

The Five Rights of AI Delegation

Before delegating any work to an AI agent, answer all five. Adapted from the NCSBN/ANA National Guidelines for Nursing Delegation (2019) — the doctrine that tasks delegate and judgment never does.

1 RIGHT TASK

Is this work task-shaped — bounded, specifiable, checkable? Name the judgment braided inside it. Who is keeping that judgment?

Never delegable: assessment, interpretation, evaluation — anything that decides what the work means.

2 RIGHT CIRCUMSTANCE

What tier is this use — audience, reversibility, current conditions? Would you still delegate it during your version of a code?

The same task may be delegable Tuesday and not during an incident. Tier the task, not the tool.

3 RIGHT AGENT

Does this specific agent have a demonstrated track record on this class of task? What permissions does it hold that this task does not need?

Capability is task-specific. Scope is least-privilege. Track records live in the ledger.

4 RIGHT DIRECTION

Does your instruction contain all five parts — objective, limits, evidence requirement, escalation triggers, intent? Did you get a read-back before execution?

Fire-and-forget is not delegation. It is abandonment with extra steps.

5 RIGHT SUPERVISION

What is the active check on what comes back, who performs it, and when did that reviewer last reject something? What did the last cycle change?

A reviewer who never rejects is a rubber stamp, not a gate.

Tasks delegate. Judgment does not. Accountability never moves.

You hold the outcome of an AI delegation exactly as a licensed nurse holds a delegated task: fully, personally, regardless of how the assistant performed.

All five answered? Delegate with a clear conscience — and delegate more. One unanswered? You have found this week's work, and it is not an AI problem.

Carry the lamp. Keep the ledger. Agents propose. Humans judge. Nurses steward.