

Effective Supervision

Effective supervisors perform many roles daily and understand that there is more to being effective than knowing the work. These supervisors know that for the work to be done well, they must display strong supervisory characteristics.

Characteristic	How?	Result
Assign work in a fair and consistent manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies technical skills (ability to do the job) • Applies planning and organizing skills (ability to plan the work daily and long range) • Applies human relations skills (ability to communicate and know his/her employees skills and what they value) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productive work crew • Fewer “fires” to put out • More satisfied employees • Higher employee morale
Properly use authority/power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies human relations skills (ability to communicate and know his/her employees skills and what they value) • Demonstrates the ability to maintain control (ability to handle and resolve work issues without causing other work issues) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher morale in work crew • Employees are more motivated to work for you no matter what you ask them to do • Better performing employees
Set a good example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies technical skills (ability to do the job) • Applies human relations skills (ability to communicate and know his/her employees skills and what they value) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer safety issues • Employees more willing to follow your lead • Employees know what is expected (work quality, timeliness, productivity) • Employees are more skilled
Develops employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively teaches and coaches employees (ability to provide opportunities for employees to become better at their jobs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer safety issues • More skilled employees • Higher productivity • Higher quality of work • Fewer “fires” to put out • More satisfied employees • Higher employee morale

Supervisors who consistently demonstrate the characteristics above will be seen as:

Trustworthy – others can rely on your words and actions

Competent – you understand your job and the jobs of those you supervise

Fair – you are consistent in words and actions towards all employees

Respectable – you are held in high regard by others

Skills of Effective Supervision

Effective supervisors perform multiple roles on a daily basis while displaying a wide variety of skills including:

Skills	Result
Technical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ability to do the job.
Administrative / Planning Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ability to plan the work and set expectations.
Human Relations / Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ability to communicate ideas and facts verbally, to listen to others and show understanding of what they are saying, and give positive or negative feedback when needed.
Ability to Maintain Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ability to maintain control in the workplace and use authority appropriately.
Effective Teachers / Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ability to guide and teach others to be better at their jobs, and to setup training opportunities.

Effective Supervision

Supervisors get things done through other people and with other people. It is helpful for us to understand characteristics and results of poor supervision:

Characteristics	What does this mean?	Result
Decision-making using personal likes and dislikes	Making decisions based on reasons such as personal preferences, favoritism, or biases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low morale in work crew • Lack of trust in supervisor from work crew
Procrastinating with tough problems	Not dealing with the problems that are not easily solved, such as poor performance of an employee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low work performance • Low work quality • Work not completed • Low morale in work crew • Not able to plan work • Lots of fires to put out (being reactive instead of proactive)
Inflexibility	Unwilling to seek the input of others or listen to other's viewpoints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad decision making • Re-work • Frustrated employees
Making promises that are not kept	Not following through on promises (either making promises that can't be kept or making promises and not keeping them).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees will not trust your decisions or your word • Low morale in work crew • Employees not willing to follow your lead
Doing an employee's work	Doing the work for an employee when he/she is often absent / tardy or does incorrect work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not able to do your own work • Other employees slack in their work • Under skilled employees • Frustrated employees

Behaviors of Effective Supervisors

Effective supervisors not only possess skills; they apply their skills in a consistent manner. Those supervisors, who are found to be more effective, demonstrate the following behaviors:

- Assign group work in a fair and consistent manner
- Properly use authority/power
- Set a good example
- Desire for being a supervisor

The four behaviors above are not the only ones necessary for a supervisor to be effective, but they are some of the most important.

Results of Effective Supervisors

Supervisors impact both the organization (upstream) and its people (downstream) through their behavior – the daily choices they make about what to say and what to do. When supervisors consistently apply their effective supervisory behaviors and skills, the following results are achieved:

Trust - when employees can rely on a supervisor's words and actions

Competence - understand your job and the jobs of those you supervise

Fairness – consistency in words and actions towards all employees over time

Respect – hold in high regard without bias



For Your Personal Reflection:

- What are some traits that I have that make me an effective supervisor?
 - How could I be more effective?
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