THE 80 PERCENT RULE

by

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“If you want a job done right, do it yourself.” Like many erroneous oversimplifications, there is some truth in that statement. The question is: What do you mean by the word “right?”

You may be the best person in your congregation/school/ministry area at doing a certain thing. If “right” means doing it (whatever “it” is) to perfection or near-perfection, then the statement is true. If “right” means doing it precisely the way you want it done, then too the statement is true. If you want that job done right, do it yourself.

The problem is that there may be other things you need to be doing, and they’re not getting done because you’re taking precious time and energy to do this one. Another problem is that there may be other people who could do it very well, and your possessiveness (disguised as diligence) is depriving them of the opportunity to exercise their God-given gifts and talents. A third problem could be that you aren’t as good at it as you think you are, and someone else could actually do it better.

Someone once told me the “80 Percent Rule” which is as follows: If you are a busy person (and most of us in ministry are), and if there is someone around who can do something you’re doing 80% as well as you can, delegate that duty to them and let them do it. Doing so keeps up your high standards and liberates some of your time and talent to attend to some other important work that is crying out for your attention. It also gives someone else the opportunity to serve, grow, and experience the joy of using his or her talents to the glory of God.