Supervision Concepts and Skill Building 11th edition Certo Solutions Manual

SKU: 9781260682960-SOLUTIONS

Chapter 01
Supervision: Tradition and Contemporary Trends

I. Chapter Overview

Learning Objectives

LO 01-01: Define what a supervisor is.
LO 01-02: Summarize research findings that have led to basic ideas of what managers should do.
LO 01-03: Describe the basic types of supervisory skills.
LO 01-04: Describe how the growing diversity of the workforce affects the supervisor's role.
LO 01-05: Identify the general functions of a supervisor.
LO 01-06: Explain how supervisors are responsible to higher management, employees, and co-workers.
LO 01-07: Describe the typical background of someone who is promoted to supervisor.
LO 01-08: Identify characteristics of a successful supervisor.

This chapter provides an introduction to the supervisor. The supervisor is the first-level manager responsible for coordinating the work of nonmanagement employees, or employees who provide the products and services for the customers of the organization.

A historical perspective of the supervisor's role looks into the theories and principles that have led to the development of current views on supervision. Frederick Taylor's scientific management principles (focus on efficiency), Henri Fayol's administrative principles (focus on functions), and Maslow's hierarchy of needs (focus on people) are discussed in relation to the supervisory role in an organization.

The skills required of the supervisor are similar to the skills required of both employees and managers. Supervisors need technical skills common to their employees, but they also need human relations skills, conceptual skills, and decision-making skills. Human relations skills enable the supervisor to work effectively with other people. Conceptual skills enable the supervisor to see the relation of the parts to the whole and to one another. Decision-making skills enable the supervisor to analyze information and reach good decisions. Supervisors usually have ample technical skills, which may have to be held in check. On the other hand, they may have to develop better human relations, conceptual, and decision-making skills.

Growing diversity in the workforce resulting from increasing proportions of women and ethnic and racial minorities is challenging the supervisor's role. Differing perspectives on situations faced by the organization are an advantage when competitive forces increasingly require flexibility and innovation. However, most individuals, including supervisors, usually feel more comfortable with those who are

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most like themselves. Supervisors need to learn to value diversity for their own success and for the success of the organization.

General functions of the supervisor include planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling. Planning involves setting goals and determining how to meet them. Organizing involves setting up the groups, allocating resources, and assigning work to achieve goals. Staffing includes identifying, hiring, and developing the necessary number and quality of employees. Leading involves getting employees to do what is expected of them. Controlling consists of monitoring performance and making needed corrections.

Supervisors are responsible for getting the work assigned by their boss accomplished through the use of the employees who work for them. They are also responsible for communicating instructions, requirements, and expectations of the organization to their employees and dealing with them fairly. Supervisors are responsible for informing their managers of concerns of employees. They are also responsible for cooperating with co-workers in other departments to assure the effective and efficient operation of the organization.

Most supervisors start out as employees within the department. Their promotion is based on performance and skill levels. To be successful, supervisors must leave the role of employee and develop the required skills of the supervisor. A successful supervisor is usually someone who has a positive attitude, is loyal and fair, communicates well, can delegate, and wants the job.

A Supervision Challenge: Supervising Remote Workers

This opening case discusses supervising remote employees and presents the following two questions.

1. **What traits do you think can help a supervisor successfully manage remote workers?**

   Sample answers may include communication skills, diplomacy, consistency, and fairness.

2. **What traits would you as a supervisor look for when hiring subordinates to work remotely?**

   Sample answers may include communication skills, attention to detail, time-management skills, and ability to do the work.

The case is again referred to in the Skills Module – Part Two: Skill-Building exercise at the end of the chapter.

II. Teaching the Concepts by Learning Objective

Learning Objective 01-01: Define what a supervisor is.

1. **Key terms:**

   Supervisor: A manager at the first level of management.

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2. Teaching notes:

The Taft-Hartley Act defines a supervisor as "any individual having authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward or discipline other employees, or responsibility to direct them, or to adjust their grievances, or effectively to recommend such action, if in connection with the foregoing the exercise of such authority is not of a merely routine or clerical nature, but requires the use of independent judgment."

