



# Authority and Responsibility



# Authority

- ❖ The legal power given to a commander or other leader to perform her or his duties
- ❖ Authority comes to a person usually by virtue of the position they hold. Certain positions have certain authority.

# Responsibility

- ❖ An expectation from a person higher up in the chain of command to get a task accomplished.
- ❖ The army now defines this as “the obligation to carry forward an assigned task to successful completion” (see FM 6-22)



# Authority and Responsibility go Hand in Hand

- ❖ With authority comes responsibility to get tasks accomplished
- ❖ Responsibility requires a leader to act with authority to accomplish assigned tasks

# Delegation

- ❖ Legally, a leader can delegate authority to a subordinate to accomplish a task, but the ultimate responsibility remains with the higher level leader
- ❖ We say, “you can never delegate responsibility” which is technically true, but good leaders still develop a sense of responsibility in their subordinates to get a job done. The higher level leader remains ultimately responsible, but the subordinate leader should feel a sense of responsibility for getting the task accomplished

# How do You Delegate?

- ❖ Delegated tasks should be SMARTER:
  - ❖ Specific – communicated clearly
  - ❖ Measurable – it will be clear whether the task has been accomplished
  - ❖ Agreed – the subordinate understands the task
  - ❖ Realistic – can be accomplished, is not impossible
  - ❖ Time-bound – can be accomplished in a reasonable time period
  - ❖ Ethical – is not illegal or immoral
  - ❖ Recorded – written down and agreed to in writing by the leader and subordinate whenever possible



# Ten Levels of Delegated Tasks

**Level 1 - "Wait to be told." or "Do exactly what I say." or "Follow these instructions precisely."**

This is instruction. There is no delegated freedom at all.

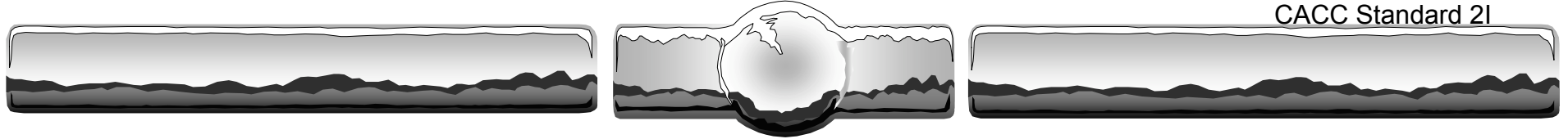


## Level 2

**"Look into this and tell me the situation. I'll decide."**

This is asking for investigation and analysis but no recommendation. The person delegating retains responsibility for assessing options prior to making the decision.

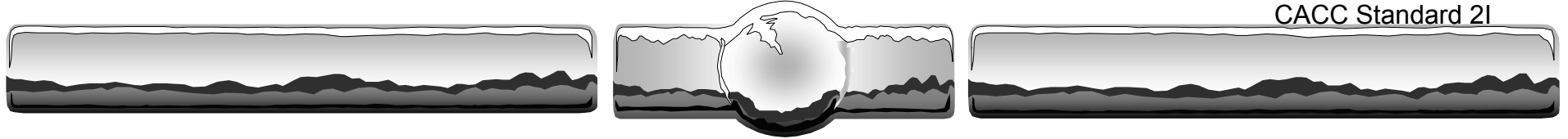




## Level 3

**"Look into this and tell me the situation.  
We'll decide together."**

This has a subtle important difference to Level 2. This level of delegation encourages and enables the analysis and decision to be a shared process, which can be very helpful in coaching and development.



## Level 4

**"Tell me the situation and what help you need from me in assessing and handling it. Then we'll decide."**

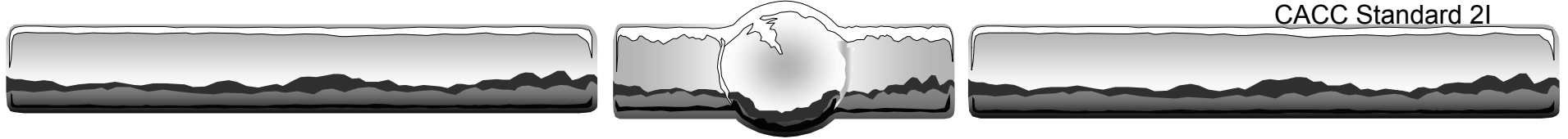
This opens the possibility of greater freedom for analysis and decision-making, subject to both people agreeing this is appropriate. Again, this level is helpful in growing and defining coaching and development relationships.



