



TWO WAYS TO HAND OFF THE SAME TASK

Delegating vs. Dumping

From across the room, both look like you handed someone work. The setup is what's different.

Dumping

- "Here, this is yours now" — no context on why it matters.
- I hand off the task, not the reason behind it.
- I hand off the parts of my job I don't want, not the parts that would grow someone.
- I disappear until the deadline, then show up to judge the result.
- I never said what "done" looks like, so I can't fairly say they missed it.
- I gave the responsibility but kept the authority to make real decisions.
- I only step back in when something's already gone wrong.
- I assume they'll figure out the constraints and priorities on their own.
- If they fail, that's on them — I already handed it off.

Delegating

- I explain why this task matters and where it fits in the bigger picture.
- I hand off the outcome and let them find their own way to it.
- I hand off work that stretches someone, not just work I'm glad to be rid of.
- I check in before the deadline, not just at it.
- We agree on what "done" looks like before they start, not after.
- The authority I hand off matches the responsibility I'm asking them to carry.
- I stay reachable without hovering over the work.
- I ask what support they'll need instead of waiting for them to ask me.
- I stay accountable for the outcome even after the task belongs to them.

If you can't say why this task went to this person, or what you'll do if it goes wrong, you didn't delegate it. You dumped it and hoped.