

# QUIRK'S

Marketing Research Review



## Is 'out of control' a compliment when managing a team?

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From mom-and-pop research shops to small full-service teams to departments within larger corporations, we have all heard the advice: delegate, delegate, delegate. But often this great advice is shrugged off with "I wish I could;" "Don't have the talent;" "We are under-resourced;" "It's too risky at our size;" etc. Yet the truth is that by delegation, a manager will accomplish more with better quality; have a happier team; and increase the quality of business.

Especially in small-business environments, there is a general feeling that if management does not keep it all in check, the business will fall apart. This simply isn't so. It may seem counterintuitive, but the more you control, the less you may succeed. If management liberates itself from control it can then be free to think of larger plans. After all, presumably the reason a person is in a management position is that s/he has experience. Experience can not only create competitive advantages, but it can also avoid costly mistakes. When in the trenches, even the most experienced can make mistakes since they are not sufficiently removed from the process to clearly see the obstacles. This is precisely why even the best players in the world have coaches.

Some are fortunate enough that they can afford great talent, therefore delegation seems like a no-brainer. However, delegation is an acquired skill for most. Those who don't have it will try to micromanage even the best talent, rendering it virtually ineffective.

On the other hand, some may overcompensate for previ-

ous micromanagement and completely wash their hands of the tasks at hand. Delegation is about letting the person closest to the problem solve the problem and being there to support - not monitor - them. Management has to be there, side-by-side and close enough to share the experience, but far enough that the work is done by the delegatee, with the delegatee receiving all the credit.

### Empower the best talent

A great psychiatrist friend of mine once told me that counseling is ineffective. It amounts to giving advice - in one ear and out the other. By contrast, with therapy, the psychiatrists often know the answers but never share them with the patient. They just ask questions leading the patient down the path so they themselves can reach the right conclusions. That experience will never be forgotten, and thereafter, the patient will have the skills to take the right steps

Management coaching should also be very similar to the therapy approach. Using this model, management can empower the best talent to be better and take even the least experienced and turn them into the most valuable team members. This approach allows for hiring out of college and still being able to compete with companies paying higher salaries for previously-honed employees.

### Control has its value

Patience is running thin in today's work environment. Impatient people are often short with others, especially with those that are in the learning phase or those who simply did not see a problem the way others viewed it. This is where control has its value. Regardless of frustration and outrage, having emotional control is crucial. This is even more impor-

tant for leaders who are coaching, teaching and sharing on a daily basis.

Remember the rule on controlling emotions: In any given exchange, regardless of the position one holds, the one who loses their temper has lost. The damage might seem temporary, but I can assure you it is not. People often don't remember details of events, but they do remember how they felt. Therefore an event in which management showed frustration - or worse yet, anger - will be forever be remembered

in a negative light, diminishing a manager's value as a leader or a team player.

### **Controlled quality**

So let go of controlling people and focus on creating processes, strategies and competitive advantages. When you create processes, people can follow them with minimal guidance. As a result, you get controlled quality without having to control people. This is the formula for growth. | Q