effectively than be done by delegator himself in a given situation.
- Principle of competency: The person or the employee selected as the delegate should be competent for the task assigned to him/her.
- Principle of confidence and trust: It is necessary to have an atmosphere of trust and confidence in the organisation as a whole.
- Principle of parity of between authority and responsibility: Authority delegated should be adequate in relation to the responsibility.
- Principle of unity of command: It describes extent of authority-responsibility. It give thrust on each subordinate should have one boss.

# Principles of Delegation

Bhattacharya, D.K. has pointed out some more principle of delegation. Such as -

- Principle clarity of delegation: Delegation of authority must be clear in terms of its contents, functional relations, scope, and assignments.
- Principle of consistency with expected results: Before proceeding with actual delegation of authority to the subordinate, the manager should know the precise jobs to be done and the results expected of such delegation.
- Principle of no delegation of responsibility: The obligation to accomplish the assigned task is absolute and is not partitioned when authority is delegated to the subordinate.



## Comparison between Delegation and Decentralization

We may have a brief discussion on the comparison between the two as follows-

Basis	Delegation	Decentralization
Meaning	Managers delegate some of their function and authority to their subordinates.	Right to take decisions is shared by top management and other level of management.
Scope	Scope of delegation is limited as superior delegates the powers to the subordinates on individual bases.	Scope is wide as the decision making is shared by the subordinates also.
Responsibility	Responsibility remains of the managers and cannot be delegated	Responsibility is also delegated to subordinates.

<b>Basis</b>	<b>Delegation</b>	<b>Decentralization</b>
<b>Freedom of Work</b>	Freedom is not given to the subordinates as they have to work as per the instructions of their superiors.	Freedom to work can be maintained by subordinates as they are free to take decision and to implement it.
<b>Nature</b>	It is a routine function	It is an important decision of an enterprise.
<b>Need on purpose</b>	Delegation is important in all concerns whether big or small. No enterprises can work without delegation.	Decentralization becomes more important in large concerns and it depends upon the decision made by the enterprise, it is not compulsory.



<b>Basis</b>	<b>Delegation</b>	<b>Decentralization</b>
<b>Grant of Authority</b>	The authority is granted by one individual to another.	It is a systematic act which takes place at all levels and at all functions in a concern.
<b>Grant of Responsibility</b>	Responsibility cannot be delegated	Authority with responsibility is delegated to subordinates.
<b>Degree</b>	Degree of delegation varies from concern to concern and department to department.	Decentralization is total by nature. It spreads throughout the organization i.e. at all levels and all functions.
<b>Process</b>	Delegation is a process which explains superior subordinates relationship	It is an outcome which explains relationship between top management and all other departments.

<b>Basis</b>	<b>Delegation</b>	<b>Decentralization</b>
<b>Essentiality</b>	Delegation is essential of all kinds of concerns	Decentralization is a decisions function by nature.
<b>Significance</b>	Delegation is essential for creating the organization	Decentralization is an optional policy at the discretion of top management.
<b>Withdrawal</b>	Delegated authority can be taken back.	It is considered as a general policy of top management and is applicable to all departments.
<b>Freedom of Action</b>	Very little freedom to the subordinates	Considerable freedom



# Advantages of Delegation

Advantages of Delegation include the following –

1. **Best use of manpower** – Proper delegation means effective use of work force. Task assigned keeping in mind the skills of an employee often gives good results.
2. **Time management** – Effective delegating skills work gives managers extra time to do other work that are of more critical nature.
3. **Prompts decision making** – Empowering subordinates to take decisions in their area of expertise speeds up the work process as they don't have to seek approval at every step.
4. **Builds team spirit** – Working together generates team spirit, develops team involvement and understanding of the business.

5. Improves inter and intra-personal communication – Employees through daily interaction get opportunities to learn from each other and reflect on their own work which are strengthened through effective delegation.

6. Inflows new and innovative ideas – Different ideas and perspectives inspire people to see things from a different angle, motivate them to explore other areas of development and keep them engaged.

7. Helps to build bench strength – The work environment trains and prepares the employees to face adverse situations so that the work does not get hindered under any circumstances.



