

## **Best Practices Supervisor's Manual**

## **1. Demonstrating Communication Skills:**

### *Giving and Receiving Criticism*

Throughout a supervisor's career, he or she will be expected to critique an employee's performance and provide feedback. In addition, he or she will be the object of criticism, both in job performance and the way in which he or she responds to the employees. A supervisor may feel that it is only the intent of the message that matters, but proper delivery is important as well (Chambers, 74). A good critique must be necessary to the employee's performance. It should be noted that it is a waste of time to criticize factors that are not important to the job. This evaluation should also be fair and positive and intended to improve one's job performance. This communication should be tactful, fair and kept in a positive light. The supervisor should also be able to receive criticism. He or she should remember that these comments are intended to improve performance and to help develop a better relationship with employees.

### *Developing Effective Listening Skills*

A supervisor needs to be an effective listener. In order to be effective, one must want to be effective. The first suggestion for improving this skill is to engage in active listening practices, such as repeating the information in order to confirm understanding (Chambers, 162). One might also want to time the discussion so that it takes place during the peak of the day's energy (such as first thing in the morning). Most importantly, an individual with good listening skills reminds him or herself, "I am going to be a good listener and I will not interrupt the employee". "I will remember that what he or she has to say to me is important". Willingness to be an effective listener is half the battle.

## **2. Improving Productivity for Teams**

### *Minimize Stress*

Employees who are experiencing a great deal of stress are less likely to be productive. They will need to call in sick more often, and when they are on the job, they are less likely to meet deadlines and produce efficient and accurate work. Supervisors should not excuse an employee's stress level by blaming it on external factors – while the employee may have problems at home, it is the workplace where they spend the majority of the day. This only succeeds in blaming the employee rather than fixing the cause of the stress in the workplace (Cooper, 3). Supervisors should engage in preventative measures, such as being flexible, anticipating market fluctuations (which may require longer working hours and shorter deadlines) and anticipating the employee's reaction to stressful situations.

### *Assign Appropriate Roles*

Rather than assigning roles based on factors such as time and qualifications, supervisors should choose the right employee for the task based on past experience and as a means to increase productivity. When working within a team, it is tempting to assign roles based on the employee's preference. One employee may prefer to do the research while another dislikes research and would rather create a presentation. A supervisor should conduct a needs assessment and match it with the employee who is most capable of completing tasks within a given deadline (Ukens, 73). Often, individuals do not have an objective view of their strengths and weaknesses, it is crucial that the effective supervisor be able to relate the employee to his or her best skill within a team environment...

...Works Cited:

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