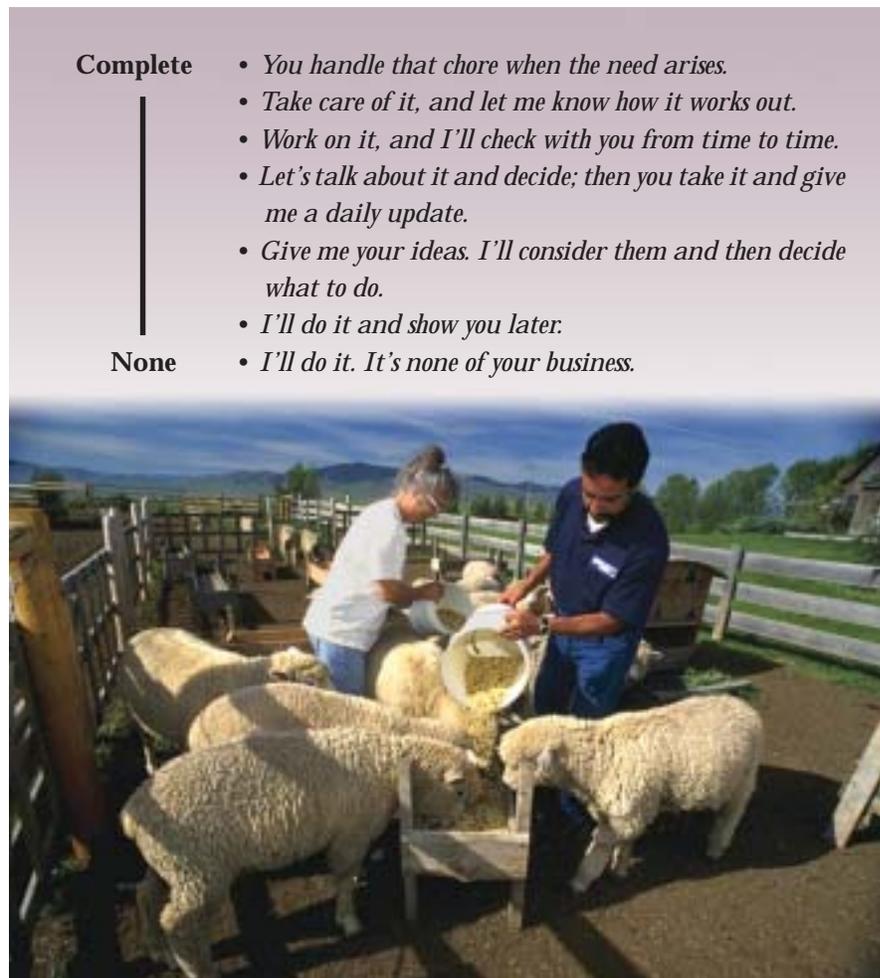


Delegation does not always look the same. The matter of to *what extent* is really the crux of the decision to delegate at all. Workers can be entrusted with different degrees of responsibility on a task. A range of degrees, from complete delegation to none, is exemplified in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3. Degrees of delegation.



Delegation and Personnel Development

A greater degree of delegation is more appropriate for simpler, repetitive tasks and when capable, reliable people are available to perform the work. As the capacity of your staff grows, duties can be delegated more completely and with more confidence. One approach to fostering such development is to identify employees with greater potential and give them increasingly difficult and more important tasks over time, perhaps using the scale above as a guide to judiciously raising the bar. Most people respond positively to being entrusted with a responsibility they feel capable of handling reasonably well.



Developing Employees through Progressive Delegation

Example 1: From Picker to Orchard Supervisor

Marie has been picking apples on the farm for five years. You believe she is a natural leader, and she obviously has the respect of the other workers. You know that if you are to effectively manage this business, you have to relieve yourself of directly supervising the orchard work.

Week 1: Inform Marie of your desire to promote her to orchard supervisor. She is pleased and scared at the same time. You tell her you will work with her until she feels comfortable in this role. You then give her some tasks, such as discussing with pickers what could be done to make their jobs easier, and you discuss various picking techniques.

Week 2: Talk with Marie about some orchard decisions you are making and how and why you handled a problem in a particular way. Encourage her to make suggestions and ask questions.

Week 3: Marie supervises in the morning and you in the afternoon, or you supervise in one orchard and she in another. Then, compare notes, including reactions of the crew members.

Week 4: Turn the job over to her, support her if she asks for it, and check with her regularly when opportunities arise. At the end of the season, review with Marie the components of the job and her performance so far.

Example 2: From Milker to Herdsman

Your herdsman has just left to start farming on his own. You have a lot of faith in Joe, one of the milkers who has been with you for some time, and think he would make a fine herdsman.

Week 1: Inform Joe of your idea. He is pleased but worried that he may not be able to handle the job. You promise to be patient and to help him along as he learns the whole job. You explain how to do one of the tasks (keeping the breeding records) and begin to monitor his progress.

Week 2: Discuss with Joe how and why you make certain decisions. He expresses concern about supervising milkers who are older than him, but you assure him of your support and suggest how he might build on his existing relationship with the milkers.

Week 3: You and Joe begin to share the various herdsman tasks and decisions with considerable two-way communication, often working side by side.

Week 10: Joe takes full responsibility. You are available if and when he needs your help. You review his performance with him and discuss relevant issues at staff meetings. You are relieved of herdsman responsibilities.