



SILVER ROSE  
CHANGE YOUR FOCUS; ENGAGE YOUR TEAM

## Socratic Delegation: get tasks done right the first time

Do you often wonder, “Why is it we never have time to plan things well at the front end but we always have time to clean them up when they go wrong?”



The answer to this lies in how we delegate.

**del·e·gate**, *verb*

entrust (a task or responsibility) to another person, typically one who is less senior than oneself

send or authorize (someone) to do something as a representative

There are two words that stick out in the definition above: *entrust* and *authorize*. The act of entrusting and/or authorizing requires that the representative to whom you are delegating take ownership of the task. In order to take ownership, it is crucial that

s/he is involved in determining how the task is to be done. This does not happen when, instead of asking for input, you provide instructions, clear or otherwise, for how to do it.

Why can they not follow simple directions? It's largely because they don't actually absorb them. The moment you tell another what you want him/her to do, that person begins to formulate a plan. And even though you may be talking, giving specific directions, s/he is only half listening, concentrating instead on how s/he plans to tackle it.

Your role, if you want to ensure that the task/project gets done correctly the first time around is to **find out what's being planned**. That's when Socratic Delegation can become your greatest tool.

**What is Socratic Delegation?** A method of using questions when assigning work, resulting in individuals developing their own implementation plans instead of being told how to do it.

### The process is as simple as:

“This is the (measurable) result I'm looking for. I need it by \_\_\_\_\_.

How do you think we should do it?”

A friend of mine, a Public Works Manager for a city in California, volunteered to edit the book I'm writing on Socratic Delegation. When she returned the manuscript she had this to say about the process, “*I found myself using it after reading/editing. Wow, it works. Specifically letting the team figure out how to tackle a project.*”

Why not try it yourself this week? Become a believer!

**Please let me know what happens** or if you have questions: [Silver@SilverSpeaks.com](mailto:Silver@SilverSpeaks.com)

To download the full, comprehensive process, **Socratic Delegation Step-by-Step**, go to: <http://silverspeaks.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Socratic-Delegation-Step-by-Step.pdf> or email [info@SilverSpeaks.com](mailto:info@SilverSpeaks.com)

**Silver Rose is an Employee Engagement Thought Leader** who works with organizations to implement practical, proven and timesaving strategies for: (1) improving employee engagement, (2) increasing profitability, and (3) freeing leadership from the need to micro-manage.

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