## Level 5

**"Give me your analysis of the situation (reasons, options, pros and cons) and recommendation. I'll let you know whether you can go ahead."**

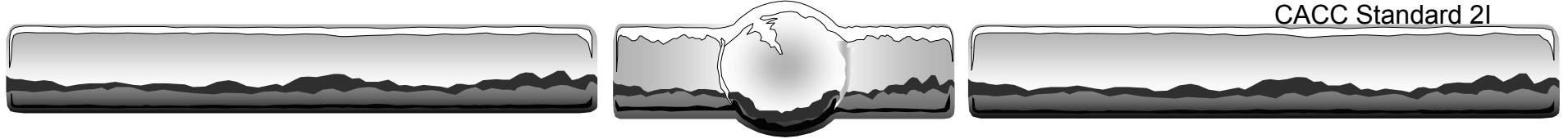
Asks for analysis and recommendation, but you will check the thinking before deciding.



## Level 6

**"Decide and let me know your decision, and wait for my go-ahead before proceeding."**

The other person is trusted to assess the situation and options and is probably competent enough to decide and implement too, but for reasons of task importance, or competence, or perhaps externally changing factors, the boss prefers to keep control of timing. This level of delegation can be frustrating for people if used too often or for too long, and in any event the reason for keeping people waiting, after they've inevitably invested time and effort, needs to be explained.



## Level 7

**"Decide and let me know your decision, then go ahead unless I say not to."**

Now the other person begins to control the action. The subtle increase in responsibility saves time. The default is now positive rather than negative. This is a very liberating change in delegated freedom, and incidentally one that can also be used very effectively when seeking responsibility from above or elsewhere in an organization, especially one which is strangled by indecision and bureaucracy. For example, "Here is my analysis and recommendation; I will proceed unless you tell me otherwise by (date)."



## Level 8

**"Decide and take action - let me know what you did (and what happened)."**

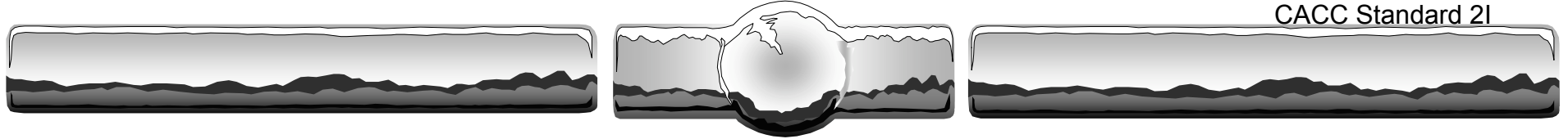
This delegation level, as with each increase up the scale, saves even more time. This level of delegation also enables a degree of follow-up by the manager as to the effectiveness of the delegated responsibility, which is necessary when people are being managed from a greater distance, or more 'hands-off'. The level also allows and invites positive feedback by the manager, which is helpful in coaching and development of course.

The image features three horizontal bars with a dark, wavy bottom edge, resembling a landscape or water. The middle bar is slightly taller and contains a white globe with a dark outline, centered within it.

## Level 9

**“Decide and take action. You need not check back with me.”**

The most freedom that you can give to another person when you still need to retain responsibility for the activity. A high level of confidence is necessary, and you would normally assess the quality of the activity after the event according to overall results, potentially weeks or months later. Feedback and review remain helpful and important, although the relationship is more likely one of mentoring, rather than coaching per se.

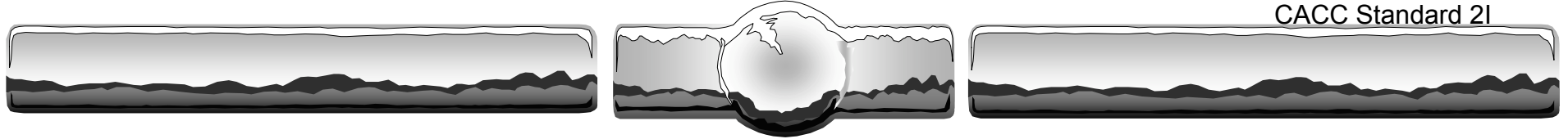


## Level 10

**"Decide where action needs to be taken and manage the situation accordingly. It's your area of responsibility now."**

The most freedom that you can give to the other person, and not generally used without formal change of a person's job role. It's the delegation of a strategic responsibility. This gives the other person responsibility for defining what changes projects, tasks, analysis and decisions are necessary for the management of a particular area of responsibility, as the task or project or





continue

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change itself, and how the initiative or change is to be implemented and measured, etc. This amounts to delegating part of your job - not just a task or project. You'd use this utmost level of delegation (for example) when developing a successor, or as part of an intentional and agreed plan to devolve some of your job accountability in a formal sense.