

Work Assignment Worksheet

These steps will help you make a clear work assignment. Discuss them with your team. Let your team know you will use them to help you communicate your expectations. Ask them to help you refine them to meet your mutual needs.

1. Define the expected end-result for the assignment
Provide a helicopter view of what you expect the assignment to look like when it is completed successfully. State your expectations in positive terms (what you expect as opposed to what you do not expect).
 - A. Ask the employee to paraphrase (repeat back) the expected end-result
 - B. Clarify any differences between what you stated and what the employee heard
2. Define absolutes, including a timeline
Every assignment has certain things that must happen (Joe has to be involved.). Many have things that cannot be allowed to happen (The budget cannot exceed \$5,000.). Every assignment has an expected completion date. List them before you talk about how to complete the assignment.
3. Ask the employee to explain how she/he will approach the assignment.
Listen. Resist tell. Let the employee speak first. Offer your suggestions after the employee describes her approach. Collaborate to list the steps the employee will take to produce the expected end-result.
4. Establish a reporting mechanism
You do not want to be a micromanager. You do have a legitimate need to know if things are on track and getting done the way you expect them to get done. Explain how you expect the employee to keep you informed of her/his progress on the assignment. Make it his responsibility to keep you informed.
5. Prioritize this assignment in relationship to the employee's current workload
Every new assignment adds to an employee's workload. You must help the employee understand where this assignment stands in relationship to their existing workload.
6. Confirm the assignment
Most supervisors skip this step. They often live to regret it. Your assignment has many moving parts. It is important for you to slow down for a minute to be sure your message (assignment) is received. It is best to ask the employee to restate the assignment and the process she will follow to produce your expected end-result. It is your job to facilitate (Ask questions. Listen. Redirect.) a discussion that leads to the employee clearly understanding the assignment and accepting responsibility for completing it.

Deblieux