

Managerial and Leadership Implementation Functions

*and
Related Concepts, Methods, Tools, and Practices*

Delegating

Robert D. Cecil

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Human Resources Development

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DELEGATING

Definition of Terms

Delegation: to entrust to another (one's authority); to appoint as one's representative; to assign responsibility or authority.

Responsibility: the quality or state of being responsible: as (a) a moral, legal, or mental accountability; (b) something for which one is responsible; (c) an obligation.

Authority: (a) power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior; (b) freedom granted by one in authority.

Accountability: a state in which one is subject to (a) giving an account; (b) being answerable to someone for something; (c) explaining something.

What Delegating Means or Involves

Students of management disagree about what can be delegated. Different theorists say, for example:

- a. Responsibility cannot be delegated. It is an obligation one owes one's superior.
- b. You can delegate authority.
- c. You can delegate both responsibility and authority, but not accountability.
- d. Delegated authority can never equal delegated responsibility.
- e. You must delegate authority equal to or commensurate with one's delegated responsibility if one is to carry out one's responsibility.
- f. Managers can have duties assigned to them, authority delegated to them, and responsibility (accountability) exacted from them.

The confusion is largely a problem in semantics.

What do you think can be . . .

Assigned? _____

Delegated? _____

Limited? _____

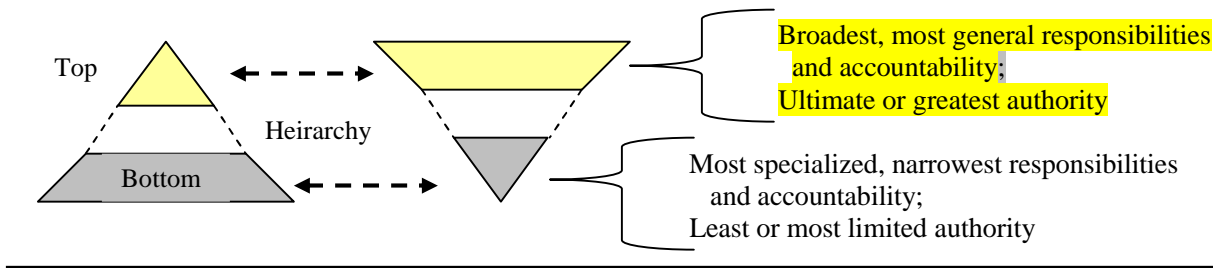
Shared? _____

Exacted? _____

Some Perspectives

- A. On diffusion of responsibility and authority in organizations: (See **Figure 1** on next page.)
 1. Organizations are structured like pyramids.
 2. The person (position) at the top has —
 - a. broad or generalized responsibilities (functions, duties) related to getting things done and meeting organizational objectives;
 - b. ultimate authority to make decisions, delegate responsibilities and authority, reverse or override lower-level decisions, and take or initiate action (within moral and legal bounds);
 - c. ultimate accountability for what goes on within the organization and for overall organizational results.
 3. Each successively lower level of the hierarchy has —
 - a. more specialized, narrower responsibilities (based on division of labor into specialized units and sub-units);
 - b. less or more limited authority;
 - c. less broad or generalized, more finite accountability.

Figure 1: Diffusion of Responsibility and Authority in Organizations



B. On relationships between responsibility and authority

1. Both managerial/supervisory and technical/functional/professional **responsibilities** (functions, tasks, duties) can be **assigned** by a superior to a subordinate.
2. To carry out an assigned responsibility and get the desired results, a manager needs to make (or to get made) certain decisions involving goals, plans, budgets, policies, procedures, organizational structure, staffing, coordination, and control that apply to his or her responsibility area's activities.
3. The big question: Has the manager's superior delegated to the manager the authority to make such decisions (either alone or with the appropriate group) and take action so that he or she can carry out assigned responsibilities efficiently and effectively in order to obtain the results for which he or she is being held accountable?
4. The next question: Is the delegated authority to make decisions and act full or limited — and if limited, (a) for which responsibilities or functions, and (b) in what ways or to what extent?
5. A pivotal point: Whether or not a manager delegates (or shares) authority to make certain decisions and take certain actions depends upon important factors such as . . .
 - a. the managerial style(s) of the manager (and his or her superior);
 - b. the nature and extent of authority delegated to the manager (and to his or her superiors);
 - c. the perceived versus the actual advisability of delegating decision-making and action authority to a particular person at a particular organizational level; and
 - d. both conscious and unconscious fears that can accompany delegation of authority to subordinates.