Figure 1.1 reprints actual advertisements for a variety of supervisory jobs.

The basic job of a manager is to see that an organization meets its goals, yet there are distinctions.

- For top executives, managing is about making sure that the organization's vision and business strategy will allow it to meet its goals through the years ahead.
- At the supervisory level, managing means ensuring employees in a particular department are performing their jobs so the department will contribute its share to accomplishing the organization's goals.
    - Usually, supervisors focus on day-to-day problems and on goals to be achieved in one year or less.

Present-day theories about how to be a supervisor are based on management and supervision research findings that continuously evolve over the years.

- Management research is important because supervision is management at the lowest level of the organization.

3. Teaching example for defining what a supervisor is:

Students may not be familiar with the structure of an organization and the functions of its managers. Use an organization chart to show where the supervisor is placed in the organization. The organization chart is covered in greater detail later, so use a very simple chart at this point.

The organization chart illustrates where the supervisor is in the hierarchy of the organization. It also illustrates the variety of work groups that include the position of supervisor.

The organization chart developed for this Learning Objective may be used again for later learning objectives. For example, Learning Objective 1.6 explains how supervisors are responsible to higher management, employees, and co-workers. On the chart, include at least four levels of employees and at least three divisions of management such as human resources (or personnel), purchasing, and a sales or production unit. By doing so, you have two divisions with which a supervisor interacts.

Develop the organization chart by using the following methods:

a. Ask students to help develop an organization chart for a local business they are familiar with such as a grocery store. Include at least four levels: for example, a CEO, managers, supervisors, and line workers.
b. In developing the organization chart, ask students to describe what has to happen in the

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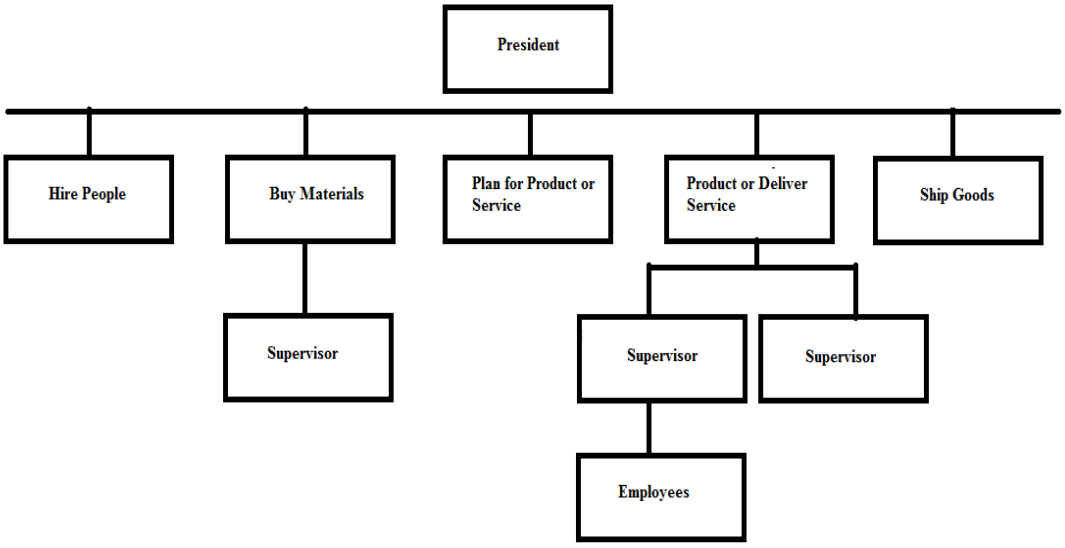
organization to ultimately deliver products and services to the customer: for example, hiring people, buying goods and materials, paying the bills for goods and materials, waiting on customers, and so forth. Add the position of division manager if it is useful to the discussion.

c. Discuss the general responsibility of each level and the relationship of other positions to the supervisor, including positions higher, lower, and peers.

d. Discuss how the supervisor's responsibilities, behaviors, and attitudes differ from the line worker and the boss of the supervisor.

