

Delegating for real: Appelo's seven levels

Adaptive module

~20 min

"I delegate" hides two mirror-image traps: abandoning a team member, or micromanaging them. Many managers swing between the two for lack of a framework. This module draws on Jurgen Appelo's seven levels (Management 3.0), a model used worldwide, to move beyond an all-or-nothing approach and define exactly who decides, and how. And because theory isn't enough, it provides a team facilitation tool (Delegation Poker), three pitfalls to avoid, and what AI actually changes in practice.

— LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 01 Escape the two delegation traps, abandoning and micromanaging, by no longer seeing delegation as binary.
- 02 Place a decision on Appelo's seven levels, from "deciding alone" to "delegating fully".
- 03 Run a Delegation Poker session to align the team and formalize who decides what, decision by decision.
- 04 Avoid the three pitfalls (fake consultation, unannounced level changes, one level for everything) and see what AI amplifies.

— WHO IT'S FOR

Managers who want to delegate well, neither abandoning nor micromanaging, by matching their decisions to the team and the stakes.

- **Prerequisite:** none

— HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

- 1 **Self-assessment:** on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.
- 2 **Expert video:** 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.
- 3 **Practice scenarios:** the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.
- 4 **Dated commitment:** one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.
- 5 **Memo to download:** key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

— ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- 7 levels of delegation / authority (Tell, Sell, Consult, Agree, Advise, Inquire, Delegate) – Jurgen Appelo, Management 3.0
- Delegation Poker – Appelo, card-voting mechanism inspired by Planning Poker (James Grenning, 2002)
- Matching the level to the stakes and the team's maturity – inspired by Situational Leadership (Hersey & Blanchard)
- Checklist of 3 pitfalls (fake consultation, unannounced change of level, one default level) – Afthonios method

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Jurgen Appelo – "Management 3.0" (Addison-Wesley/Pearson, 2011): 7 levels of delegation, Delegation Poker, Delegation Board
- Tannenbaum & Schmidt – "How to Choose a Leadership Pattern," Harvard Business Review (1958): leadership continuum with 7 positions
- Deci & Ryan (2000) – autonomy, competence, and relatedness in motivation
- Albert Bandura (1977) – self-efficacy and mastery experiences