Basic Points

1. The entire **process of delegation** involves . . .
 - a. the assignment of responsibilities (duties, functions, tasks);
 - b. the delegation of authority needed to accomplish responsibilities;
 - c. the exaction of accountability for activities and results.
2. Authority is delegated when organizational power is vested in a subordinate by a superior.
3. No superior can delegate authority that he or she does not have.
4. A superior cannot delegate all of his or her authority without, in effect, abdicating his or her position to subordinates.

5. The degree or extent of authority delegated to a subordinate should be commensurate with the assigned responsibility.
6. Authority to make a specific decision should be delegated to the lowest possible level of the organization.

The Process of Delegating

Appropriate Times to Delegate

1. When orienting newly hired or promoted individuals to their jobs (using the basic job description for their position).
2. During formal organizational (unit) goal-setting and planning processes.
3. When planning new projects.
4. When special situations (problems/opportunities) occur.

Appropriate Times to Review Past Delegation

1. At all of the above times.
2. During performance evaluation processes.
3. During exit interviews (upon termination).

Effects of Managerial Styles on the Delegation Process

A. Authoritarian/"Theory X"/"Hi Task,Lo People" Managers

1. Will perform process (steps) unilaterally (without involving subordinates).
2. Assign responsibilities for (a) providing informational input to decision-making; (b) supervising (directing and coordinating) implementation of decisions (goals, plans, budgets, policies, procedures, solutions); and (c) reporting results.

3. Delegate only authority to supervise (direct, coordinate, control) implementation of decisions made by these managers.

B. Permissive or "Lo Task,Hi People" Managers

1. Let subordinates assume whatever responsibilities they wish (within basic organizational guidelines).
2. In effect, delegate full decision-making authority to subordinates.

C. Non-Managers/"Lo Task,Lo People" Managers

1. Prefer to be uninvolved in managerial functions!responsibilities.
2. Let their superiors delegate to their subordinates.

D. Mid-Road or "Medium Task,Medium People" Managers

1. Will perform process (steps) unilaterally, but generally solicit information, ideas, and suggestions from subordinates.
2. Assign responsibilities for (a) providing input (information, ideas, suggestions) to them for making major decisions; (b) making only minor or routine decisions; (c) supervising (directing, coordinating, controlling) the implementation of all decisions made; and (d) reporting results.
3. Delegate authority essentially to (a) make minor or routine decisions, and (b) supervise the implementation of decisions.

E. Participative, "Theory Y," Team, or "Hi Task,Hi People" Managers

1. Will perform process (steps) with subordinates (both as a group and one-on-one).
2. Assign responsibilities for (a) sharing or participating in major decision-making (goal-setting, planning, etc.) processes; (b) performing less major decision-making processes (given managerial input or guidance); (c) guiding activities and the performance of control functions.
3. Delegate (share) authority to carry out all of the above responsibilities.

A Common, Often Recommended Approach to Delegation

Many managers have been advised to take the following steps when they do in fact delegate concerning (a) technical/functional tasks, and (b) managerial (decision-making) tasks.

Step 1: Preparation

- 1A. Formulate goals and plans / establish priorities
- 1B. Identify tasks to be delegated (distinguishing between technical/professional tasks and managerial tasks)

Generally Delegated

- a. Time-consuming, routine matters
- b. Routine decisions
- c. Time-consuming reports and meetings
- d. Tasks that subordinates are more technically qualified to handle
- e. Things you don't really like to do
- f. Tasks that either over-specialize or under-specialize you

Generally Not Delegated

- a. Tasks for which objectives cannot be defined
 - b. Decision-making involving department level goals and interdepartmental matters
 - c. Disciplinary authority
- 1 C. Identify/consider personal attitudes toward delegation (See Step 10 of Participative Approach on page 6.)