- Remind students that the supervisor has a role in the organization that is different from those who are higher in the organization and the employees who will work in the supervisor's work unit, even though there is a sharing of certain skills.

Typical organization chart, simplified:



4. Exercise for defining what a supervisor is:

Draw on the experience of students in the class. Ask them to describe what supervisors do by using knowledge they have gained with work experiences or talking with other people about supervisors.

a. Ask students to think about supervisors they have worked with or information about supervisors they have gained by talking to other people. Have them list what supervisors do on the job and how they fit into the total organization. Allow two to five minutes for them to individually write their list.

b. Ask students to share the comments on their lists with the class.

c. Separate the comments by tasks of the supervisor, organization fit, and any other general categories that emerge.

d. Discuss the comments by responding to those that are common to supervision, misconceptions, and those that will be covered in the chapter.

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Learning Objective 01-02: Summarize research findings that have led to basic ideas of what managers should do.

1. **Teaching notes:**

Three basic ideas are:

- Supervisors should focus on efficiency (Taylor)
- Supervisors should focus on functions to be performed (Fayol)
- Supervisors should focus on people (Maslow)

Frederick W. Taylor (1856-1915) believed that in order to improve efficiency, it is important to consider the best way in which a job could be completed.

- Often referred to as the "father of scientific management."
- By applying scientific knowledge to the study of production, it was feasible to maximize efficiency – as Taylor did at Bethlehem Steel.

Henri Fayol (1841-1925), a French industrialist, asserted that all managers have primary management functions to perform in organizations.

- Often regarded as the pioneer of administrative theory.
- These functions include planning, organizing, leading, and controlling.

Because they deal directly with employees and have knowledge about an organization's customers, supervisors emphasize a people orientation.

- This focus recognizes that the quality of an organization is often affected by the quality of interactions among its members.
- Consistent with this approach is the idea that supervisors must recognize that above all, their employees should be treated in a humane fashion.
- Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), a pioneering psychologist, recognized that people have different sets of needs that are met in a hierarchical pattern.
    - The most basic needs of any human being are physiological needs.
    - Once those needs are met, then safety needs must be considered.
    - Next on the hierarchy are needs related to love and belonging.
    - The fourth level of the hierarchy includes esteem needs.
    - The final part of the hierarchy includes self-actualization.
- Based upon Maslow's findings, supervisors must help workers to satisfy their personal needs while being productive in organizations.

2. **Teaching example for a historical perspective of supervision:**

This is an opportunity to revise certain theories and views that were studied or mentioned earlier. Students should be required to recall theories like Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Frederick Taylor's scientific management principles, and Henri Fayol's findings.

Discussions on the finer differences between top management and supervisory roles could be held based on the theories discussed. Students are encouraged to cite examples from experience or

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observations.

3. Exercise for understanding the historical perspective:

Divide class into 6 groups. Assign one supervisory dimension to two groups each: focus on efficiency (2 groups), focus on functions (2 groups), and focus on people (2 groups). Let the teams prepare charts on the relevant theories and provide visual representations of these dimensions at work. Examples and other illustrations should also be included. Let the teams present their exhibits and examples to the rest of the class. Discussions on the points should be moderated by the facilitator after the presentations.

Learning Objective 01-03: Describe the basic types of supervisory skills.

1. Key terms:

Technical skills: specialized knowledge and expertise used to carry out particular techniques or procedures.

For example, a mechanic's ability to bring an automobile engine back to life relies on technical skills. To be "technical," skills do not have to be mechanical or scientific; they can involve any work-related technique or procedure.

Human relations skills: the ability to work effectively with other people.

These skills include the ability to communicate with, motivate, and understand people. Supervisors use their human relations skills to impress their superiors, inspire employees, defuse conflicts, get along with co-workers, and succeed in many other ways.

Conceptual skills: The ability to see the relation of the parts to the whole and to one another.

For a supervisor, conceptual skills include recognizing how the department's work helps the entire organization achieve its goals and how the work of various employees affects the performance of the department as a whole.

