October 31, 2022

**ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SERIES (ALDS) SESSION 3**
**Delegation**

"*Imparting trust, the real meaning of delegation is a powerful thing.*"
— [Scott Berkun](#), Writer

**Session Goal**
The goal of this session is to discuss five key principles of delegation.

**Why Is It Important to Delegate?**
Delegation is a skill that is not intrinsic to everyone. Fortunately, delegation skills can be developed. Like most managers, department chairs can often find themselves overwhelmed with their responsibilities. As hard as it may be to acknowledge, delegating is important because you can't and shouldn't do everything yourself. Whether involving committee work or your duties chair, delegating tasks is not only beneficial to you, but when done appropriately, delegation builds trust, allows members of the department to become more invested, and contributes to professional development. Just as important, successful delegation of tasks allows the chair (you) to identify who is best suited to undertake certain tasks or projects.

**Five Key Principles of Delegation**
When thinking about delegating one needs to consider the *rightness*, if you will, of delegating a particular task/project. Note the nature of the following questions intended to help one make the best decision. Is the chosen task the **right task** to delegate? Is the situation the **right situation** to justify delegation? Are you delegating to the **right person?** Have you clearly defined and communicated what needs to be done (i.e., provide the **right direction**)? And have you considered what might be the **right level of guidance** (think four quadrants of leadership style) to maximize the likelihood of a positive outcome?

**Considering Challenges**
What if you have problems delegating? Do you think the risk of delegating outweighs the benefit? Are you hesitant to delegate because you aren't sure what task to delegate? There are any number of challenges that one will need to navigate. Other examples that need to be considered include:

- You hesitate to delegate because you don't want over burden colleagues, particularly pre-tenure colleagues.
- You feel uneasy about delegating a task because you're not sure of the person's abilities.
- You feel you are more competent than members of your department, so why delegate at all?
- You're uncertain about what to delegate.
- You're worried about failure.

What might you do to navigate some of all of these challenges?

**Resources and Readings**
A short 3-page essay *You Can't Do It All: Delegating*
A short YouTube video: *Delegating in academia. Super important, difficult to do well.*