Step 2: Analyze situation and potential delegatees

Consider the following:

- a. Time constraints
- b. Organizational constraints (environment, politics)
- c. Desired results and priorities
- d. Individuals' . . .
 - 1. capabilities, strengths, weaknesses, potentials
 - 2. dependability and motivation
 - 3. workloads and competing responsibilities
 - 4. receptivity to delegated responsibility/authority
 - 5. used and unused capabilities

Step 3: Select appropriate delegatee(s)

Consider the following:

- a. a through d above
- b. experience vs. opportunity to gain experience
- c. one person vs. more than one person
- d. benefits vs. risks of various alternatives

Step 4: Delegate

- 1. Communicate assignment
- 2. Identify authority limits
- 3. Establish Performance Standards
- 4. Assure understanding

Step 5: Control

- 1. Monitor progress/results
- 2. Evaluate results
- 3. Take appropriate corrective action

When the "common, often-recommended approach" described above is used, the typical results tend to be as indicated in **Figure 2** on page 8.

Phases and Steps of an Alternative, Team-Oriented or Systems Approach

Phase I: Preparation (By manager and immediate subordinates)

At some point in time, perhaps prior to annual goal-setting and planning, both the manager and immediate subordinates should take the following steps in preparation for participative decision-making discussions (as group and one-on-one). The manager's thoughts serve as input and guidance for such discussions. Subordinates' thoughts serve as input to discussions.

Draw The Big Picture –
Get Things Into Perspective

Step 1: Analyze operations (or review operational analysis)

- 1A. Identify key elements/aspects of operations
- 1B. Identify important, persisting problems (and their priorities)

Table 1: General Guidelines for Step 6

	<u>Positions Involved</u>
A. Matters having significant organization-wide implications (e.g., personnel policies)	Top/higher management decision based on input/recommendations arrived at by bosses with subordinates up the line
B. Matters having significant inter-unit implications (e.g., unit-level goals, plans, budgets, structure, procedures; also, many sub-unit level goals, plans, and procedures)	Final decision by unit manager and colleagues with their superior, based on input/recommendations arrived at participatively by unit manager(s) and their immediate subordinates
C. Matters having significant intra-unit implications (e.g., sub-units' goals, plans, structures, procedures)	Decision by unit manager with sub-unit managers, based on input/recommendations participatively made by sub-unit managers and their subordinates
D. Matters having relatively little or no inter- or intra-unit implications (e.g., sub-units' internal scheduling, technical procedures)	Sub-unit manager with his/her subordinates

Step 2: Formulate (or review) short-term unit goals/plans (& priorities)

Consider:

- A. Long-term organizational and unit objectives/goals and strategies/plans (and their priorities)
- B. Unit problem areas (and their priorities)

Step 3: Formulate (or review) basic unit structure

Consider/Analyze:

- A. Organizational structure
- B. Unit's operational relationships with other Units
- C. Appropriate structures for sub-units (based on logical groupings of tasks into specialized sub-units)

Determine Where Decisions Ought to Be Made

Step 4: Formulate (or review) operational/functional responsibilities/activities of sub-units and their sub-units

These amount to "sub-unit job descriptions."

Step 5: Determine types and degrees of interdependencies between units and jobs

Analyze... the flow of materials, services, and information . . .

- a. to and from unit and other units (horizontally and vertically);
- b. between the unit's sub-units; and
- c. between unit managers (horizontally and vertically).

Key decisions (involving goals, plans, procedures, structure, and solutions) revolve around flows of materials, services, and information.

Interdependencies exist between units, sub-units, and jobs when the material outputs, services, or informational outputs of one are input(s) to, and affect the performance of another. It requires analyzing input/output flows to determine the types and degrees of interdependencies between units and jobs.

Step 6: Determine which positions ought to be involved in making which integrative decisions

Use the General Guidelines in **Table 1**.

Major point: Whenever someone is confronted by a decision, they should anticipate the way and extent to which someone else could be affected, and seek involvement of the individuals at the appropriate points in the decision-making process.

Using the guidelines above, much inefficiency and ineffectiveness within the organization and unit, and many inter- and intra-unit conflicts, can be prevented.

Unless all who are involved in a situation and/or would be significantly affected by a decision actually participate in making the decision, more problems can be generated than solved.

Examples:

- A. A technical/procedural decision that is good for a sub-unit is made in that sub-unit, but it alters the type, quality, and/or amount of informational, material, or service input to another unit, adversely affecting the other unit's operational activities and performance.
- B. Goals set and plans made unilaterally in one unit are incompatible with those of another unit, thereby generating activities in each that interfere with, duplicate, or compete with activities in the other.