Decision-making skills: The ability to analyze information and reach good decisions.

Someone with strong decision-making skills can think objectively and creatively. Chapter 08 provides a more detailed look at how to make decisions effectively.

2. Teaching notes:

Classically, experts have considered managers' success dependent on three basic categories of skills: technical, human relations, and conceptual. In addition, the application of those skills requires a fourth skill: decision making.

The relative importance of each type of skill depends on the level of management. (Figure 1.2)

- Supervisors rely more on technical skills than do higher-level managers because

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employees who have a problem doing their jobs go to the supervisor and expect help.
- Also, top managers tend to rely more on decision-making skills simply because they tend to make more complex decisions.

Expanding on the classic view of management skills, current thinkers have concluded that the typical manager's activities fall into three groups:
- *Task-related activities* carry out critical management-related duties, such as planning.
- *People-related activities* manage people such as recognizing contributions.
- *Change-related activities* are efforts to modify components of the organization.

These activities frequently come together in today's fast-moving business environment.
- Contemporary business demands such as *sustainability* and *social media* call for new ways of working.
- To carry out these activities, supervisors and other managers rely on a diverse set of skills, including those listed in Table 1.1 on page 1-8 of the Instructor's Manual.

Supervisors who continually develop their skills in each area are the ones most likely to be promoted to higher levels of management.

3. Teaching example to describe the basic types of supervisory skills:

The purpose of this teaching example is to illustrate how two skills—technical and conceptual—are required to be a successful supervisor. Use Table 1.1 to show the relative importance of types of skills for different levels of managers.

Table 1.1 lists some of the skills managers and supervisors rely on to carry out these activities.

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Table 1.1

Skills of Successful Managers

Clarifying roles	Assigning tasks; explaining job responsibilities, task objectives, and performance expectations
Monitoring operations	Checking on the progress and quality of the work; evaluating individual and unit performance
Short-term planning	Determining how to use personnel and other resources to accomplish a task efficiently; determining how to schedule and coordinate activities efficiently
Consulting	Checking with people before making decisions that affect them; encouraging participation in decision-making; using the ideas and suggestions of others
Supporting	Being considerate; showing sympathy and support when someone is upset or anxious; providing encouragement and support when a task is difficult or stressful
Recognizing	Providing praise and recognition for effective performance, significant achievements, special contributions, and performance improvements
Developing	Providing coaching and advice; providing opportunities for skill development; helping people learn how to improve their skills
Empowering	Allowing substantial responsibility and discretion in work activities; trusting people to solve problems and make decisions without getting approval first
Envisioning change	Presenting an appealing description of desirable outcomes that the unit can achieve; describing a proposed change with enthusiasm and conviction
Taking risks for change	Taking personal risks and making sacrifices to encourage and promote desirable change in the organization
Encouraging innovative thinking	Challenging people to question their assumptions about the work and consider better ways of doing it
External monitoring	Analyzing information about events, trends, and changes in the external environment to identify threats and opportunities for the work unit

4. Exercise for describing the basic types of supervisory skills:

a. There are statements in the "Review and Discussion Questions" section of the text that ask students to identify the type of skills illustrated.
b. Based on the skills outlined in the table above, students may be requested to provide instances from real-life that relate to the relevant skills.

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Learning Objective 01-04: Describe how the growing diversity of the workforce affects the supervisor's role.

1. Teaching notes:

Human relations skills are important due to increasing diversity of the U.S. workforce.

- In 2008, about 44 percent of the workforce consisted of white men; this group's share of the workforce is expected to fall to about 40 percent by 2028.
- While the share of white men in the workforce declines the share of black, Hispanic, and Asian workers is expected to rise.
    - See the "Supervision and Diversity – The Largest Ethnic Minority Group" inset to learn more about the Hispanic minority group.
- Women are entering the workforce at almost the same rate as men, and they now make up almost half (46.9 percent) of the adult labor pool.
- In addition, the decade of the 2030s, when all the Baby Boomers will be 65 and older, will represent a turning point in the composition of the U.S. population.

