Commander's Intent

Delegation worksheet • Outcome before task list

Delegate the result; clarify the boundaries

A team member cannot make good decisions with information they were never given. Use this worksheet to explain the intended outcome, why it matters, what the employee may decide, what requires approval, and when to report back.

The six pieces of a complete assignment

- Outcome: What must be true when the work is done?
- Purpose: Why does this result matter for safety, service or the public?
- Guardrails: What policies, deadlines, budget constraints and standards apply?
- Authority and resources: Which decisions and people are available?
- Escalation: Which risks or changes require an immediate supervisor decision?
- Proof and debrief: How will you know it is complete, and what will you learn?

Municipal example: event-readiness assignment

Outcome: Prepare the approved park site before a scheduled community event, completing assigned readiness checks. The crew lead can coordinate existing staff and work orders but cannot authorize purchases, bypass inspections or make personnel decisions outside assigned authority. Escalate a safety hazard or deadline risk promptly. Close with the authorized checklist.

Important limitation

This approach clarifies a work assignment; it does not change chain of command, purchasing authority, licensing requirements, required inspections, safety rules or agency policy. Use the agency's approved system for restricted details.

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Complete together before assigning the work

Assignment / accountable role

1. Intended result: what will be true when completed?

2. Why the result matters (service / public / team)

3. Deadline, standards and critical constraints

4. Decisions employee may make (authority granted)

5. Decisions requiring approval or escalation

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Check-ins, proof and coaching

6. People / resources / approved information available

7. Update schedule / owner of check-ins

8. Early-warning signs requiring immediate escalation

9. Definition of done and completion evidence

10. After-action: what worked, changed, needs coaching?

Monday morning: choose one appropriate task you normally rescue from your team. Complete the outcome and authority sections together; then ask the employee to explain them back to you.