Step 7: Formulate (or review) basic criteria and performance standards for evaluating effects/results

Now Think About the Individuals
In Those Positions

Step 8: Analyze subordinates

Consider:

- A. Capabilities, potentials, strengths, weaknesses (both managerial/supervisory and technical/functional)
- B. Attitudes, motivation
- C. Past performance

Step 9: Determine what they need to carry out the responsibilities and exercise the authority of their positions effectively

Consider/identify:

- A. What information they might need that they are not now getting
- B. What training and development they might need
- C. What guidance (advice) and support they might need

Also Think About Yourself

Step 10: Identify/analyze personal attitudes relating to delegation

Consider/analyze:

- A. Your willingness to take risks —
 1. to give subordinates' ideas a chance;
 2. to share power with subordinates;
 3. to let subordinates make mistakes (that could be personally embarrassing and for which you would have to answer);
 4. to trust subordinates;
 5. to make choices involving people;
 6. to keep lines of communication open;
 7. to see someone else do something as well as or better than you can (and perhaps feel that your job is threatened).
- B. Your willingness to take the time and make the effort —
 1. to provide training, development, guidance, and support;
 2. to monitor and guide subordinates' efforts.
- C. Your willingness to increase a subordinate's job satisfaction, possibly at some expense to your own.

Phase II: Participative Delegation

Step 11: Discuss with immediate subordinates the contents of Steps 1 - 7

Step 12: Identify and categorize important types of decisions relating to unit's and sub-units' operations (See categories in Step 6)

Step 13: “Contract” participatively with immediate subordinates regarding their responsibilities and the decision-making/implementation authority to be delegated to them

- 13A. First with group regarding general matters
- 13B. Then with individuals regarding appropriate specific matters

Step 14: Identify/formulate/plan inputs needed by subordinates

- 14A. Formulate with each immediate subordinate (one-on-one) their training/development goals and plans

Consider:

- A. Job descriptions and contents of Step 6.
- B. Contents of Steps 8 and 9.

- 14B. Identify with each immediate subordinate what additional advice, information, and support they might need

Phase III: Implementation

- A. Provide planned training and development
- B. Guide activity
- C. Participatively delegate responsibilities/authority as appropriate when unanticipated situations arise
- D. Guide control functions (in which subordinates participate)

When the “Participative, Systematic Approach” described above is used, the typical results tend to be as indicated in **Figure 3**, page 9.

A “delegation worksheet” has been provided on pages 11 and 13.

