



STUFF YOU CAN USE

Hi saoumyaa!

Several years ago, I gave a talk, and the theme was **delegation as formation**. The audience was visibly surprised throughout this talk because most people never think to equate these two ideas.

We talked about this in our Leadership Labs workshop yesterday, and it was so fun to hear everyone's challenges and successes when it comes to delegation. You can join us every month as I host a live workshop on Zoom focused on topics just like this. If you want to join us in May to learn, discuss, and grow together, then [sign up here](#) for \$9.97!"

If delegation only becomes a part of your strategy when you're overwhelmed, you're missing a huge opportunity.

Most ministry leaders treat delegation like an emergency lever...

- "I can't keep doing all this."
- "Something has to come off my plate."
- "Can someone please take this?"

That's not leadership development.

That's survival.

And survival-based delegation almost always produces frustration — both for you and for team.

But what if delegation wasn't primarily about reducing your workload? What if it could be about increasing your ministry's capacity?

Because at its core, delegation should not be about efficiency.

It should be about formation.

## The Delegation Gap in Ministry

In corporate environments, delegation is tied to scalability. In ministry environments, it's often tied to necessity.

That difference matters.

Because research shows that leaders who fail to delegate don't just burn out — they stall organizational growth. Their teams become dependent instead of empowered.

Meanwhile, research also shows that leaders who know how to delegate well increase proactive behavior and initiative on their teams. It's not surprising that people step forward when they believe they are trusted to do so.

What does all this mean for us?

**If you don't delegate intentionally, your church will revolve around your energy instead of shared ownership.**

That's not sustainable. And it's not biblical.

## **Rethinking Delegation: 4 Shifts Ministry Leaders Must Make**

Instead of walking through technical steps, I want to offer four mindset shifts.

Because delegation fails less from poor systems and more from poor assumptions.

### **Shift #1: From “Helper” to “Steward”**

When you delegate to helpers, they execute your ideas.

When you delegate to stewards, they own part of the mission.

There's a psychological difference.

Research on role identity shows that when individuals internalize a role as part of who they are (not just a thing they're asked to do), performance and persistence increase.

Don't ask someone to “help with kids ministry this weekend.”

Invite them to play a crucial role in the spiritual formation of children.

Language shapes ownership.

### **Shift #2: From Control to Coaching**

Many leaders think delegation means letting go.

It doesn't.

It means changing roles.

It means shifting your focus from a doer to a developer.

Leaders who adopt a coaching orientation — asking developmental questions rather than giving directive answers — cultivate stronger long-term performance.

Instead of solving every problem that comes to you, try responding with:

- “What do you think the best option is?”
- “If you were fully in charge, what would you do?”
- “What outcome are we aiming for here?”

That shift feels slower at first.

But over time, it creates independent thinkers instead of dependent executors.

### **Shift #3: From Perfection to Progress**

One of the biggest barriers to delegation in ministry is quality control.

The honest truth is — you probably *can* do it better, faster, cleaner, and more aligned with your vision.

But if everything must be done at *your* level to be acceptable, you are building a ministry bottleneck.

Research shows that psychological safety — the freedom to try, fail, and adjust — is a key predictor of team growth.

If people only get responsibility when they can perform flawlessly, they will never grow into leaders.

Delegation requires tolerating imperfection in the short term for strength in the long term.

That's not lowering standards.

That's multiplying capacity.

### **Shift #4: From Urgency to Intentional Development**

Most delegation in churches happens reactively. It comes from a place of, “we need someone to do this now.”

But the strongest leaders delegate proactively. From a perspective of, “I see leadership potential in you. Let's explore that.”

The difference is developmental intent.

Research consistently shows that when people perceive trust from authority figures, their commitment and engagement increase.

Delegation becomes a vote of confidence.

## **A Diagnostic Question for You**

If you stepped away for 60 days, what would stall? Be honest.

- Which decisions are still routed through you?
- Which ministries depend on your approval?
- Which leaders lack the authority to adapt without asking?

Wherever the system bottlenecks at you, delegation has not yet matured.

That's not a condemnation or anything to feel ashamed of, but it should provide clarity. Where can you be growing in this area of your leadership?

### **Go Deeper in Leadership Labs!**

If you're curious about topics like this, where we become better leaders by thinking differently about leadership, Leadership Labs is for you!

👉 **Sign up for our next Leadership Labs live workshop [here!](#)** These workshops are designed to help you **learn, experiment, and grow your leadership skills.** With Leadership Labs, you'll get...

- Live 60-minute Leadership Labs with me (Yulee!) and some special guests
- Live group discussion
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