Although diversity is not a new issue, the even greater diversity expected in the U.S. workforce of the future—coupled with laws and policies intended to ensure fair treatment of various groups—requires supervisors to work successfully with a much wider variety of people.

Subtle forms of discrimination persist in every workplace, and everybody holds some stereotypes that consciously or unconsciously influence their behavior.

Supervisors and other managers can use several tactics to improve attitudes:

- Have employees work with someone who is different.
- Use the kind of behavior they expect employees to exhibit, including demonstrating respect for others.
- Question negative stereotypes.

Even in an organization whose management is not committed to these goals, supervisors can provide advice and coaching to female and nonwhite employees.

- Supervisors also can make a point of learning about the individual employees in the department, such as what motivates them and what their career goals are.

2. Teaching example for illustrating how growing diversity of the workforce affects the supervisor's role:

Stereotypes of identifiable groups may lead to biased and unfavorable behavior by the supervisor as well as other employees. Explain the following consequences of unfavorable behavior by a supervisor that is perceived as unfair or biased:

- Perception of unfair or biased behavior can lead to morale problems.
- Individuals who feel they are undervalued may see no reason to contribute fully to the organization.
- Perceptions that bias is based on membership of an identifiable group may lead all

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members to withhold knowledge and work since they will not be able to escape the labels attached to the group.

- Members of other groups may avoid working with a devalued group, thus denying the organization of the best efforts to accomplish its goals.

Supervisors must be fair to all who work in their department. They must also see to it that other workers do not contribute to unfair treatment of women and ethnic and racial minority group members.

3. Exercise for diversity in the workforce and how it affects the supervisor's role:

A common problem of people who have had little experience dealing with diversity is that they may not be aware of their own bias and how it affects their behavior. One of the ways to help them recognize the effects of stereotypes on their own behavior is to have them carefully examine their thoughts relative to specific groups of people.

The purpose of the following exercise is to show how life experiences have shaped perceptions of characteristics of people and how perceptions shape behavior toward people who have these characteristics. Use this exercise to stimulate small group discussions of four to six students.

a. Make each student a copy of Form 1.1 on page 1-11 of the Instructor's Manual, which contains a list of descriptions of human characteristics.
b. Have each student spend three to five minutes looking over the list and jotting down notes about personal and behavioral traits of people who are in the category; for example, red heads may be perceived as having a quick temper.
c. Ask the group participants to share their notes and perceptions. They will probably be surprised that others share their perceptions.
d. Next, have the groups discuss how the perceptions might result in undesirable behaviors by a supervisor; for example, a supervisor warning employees to be careful what is said to red heads because they have a quick temper.
e. Have the small groups report their discoveries to the larger group.
f. Summarize the lessons learned in a way the class can share the lessons.

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Form 1.1

Stereotyping

Make notes on the list below indicating common notions held about persons who have the characteristic.

1. Blind

2. Red hair

3. Bald man

4. Speaks English as a second language

5. African-American man

6. Single parent of a young child

7. Hispanic woman

8. Blonde woman

9. Asian man

10. Person using a wheel chair

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Learning Objective 01-05: Identify the general functions of a supervisor.

1. Key terms:

Planning: Setting goals and determining how to meet them.

- The purpose of planning by supervisors is to determine how the department can contribute to achieving the organization's goals.
    - Chapter 06 discusses planning in greater detail.

Organizing: Setting up the group, allocating resources, and assigning work to achieve goals.

- At the supervisory level, organizing usually involves activities such as scheduling projects and assigning duties to employees.
- In addition, modern supervisors are increasingly responsible for setting up and leading teams of workers to handle special projects or day-to-day operations.
    - Chapter 07 discusses organizing and Chapter 03 addresses leading a team.

Staffing: Identifying, hiring, and developing the necessary number and quality of employees.

- Whereas an operative (nonmanagement) employee's performance is usually judged on the basis of the results that the employee has achieved as an individual,
    - A supervisor's performance depends on the quality of results that the supervisor achieves through his or her employees.
- Therefore, staffing is crucial to the supervisor's success.
    - The various activities of the staffing function are addressed in Chapters 15-17.

