DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

A manager alone cannot perform all the tasks assigned to him. In order to meet the targets, the manager should delegate authority. Delegation of Authority means division of authority and powers downwards to the subordinate. Delegation is about entrusting someone else to do parts of your job. Delegation of authority can be defined as subdivision and sub-allocation of powers to the subordinates in order to achieve effective results.

Elements of Delegation

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. All people who have the authority should know what is the scope of their authority is and they shouldn't misutilize it. Authority is the right to give commands, orders and get the things done. The top level management has greatest authority. Authority always flows from top to bottom. It explains how a superior gets work done from his subordinate by clearly explaining what is expected of him and how he should go about it. Authority should be accompanied with an equal amount of responsibility. Delegating the authority to someone else doesn't imply escaping from accountability. Accountability still rest with the person having the utmost authority.

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. Responsibility without adequate authority leads to discontent and dissatisfaction among the person. Responsibility flows from bottom to top. The middle level and lower level management holds more responsibility. The person held responsible for a job is answerable for it. If he performs the tasks assigned as expected, he is bound for praises. While if he doesn't accomplish tasks assigned as expected, then also he is answerable for that.

Accountability - means giving explanations for any variance in the actual performance from the expectations set. Accountability cannot be delegated. For example, if 'A' is given a task with sufficient authority, and 'A' delegates this task to B and asks him to ensure that task is done well, responsibility rest with 'B', but accountability still rest with 'A'. The top level management is most accountable. Being accountable means being innovative as the person will think beyond his scope of job. Accountability ,in short, means being answerable for the end result. Accountability can't be escaped. It arises from responsibility.

DELEGATION PROCESS

The steps involved in delegation are given below



Allocation of 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.

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.

Assigning of 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 in best of his ability as per the directions of superior.

Therefore, it is that which gives effectiveness to authority. At the same time, responsibility is absolute and cannot be shifted.

Creation of accountability – Accountability, on the others hand, is the obligation of the individual to carry out his duties as per the standards of performance. Therefore, it is said that authority is delegated, responsibility is created and accountability is imposed. Accountability arises out of responsibility and responsibility arises out of authority. Therefore, it becomes important that with every authority position an equal and opposite responsibility should be attached.

Therefore every manager, i.e., the delegator has to follow a system to finish up the delegation process. Equally important is the delegatee's role which means his responsibility and accountability is attached with the authority over to here.