

**Book of Enlightening Laughters**  
**Collection of Stories & Anecdotes From the Talks of**  
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**PEOPLE CANNOT DELEGATE!**

It is popularly believed that some people are born to delegate while others are not. I do not subscribe to this view. I think that some people learn to delegate, while others do not. It is a skill that can be taught; it is a skill that can be acquired. The incapacity to delegate power is frequently psychological. People in managerial positions often encounter a resistance within themselves to delegate responsibilities. Each person has to understand the reasons for this resistance and overcome it. Once this is accomplished, delegation becomes a simple pragmatic issue of finding the right person for each job.

The wife of a company executive wanted a cook for a long time. She was cooking all the time. She got tired of it. Now she could not do it anymore. She wanted him to get one somehow. He said, "We cannot afford now. Please wait. We will get a pay revision. Then we will hire a cook."

Soon, he got a rise in his salary. As promised he hired an efficient cook for her. The woman taught the cook the types of food to prepare and the modes of cooking. The cook, who was intelligent, understood the family members' preferences and learned to cook to their liking.

But the Mem-sahib, the lady of the house, did not relinquish her control over the kitchen; she continued to supervise the cook. She was behind him all the time. Frequently she would interfere saying, "You should not do like this. This is not the way. See how I do!" She would take out things from the containers and give everything to him. When he cooked something finally, she would say, "You do not know anything. Come out. I will do this." Thus she would ask the cook to stand by and watch. She would do all the cooking herself.

Soon, the cook put on weight and said, "Memsahib's cooking is excellent." Mem-sahib did not know how to delegate. From the time she taught the cook how to do it, the cook should have been left alone to do his job.

It is exactly like the owner appointing a driver to drive his car. He sits in the car behind him. But he does not relax. He drives the driver. He keeps on telling, "Hey, look there, a truck is coming. Hey, do not go fast. Hey, a scooter is behind". He will make the driver crazy.

There are several reasons why the Mem-sahib could not let the cook do his job. One reason is perfectionism. She had her own concept of how things should be done and found it hard to accept that it could be done another way. This is perfectionism. Perfectionism is a weakness and it prevents you from being efficient. If a person tries to do everything himself, he cannot finish any of the jobs. He is pulled from all sides and he ends up spending more time in shuttling between jobs than on them.