Leading: Influencing people to act (or not act) in a certain way.

- The supervisor is responsible for letting employees know what is expected of them and inspiring and motivating employees to do good work.
- Organizing draws heavily on the supervisor's conceptual skills, but leading requires good human relations skills.
- The supervisor needs to be aware of and use behaviors that employees respond to as he or she desires.
    - Chapter 02 includes a detailed discussion of leading.
    - Other chapters discuss the ways in which supervisors influence employees to act, such as by communicating (Chapter 10), motivating (Chapter 11), and disciplining (Chapter 12).

Controlling: The management function of ensuring that work goes according to plan.

- Monitoring performance and making needed corrections is a function of controlling.
- The supervisor needs to know what is happening in the department.
- When something goes wrong, the supervisor must find a way to fix the problem or enable employees to do so.

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- For a high-tech example of controlling, see "Supervision: New Trends – Mobile Apps for Tracking Workers."
- Chapter 06 discusses controlling trends and more traditional principles of controlling in more detail.

In an increasing number of organizations, the supervisor is not supposed to control by dictating solutions. Instead, the supervisor is expected to provide employees with the resources and motivation to identify and correct problems themselves.

2. Teaching notes:

Supervisors and other managers carry out the same types of functions. To describe these common activities, management experts categorize them as planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling.

Figure 1.3 shows the management functions as a process in which planning comes first, followed by organizing, then staffing, then leading, and finally controlling.

- This order occurs because each function depends on the preceding function or functions.
- Figure 1.3 is a very general model of managing that shows how the functions depend on one another, not how the supervisor structures his or her work.

Typically supervisors spend most of their time leading and controlling, because they work directly with the employees who are producing or selling or providing support services.

- In contrast, higher-level managers are responsible for setting the overall direction for the organization; thus, they spend more time planning and organizing.

3. Teaching example to describe the basic types of supervisory skills:

The purpose of this teaching example is to provide another illustration to help students understand the combination of the five managing functions to each other.

Use Figure 1.3 to illustrate the planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling sequence, and the relationship of the parts to the whole.

Each of the five functions are shown as connected parts of a whole to show the sequence of the process and how each function depends on preceding functions.

4. Exercise for the basic types of supervisory skills:

The following list of statements is an example of the five functions related to a single topic. Have the students determine which function is represented in the statement:

- The supervisor looks at the sales forecast and determines more employees will be needed in six weeks. The first steps are taken to meet the needs of the organization. (Planning)
- A request for six employees is sent to the human relations department.

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(Staffing)
- The new employees will require training. The supervisor requests six copies of the employee handbook, reserves the training room, and uses the employee orientation video. (Organizing)
- The supervisor carefully monitors sales and staff schedules over the next several months. (Controlling)
- After the employees are hired and trained, the supervisor talks with them daily about the expectations for the day and coaches them to help them learn the details of the job. (Leading)

Learning Objective 01-06: Explain how supervisors are responsible to higher management, employees, and co-workers

1. Key term:

Accountability: The practice of imposing penalties for failing to adequately carry out responsibilities and providing rewards for meeting responsibilities.

2. Teaching notes:

An employee who becomes a supervisor assumes all the responsibilities listed in Table 1.2.
- Though supervisors have more power than non-managers, they also have many responsibilities – to higher management, to employees, and to co-workers.

Supervisors are responsible for carrying out the duties assigned to them and their department by higher-level managers.
- This includes giving managers timely and accurate information for planning.
- They should look for ways their group can contribute to achieving the organization's larger goals.
- They must also keep their managers informed about the department's performance.
- Supervisors are expected to serve as a kind of linchpin, or bridge, between employees and management.

Some supervisors may question the notion that they have a responsibility to their employees.
- After all, the employees are responsible for doing what the supervisors say.
- Nevertheless, because supervisors link management to the employees, the way they treat employees is crucial.
- Supervisors are responsible for giving their employees clear instructions and making sure they understand their jobs.
- They must look for problems and correct them before employees' performance deteriorates further.
- They also need to treat their employees fairly and to speak up for their interests to top management.