## **Disadvantages of Delegation**

**Disadvantages of Delegation can be discussed as per following way-**

- 1. Lack of knowledge of employees skills –Wrong delegation of task can prove fatal for a project and business.**
- 2. Lack of trust – Many managers either lack trust or do not want to trust their subordinates. They try to do everything themselves due to which their work pressure never gets easy enough.**
- 3. Lack of interest – Managers who keep the interesting work to themselves and assign routine and monotonous to others give rise of discontentment.**
- 4. Lack of credit – When multiple people work on a single project the credit of the work often gets distributed. The true contribution of each person is at times not recognized.**
- 5. Lack of authority – It is also important to delegate sufficient authority along with responsibility. Only then can employees work their full potential.**

# Concept of Power and Authority

Power is one of the key ideas in management, and so is the concept of authority

Power is something that is referred to as the ability to influence the attitude or behavior of any individuals.

Authority is generally a representation of someone's position. It is derived from multiple sources like seniority, technical competence, etc. The power of a manager is considered as their ability to ask the subordinates whatever they wish them to do.

In management, authority is summarized as a right to guide and direct the activities of others so that individuals perform their duties in achieving organizational goals.

In management, power also brings influence on the behavior and attitudes of other people. This can be applied to customers and/or suppliers. It depends on how the power is used and to whom it is inflicted.



## Types of Authority

1. **Legal authority:** The authority is based upon the rank of the person in the organization and such authority may be given by law or by social norms, rules and regulations protected by law.
2. **Traditional authority:** This authority is based upon the belief in traditions and the legitimacy of the status of people exercising authority through those traditions.
3. **Accepted theory of authority:** This type of authority presents a contrast to the traditional formal view of authority. Authority in the ultimate analysis depends on the acceptance or consent of the people who are managed rather than any other norms
4. **Charismatic authority:** The Charismatic Authority rests on personal charisma of a leader who commands respect of his followers on the basis of his personality and his personal traits such as intelligence and integrity.
5. **Competency theory of authority:** This is also known as technical authority and is implicit in person's special knowledge or skill.

# Characteristics of Authority

There are certain characteristics of authorities which are as follows-

- **Basis of getting things done:** Authority provides the basis of getting things done in the organisation. It refers to the right to affect the behaviour of others in the organisation with a view to performing certain activities to accomplish the defined objective
- **Legitimacy:** The person who is given a position of authority is legitimate and legal. This position is supported by law, tradition, and standards of authenticity. Thus, authority is also considered as formal.
- **Authority is goal oriented approach:** The basic use of authority is to influence the attitude and behavior of the subordinates in terms of doing the right things at the correct time to achieve the goals.



# Characteristics of Authority

- **Subjectivity in implementation:** organizational goals are achieved by the subordinates. The person who has authority influence the behavior of individuals who otherwise might not do the thing.
- **The position and person:** Person who has a position of authority does not enjoy it unlimitedly. There are limits and extents to which the position of authority can be attained. It is predefined. The person with the authority is expected to use it within the rules, policies, and regulations.
- **Decision making:** Authority also gives the person a right to make a decision. Furthermore, a manager can only decide his orders about what his subordinate should or should not do. Thus, authority is exercised using the decision and looking when they are carried out.

# Authority and Responsibility

Authority	Responsibility
It is the legal right of a person or a superior to command his subordinates.	It is the obligation of subordinate to perform the work assigned to him.
Authority is attached to the position of a superior in concern.	Responsibility arises out of superior-subordinate relationship in which subordinate agrees to carry out duty given to him.
Authority can be delegated by a superior to a subordinate	Responsibility cannot be shifted and is absolute
It flows from top to bottom.	It flows from bottom to top.



## Authority and Power at a glance

Basis	Authority	Power
Nature	It is the formal right given to a manager to make decisions or to command	It is the personal ability to influence others or events
Flow	It flows downwards in the organisation. This is because it is delegated by the superiors to the subordinates.	It can flow in any direction. Even subordinates have power over their superiors, if they can influence their behaviour. So power can flow upwards, downwards or horizontally.
Organisational Chart	Authority relationships (superior-subordinate relationships) can be shown in the organisation charts.	Power relationships cannot be shown in organisation charts.

