

## Chapter 3

### Delegation

*“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree...” Matthew 13:31*

There are many examples of delegation throughout the Scriptures. For, instance while leading his people in the wilderness, a major portion of Moses’ day was spent settling disputes among his followers. Observing this, his father-in-law, Jethro advised him to delegate. In Exodus 18:17-88, Jethro told Moses to stop wearing himself out by attempting to do everything himself. He suggested to Moses to surround himself with able, trustworthy men and appoint them to manage others. These trusted individuals would serve as judges on trivial matters and only important matters would be presented to Moses. “You are placing too much burden upon yourself by attempting to do everything,” Jethro warned.

In the way that Moses had initially failed to delegate, many sole proprietors also limit themselves. And they too wear themselves out with a heavy task. Conversely, successful owners of companies employing many people take advantage of leverage, which permits them to accomplish considerably more. They do this by delegating responsibilities. Jesus also recognized that He could accomplish more by delegating to others. In Matthew 10, Jesus authorized his twelve disciples to cast out unclean spirits and to cure diseases and sicknesses. They were instructed to neither solicit Gentiles nor enter any town of the Samaritans, but instead see the lost sheep in the house of Israel.

Jesus asked them to proclaim the good news: “The kingdom of heaven has come near.” Their missions were to cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and to cast out demons. Jesus did not pay his disciples and said they should not accept any payments for their work. And when they entered a town or village, they should find out who in it is worthy and who is not.

Jesus’ disciples were ordinary men from diverse occupations—a fisherman might sit at his feet beside a tax collector. Most importantly, they were good men whom he trusted and gave enormous responsibility. Through the scripture I have learned to delegate responsibility to individuals based on their attitude, work ethic and principles. I believe it comes down to trusting the right people—those who have integrity, loyalty and commitment. I look for these qualities before I place people in leadership roles. While there may be other candidates with better résumés, I listen carefully to what a person is receiving in his heart. Through conversation, what he is receiving in the Gospel comes out. Luke 6:45 says that a good person speaks from the heart, and if we listen carefully, we will pick up on this. With this in mind, what a person is internalizing means more to me than his credentials.

Several times, we hired people who looked good on paper but didn’t work out. On the other hand, we’ve put good, solid businesspeople into positions even when they didn’t have all the necessary technical skills. We believed they had good core business principles and understood how to work with people. Once on the job, nearly everyone learns the necessary technological skills.

In Matthew 13:31, a parable of Jesus is quoted: “*The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but*

*when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree....”* A businessperson delegates assignments to people, and like the planting of a small mustard seed that becomes a tree and branches out, his work blossoms and multiplies. Great organizations blossom through the efforts of many.

In the beginning, the owner of a small startup company may have no one to delegate to. Consequently, he does everything—from secretarial chores to selling and servicing customers. Later, when he employs workers, he has become so accustomed to doing everything himself that he finds it hard to delegate. He thinks, “If I want it done right, I need to do it myself.” As a result, he ends up delegating only menial assignments, keeping meaningful responsibilities for himself.

I understand it’s not easy for an entrepreneur to let go: he has already developed his own personal way of doing things. Frequently this is because a company owner lets his ego get in his way. He believes nobody can match his expertise—especially in a business he built from scratch. I have a special word for this attitude that I call “edgo.” It means edging God out. I say, “Better to let go and let God.” To grow a business, you can’t let false pride govern you. As Proverbs 16:18 says, *Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*

At some point, you have to let go and trust your people. You sow the seed of trust by giving trust. I truly believe delegation begins with trusting others—followed by letting go. In a sizeable company, a good leader must trust key individuals to assume responsibility for various segments of the business. Only this way can strong partnership relationships be built. Through this trust and confidence a company can grow

exponentially. Once the owner relaxes his tight grip on operations, that small mustard seed grows and branches out.

As CEO, I must surround myself with specialists from different areas who have expertise that exceeds mine, and I must rely on their advice. This requires me to have explicit trust in these individuals, because I must rely on them to operate their own organizations within the company. With everyone aboard sharing a vision, our mutual plan serves as our roadmap into the future. Our company has a matrix that allows us to use an effective reporting system to measure and monitor each organization's success for profitability. At weekly finance meetings, we review every department of the company. This way, everyone can pull together and receive support from others. Although I bring wise counsel together to determine what is in the best interest of the organization, as CEO, I am responsible for the final decision.