



## DELEGATION TOOL KIT

This Delegation Tool Kit is designed to help you determine when it is appropriate to delegate, the types of tasks that can be delegated, and to whom delegation tasks can be assigned.

The purpose of delegation is twofold. First, well thought out delegation relieves the nurse leader of workload components and tasks that can safely be assigned to other staff members. Second, appropriate delegation develops the skills and confidence of the individual team member to whom the tasks may be assigned.

When the activity of delegation is considered, it is important to distinguish between accountability and responsibility. **Accountability** is the state of being accountable, liable, or answerable. It means the nurse leader will have to answer to an authority for the activity, regardless of whether he or she performs it personally or delegates it. **Responsibility** is the duty to satisfactorily complete the task that was assigned by someone, for which there is a consequence for failure to do so. A key component of delegation is this: **responsibility can be delegated, but accountability cannot**. Even if the nurse leader assigns a task to be performed by another, the nurse leader remains accountable to see that it is done correctly and on time.

### Delegation – Unleashing the Power of Others

Delegation transfers responsibility for a procedure or task without transferring accountability. To delegate, the nurse leader must know the scope of practice, qualifications, and competence of the person to whom he or she is considering transferring responsibility for the task.

### Reasons Nurse Leaders Fail to Delegate

There are a number of reasons leaders fail to delegate when they should:

- Fear the task will not be done well, or will not be done at all
- Fear of giving up control
- Time constraints for teaching the other person how to do the job
- Concerns about burdening a team member with more work

When done correctly, delegation promotes efficiency and empowers others with additional skills and confidence.



### **Choosing to Delegate**

When considering whether to delegate a task or not, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is it critical that I complete the task? – if yes, don't delegate
- Is there someone who has the expertise to complete the task? – if yes, consider delegating to them
- Will the task develop another person's skills? – if the task is mundane but you need help with your workload, delegate and explain that even though the task is not challenging, you are grateful for their help in getting it done. If the task is beyond their skill set, do not delegate to them.
- Can the person selected work independently? – it is important to choose someone who can move ahead without dependency on you.
- Do you have time available to provide adequate training and to answer questions, check progress, and contribute if necessary? – if yes, delegate and begin the training.
- Does the person have enough time to take on the work? – if giving the individual this additional task creates the inability to complete his/her own work, then find another person to whom you can delegate, or have the person delegate some of his or her tasks to others who are capable of taking on those tasks.

### **Tips for Delegation Success**

- Give specific details to the person about the project so they have enough information to complete the task
- Be selective about what and to whom you delegate
- Delegate small tasks first to build confidence and skill
- Be a resource without taking over the project
- Give realistic timelines for completion
- Provide necessary tools and resources



- Reward and recognize success in a timely manner
- Clarify your expectations as often as needed
- Never dump a problem on staff because you are tired of dealing with it.
- Avoid letting delegated tasks fall by the wayside. Review the person's progress periodically to make sure they are on track, and that they have everything they need to complete the assignment.

### **Benefits of Delegation**

Delegation frees up time so you can focus on other job duties. When done correctly, it builds staff self-esteem and grows new leaders. Delegation provides a clear message to staff that teamwork is valued. The practice of delegation displays to the organization the level of trust within the department with you as the leader. When a manager does not delegate, trust is diminished, and staff remain dependent on the leader.

### **Tools to Help You Manage Delegation**

The following tools are developed to help you select topics to delegate, a person to delegate to, and to track the progress of the tasks you have assigned to others. You may copy them and use them in your work setting.



## DELEGATION DECISION PROCESS

Task considered for delegation	Person considered for the Task	Yes	No
<b>List Task:</b>	<b>List Name of Person:</b>		
1. Is it critical that I personally complete the task?			
2. Is the person qualified to complete the task?			
3. Is the task within the person's scope of practice?			
4. Can the person work independently?			
5. Does the person have the time to do the task?			
6. Do I have the time to train the person and answer questions?			
7. Do I have the time to assist if necessary?			
8. Are the needed resources available to the person?			
<b>Comments:</b>			
Based on the above questions and answers, proceed to delegate?			

---

Nurse Leader Name

---

Date



## DELEGATION LOG

TASK	DELEGATED TO	DATE DELEGATED	DATE DUE	DATE COMPLETED

**COMMENTS:**