

**Delegation Checklist**  
**(for the dentist to evaluate his/her propensity to delegate)**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1. I work longer hours than my auxiliaries and have little time for any activities outside the office.	_____	_____
2. I am frequently interrupted because others feel they should come to me before making any decisions.	_____	_____
3. I have unfinished jobs accumulating or have difficulty meeting deadlines.	_____	_____
4. I am too conscientious with details that are not important for the main objective of our practice.	_____	_____
5. I have the feeling that a successful dentist should be rushed in order to justify his/her fees.	_____	_____
6. I neglect to ask team members for their ideas about problems that arise in their work.	_____	_____
7. Team members ask me about minor problems or decisions that I would rather they handle.	_____	_____
8. I do not know which tasks to delegate or how to direct auxiliaries to do them.	_____	_____
9. I ask a team member to be responsible for an activity or area and then hang over his/her shoulder to be sure it gets done.	_____	_____
10. I lack confidence in auxiliaries' abilities to make proper decisions.	_____	_____
11. My tendency is to place blame rather than trying to understand why a mistake was made.	_____	_____
12. I dread regular team meetings and avoid frequent one-on-one discussions with individuals so that they can report problems and/or progress in their work.	_____	_____
13. I am hesitant to allow time for a day-long planning retreat at least yearly.	_____	_____
14. I fear losing control of my practice.	_____	_____
15. I am limited by the "I can do it better myself" fallacy.	_____	_____
16. I am particularly interested in details of work in our office and want to do it myself because I get satisfaction from this personal involvement.	_____	_____
17. I am "wishy washy" with decisions and change my mind frequently with little reason.	_____	_____
18. I believe that I must do all interviewing and provide all training for new auxiliaries.	_____	_____

## **Scoring:**

0 - 3 Yes's — You are probably comfortable with delegation to staff.

4 - 6 Yes's — You are hesitant to delegate but believe to do so would be in the best interest of the practice.

7 - 9 Yes's — The idea of delegating may appeal, but you need lots of practice.

10 Yes's or more — The thought of delegating probably makes you panic. Decide why and try to eliminate those feelings and habits or seek counseling from a person skilled in the art of delegation. An experience manager in mid-to-large businesses may be a good source of advice about delegation.

### 1. To improve delegation the dentist can:

- Forget the fallacy frequently taught in dental school, "If you want something done right, do it yourself."
  - Classify responsibilities and tasks for delegation:
    - ▶ Can be done by an untrained person
    - ▶ Can be done by a person with some training
    - ▶ Can be done by a well trained, experienced person
    - ▶ Can be done by the dentist only
  - Train auxiliaries; trust; turn loose.
2. Be available to counsel rather than to direct. When a staff member comes to ask a question, answer with a question, "What do YOU think should be done in this situation?"
  3. Critique individual auxiliaries privately so that she or he understands your expectations and how to handle particular situations correctly the next time.
  4. When a staff member accepts delegated tasks, praise frequently.