## Authority and Power at a glance

Basis	Authority	Power
Level of management	Higher the level of management, higher will be the authority and vice-versa	Power can exist at any level of management. It does not depend on level
Legitimacy	Authority is always official in nature. So it is legitimate.	Power need not be official in nature. So it need not be legitimate.
Position and person	Authority is given to a position or post. The manager gets the authority only when he holds that position	Power resides (lives) in the person who uses it.



# Limitations of authority

There are certain limitations of authority In management. Such as -

1. **Capacity of subordinates:** If subordinates cannot work due to their physical and mental limitations, managers cannot issue directions to that effect. If a worker is asked to perform the duties of a foreman or a first line supervisor and he finds himself incapable of doing so, orders issued to that effect shall not be effective.
2. **Overall organizational goals:** Directions against the organizational goals will not be carried out by subordinates.
3. **Legal restrictions:** Every organization is bound by a legal framework of rules and procedures. As requirement of the Companies Act, a company cannot issue shares more than its authorized capital. Any directive issued against the rule shall not be complied with.

4. Social factors: People collectively work in the organisation and form groups on the basis of their social values and cultures. Orders issued against these values have limited acceptance.

5. Personal limitations: Not only should managers take care of physical limitations of their subordinates while exercising authority, they should also keep in mind their own limitations in carrying out certain activities. Something that a manager cannot do himself, he should not expect from his subordinates also.



# Types of Power

We find that generally power is of five types. They are-

- **Legitimate power:** It normally arises from position and derives from our cultural system of rights obligations, and duties whereby a “position” is accepted by people as being legitimate
- **Coercive power:** This is derived from a person’s ability to create fear in another individual and is based on the subordinate’s expectation that punishment will be received for not agreeing or complying with the superior’s commands or beliefs.
- **Reward power:** Reward power is the opposite of coercive power. It arises from the ability of some people to grant rewards. Purchasing agents, with little position power, might be able to exercise considerable influence by their ability to expedite or delay a much-needed spare part.

# Types of Power

- **Expert power:** This is the power of knowledge, skill and expertise in certain areas. Since the superiors possess these knowledge the subordinates desires to fulfill the wishes and their directions.
- **Referent Power:** Referent power is based on the identification of an individual faith a leader who is held in high esteem, admired and often imitated by the subordinate.

Where there is power, there are also consequences that go along with it. The application of power varies from individual to individual and situation to situation. There are three specific examples of this. They are commitment, compliance, and resistance through which the consequences are likely to happen.



# Characteristics of Power

The important characteristics of power may be put down as follows-

- There is no relationship between the power exercised by an individual and the position or the role he/she holds.
- Sometimes higher level people may have no power and sometimes lower level people may exert more power.
- Those who are in power would like to get more they resist any attempt which tries to weaken the hold of power.
- An individual cannot have power at all times. At a time, he/she may have to give up this power if there is a failure in performance.
- People who are able to withstand and cope with uncertainty in organizations have more power.
- People who use power do not want others to know of it unless it is legitimate power.

# Advantages of Power

Following are the advantages linked with power in the organization-

- Managers are able to perform their leadership responsibilities with the help of power so it is quite necessary for the organization.
- The employees can also be facilitated through the power of influencing others in the achievement of the organizational objectives as well as personal ones.
- Another advantage of referent & expert power is that it can inspire the other employees to become committed to their work.
- The other employees also feel less uncertainty in the organization when some of them possess expert & referent powers.



- The bureaucratic obstacles are reduced through the use of power by employees in the organization.
- The creativity of the employees is enhanced with the support of power in the organization.
- The individuals can misuse the power in the organization that would affect the overall performance of the organization, and is considered as the main disadvantage of power.

# Disadvantages of Power

There are some disadvantages of power in the organization like-

- The decision making in the organization becomes poor for over exercise of power.
- The coercive behavior is promoted in the organization.
- The employees of the organization have a low opinion about the processes & the working environment of the organization.
- The distance between management & employees is enhanced that badly affects the performance of the organization.
- The managers are free to promote illegal or unethical actions in the organization for the power of authority delegated to him/her.