Figure 2: How (or What) Many if Not Most Managers Delegate

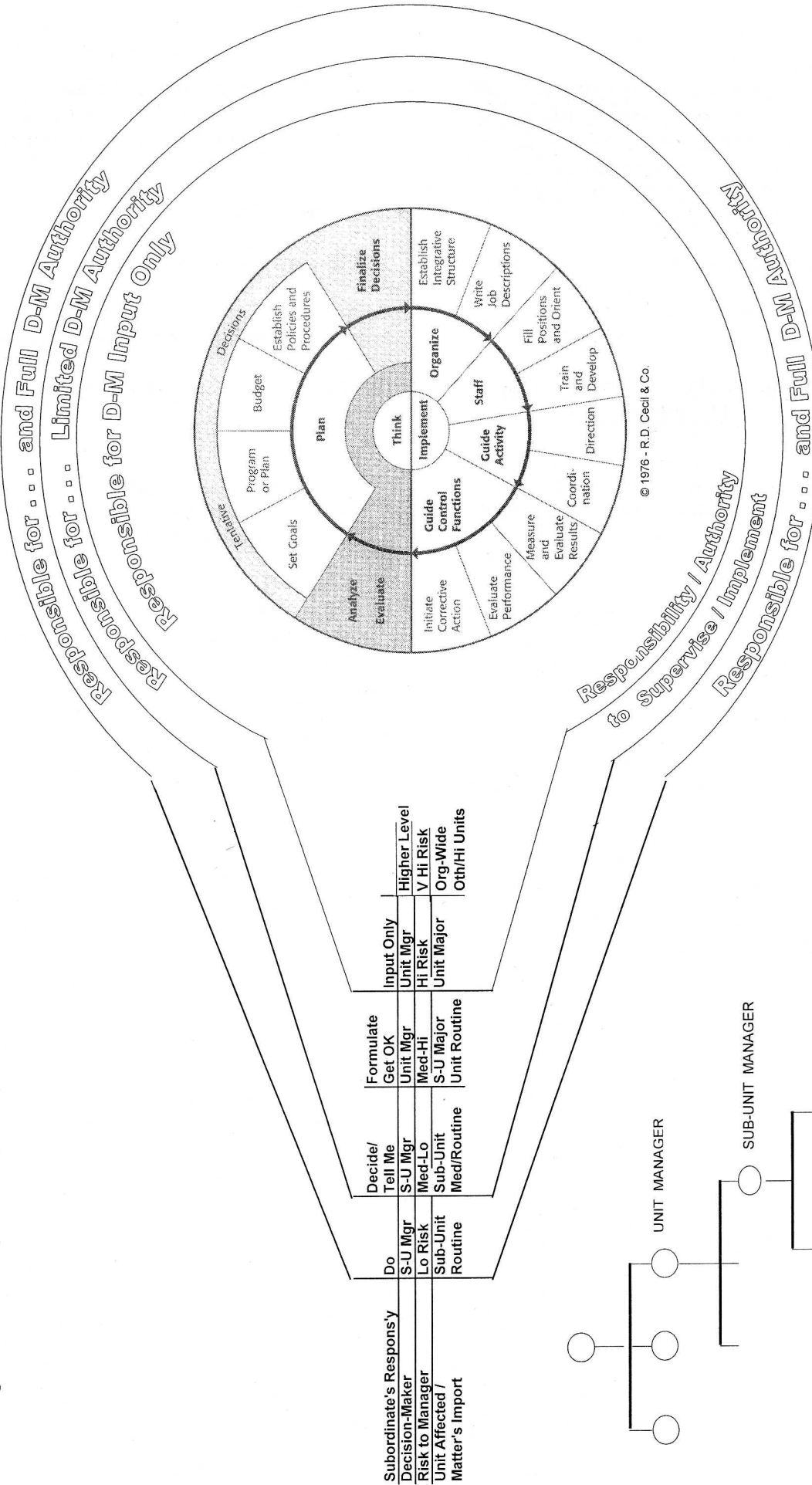
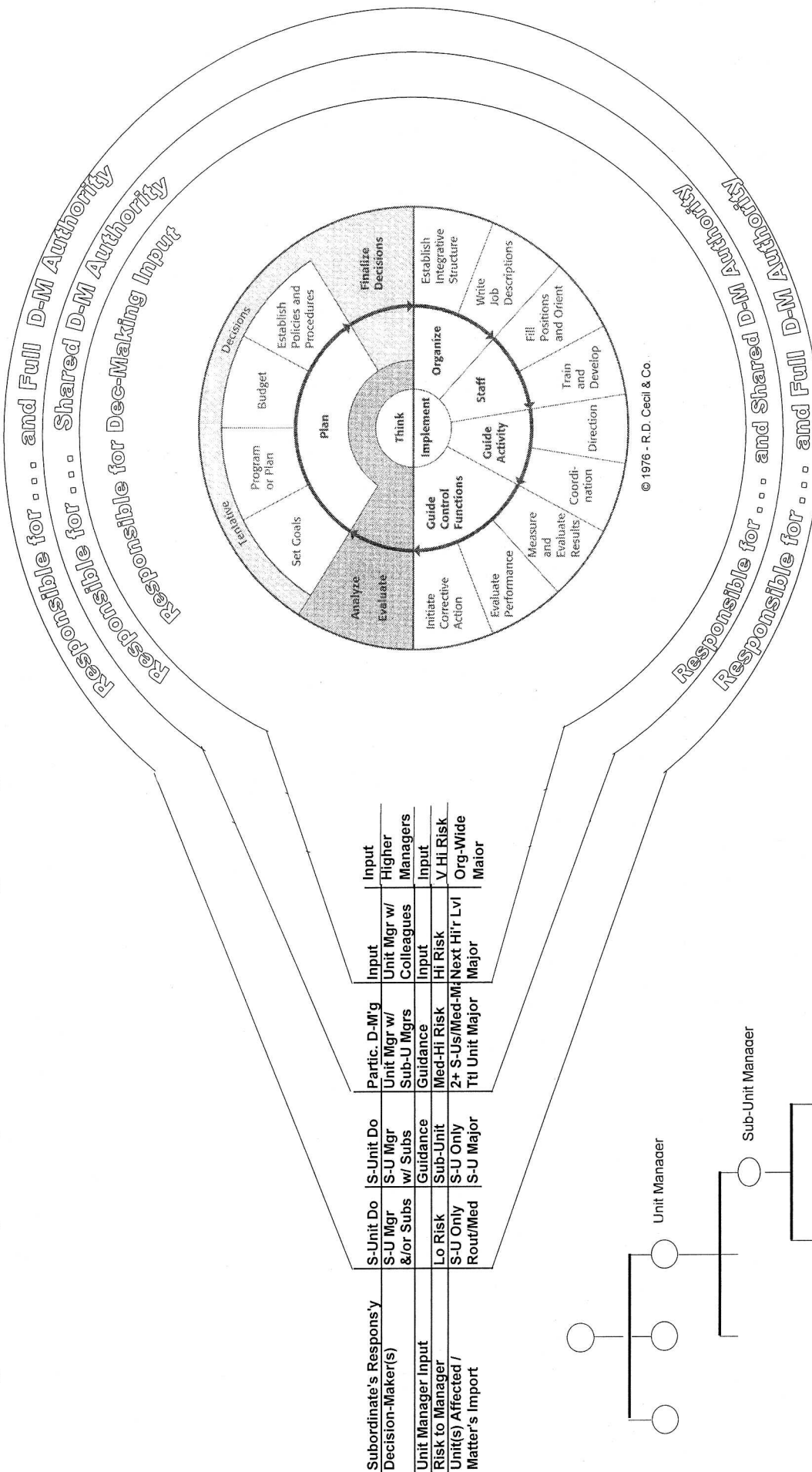