Supervisors are also responsible for cooperating with their co-workers in other departments.

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- They should respond promptly when a co-worker in another department requests information.
- They should listen with an open mind when co-workers in other departments make suggestions about improving the way things are done.
- When supervisors learn from one another's ideas, the whole organization benefits, and the supervisors have the satisfaction of working together as members of a team.

Whatever the responsibilities of a particular supervisor, the organization holds the supervisor accountable for carrying them out - **accountability**.

3. Teaching example to explain how supervisors are responsible to higher management, employees, and co-workers:

Most of the supervisor's time is spent seeing to it that production requirements are met or customers receive the desired services. In many organizations, promotion to the supervisory position implies responsibility for meeting these requirements. Accountability is the monitoring and controlling part of responsibility. When the work unit is unable to fulfill goals and objectives, the supervisor is expected to take corrective action, such as requesting help, investigating problems or bottlenecks in the work, and moving staff to cover priority areas.

Examples of supervisory responsibilities where accountability is required include:

a. Staff performance to standards of quality and productivity
b. Conduct of staff relative to organizational requirements, such as courtesy in greeting customers, refraining from sexual harassment behavior, respect among co-workers, and so forth
c. Skill level of employees
d. Staffing levels
e. Absence of formal grievances by employees
f. General housekeeping in work area, such as the absence of clutter and unsafe conditions
g. General morale of employees in the work unit
h. General condition of equipment and materials used in the work unit

4. Exercise to explain how supervisors are responsible to higher management, employees, and co-workers:

The purpose of the following exercise is to have students evaluate a work situation related to supervisor accountability. This will give them an opportunity to check their understanding of the concept and evaluate their own attitudes toward accountability.

Copy the Case Study on page 1-17 of the Instructors Manual for each student. Have them work either in small groups or individually and answer the questions following the case study. Discuss their decisions with the whole class.

a. Should Terry be held accountable for the customer complaint and employee gripes? Why or why not?

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Suggested answer: Yes. Terry is responsible for meeting productivity and quality requirements for service to customers. He is also responsible for the general morale of his employees.

b. What suggestions can you make to Terry to help him be successful in his job?

Suggested answer: Terry needs to watch staffing more carefully, especially during busy periods. He should take corrective action to see that staff is moved or enlisted to busy times or places. He should also talk with the staff more often to find out what they need and what general problems may be forming in the department.

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Case Study

Is Terry Being Blamed Unfairly?

Terry was recently promoted to supervisor. Things were not going as smoothly as they should. In the past few days it seemed that the manager of the division was being unreasonable. She had talked to Terry about the performance of the work unit. There had been a customer complaint last week about the slowness of service. There were also a few gripes from employees about the way he treated them. Although he felt bad, he did not think he was really responsible for either situation. After all, at the time the complaining customer requested service they were very busy. And the gripes, they just liked to complain. What could he do about that? But since he wanted to succeed, Terry has asked you to help him out.

a. **Should Terry be held accountable for the customer complaint and employee gripes? Why or why not?**

b. **What suggestions can you make to Terry to help him be successful in his job?**

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Learning Objective 01-07: Describe the typical background of someone who is promoted to supervisor.

1. Teaching notes:

Most supervisors start out working in the department they now supervise.

- Because technical skills are relatively important for first-level managers, the person selected to be supervisor is often an employee with a superior grasp of the technical skills needed to perform well in the department.
- The person also might have more seniority than many other department employees.
- Good work habits and leadership skills are also reasons for selecting an employee to be a supervisor.
- Sometimes a company will hire a recent college graduate to be a supervisor, perhaps because the person has demonstrated leadership potential or a specialized skill that will help in the position.
    - Unfortunately, none of these bases for promotion or hiring guarantee a person knows how to supervise.

Becoming a supervisor marks a big change in a person's work life. All the changes are bound to lead to some anxiety.