Figure 3: How (or What) Team-Oriented Managers Delegate



DELEGATION WORKSHEET**B** = My Boss**M** = Me**S** = My Subordinates

	Full Respons & Authority	Shared Responsibility; Shared/Limited Authority	Responsibility; Limited Authority	Responsibility (Input); Little or No Authority	NO Respons; NO Authority
	Full Respons and Authority to do on own	Respons/Auth to do, given boss's input or guidance	Respons/Auth to do with colleagues (same level)	Respons for doing, but report to boss after	Recommend only (usu- ally not con- sidered, taken)
MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS					No respons or authority to do (act) or even to recommend
ANALYZING (Situation / Problems)					
DECISION-MAKING					
GOALS Unit Responsible For Personal Performance					
PLANS Unit Responsible For					
BUDGETS Unit Responsible For					
POLICIES (Personnel) Organization-Wide Formulate / Change Interpret Enforce Make Exceptions					
Unit Responsible For Formulate / Change Interpret Enforce Make Exceptions					
POLICIES (Operating) Organization-Wide Formulate / Change Interpret Enforce Make Exceptions					
Unit Responsible For Formulate / Change Interpret Enforce Make Exceptions					

B = My Boss M = Me S = My Subordinates MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS	Full Respons & Authority	Shared Responsibility; Shared/Limited Authority		Responsibility; Limited Authority		Responsibility (Input); Little or No Authority		NO Respons; NO Authority
	Full Respons and Authority to do on own	Respons/Auth to do, given boss's input or guidance	Respons/Auth to do with colleagues (same level)	Respons for doing, but get boss's approval 1st	Respons for doing, report to boss after	Recommend only (considered heavily, usually taken)	Recommend only (usually not considered, taken)	No respons or authority to do (act) or even to recommend
PROCEDURES Organization-Wide (Inter-Departmental) Formulate / Change Interpret Enforce Make Exceptions Unit Responsible For Formulate / Change Interpret Enforce Make Exceptions ORGANIZATION Unit Responsible For Structure Job Descriptions STAFFING Unit Responsible For Hiring / Promoting Training / Developing Firing Wages/ Salaries								
DIRECTING / COORDINATING OR GUIDING ACTIVITIES Unit responsible for CONTROLLING OR GUIDING CONTROL FUNCS Unit Responsible For Measure/Eval Results Eval. Individ. Perform.								