- One way to combat the anxiety is to prepare for the job.
- A new supervisor can learn about management and supervision through books and observation.
- He or she can think about ways to carry out the role of supervisor.
- A supervisor can also strive to learn as much as possible about the organization, the department, and the job.
    - To see what awaits a new supervisor refer to Figure 1.4: accountability, focus on human relations skills, changed work relationships, focus on the group, and power and authority.

Once on the job, a supervisor needs to continue the learning process.

- Particularly in the early days on the job, a supervisor should take time to discuss goals with employees and observe their work habits.
    - A supervisor may learn that one or more employees had been candidates for the supervisor's job and therefore may be jealous.
    - One constructive approach that a supervisor might take to this problem is to acknowledge the other person's feelings, ask for the employee's support, and discuss his or her long-term goals.

To carry out their job, a supervisor needs not only knowledge but also power (the ability to do certain things) and authority (the right to do certain things).

- To acquire power upon assuming the job of supervisor, it may help to have the new supervisor's boss make an official announcement of the promotion.

A new supervisor should not rush to make changes in the department but instead should first

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understand how the department works and what employees expect.

- Making changes quickly and without seeking their input can alienate employees and put them on the defensive.
- The supervisor can build support for change by introducing it gradually after inviting suggestions where appropriate.
    - For more ideas on becoming a supervisor, see "Practical Advice for Supervisors: Becoming a Supervisor."
    - See also Self-Assessment 1.1: Is Supervising Right for You?
    - In addition, many chapters in this book provide ideas to help with the transition to supervisor.
        - Chapter 07 discusses the delegation of authority.
        - Chapter 14 covers the sources and types of power, along with more information about managing change.

2. Teaching example to describe the typical background of someone who is promoted to supervisor:

The following characteristics may lead to the promotion of an employee to a supervisory position:

- Demonstrates technical skills
- Demonstrates leadership skills or acts as informal leader
- Is hard working
- Is conscientious
- Is a good communicator
- Expresses interest in becoming a supervisor
- Is interested in getting ahead

3. Exercise to describe the typical background of someone who is promoted to supervisor (and the difference between the old and new role):

The purpose of this exercise is to guide students through the experience of changing roles from front-line employee to supervisor. This exercise also reinforces the supervisor's functions and skills.

Since many supervisors come from the employee group in a work unit, one of the major difficulties is the transition from one role to another. Expectations, attitudes, and behaviors are different for these two groups. Make the point by contrasting the front-line employee and the supervisor.

a. Make a list of employee behaviors, attitudes, and expectations. Ask students for input based on their own experience and stories they have heard about the way employees are.
b. Make a second list of supervisor behaviors, attitudes, and expectations. Whenever possible, match the employee list with the supervisor list. For example, if the employee list has an "8 to 5" work schedule, the supervisor's list should have an entry such as "before 8 and after 5."

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The following is an example of the lists:

Employees	**Supervisors**
Are told what to do	Tell others what to do
Focus on their job only	Oversee many jobs
Are paid by the hour	Are paid a salary
Are not paid for time off	Are paid for time off
Don't expect to take work home	Sometimes take work home
Are "one of the gang"	Are not "one of the gang"
Seldom worry about pleasing upper management	Must please upper management

c. Discuss the general responsibilities of an employee and supervisor. Point out especially how supervisors' expectations for themselves and others, attitudes, and behaviors differ from those of line workers and how that may cause some difficulties for new supervisors.
d. Incorporate the suggestions for smoothing the transition offered in the Practical Advice for Supervisors: Becoming a Supervisor discussion box in the text: set limits on your behavior, don't be a "rescuer," figure out how to measure success, communicate with everyone, be firm, and learn from others.

Learning Objective 01-08: Identify characteristics of a successful supervisor.

1. Teaching notes:

Figure 1.5 illustrates some characteristics of successful supervisors.

A successful supervisor has a *positive attitude.*

- When the supervisor's attitude toward work, the organization, and change required by modern trends is positive, employees are more likely to be satisfied with and interested in their work.

Successful supervisors are *loyal*.

- As a part of the management team, they must take actions that are best for the organization.
- This responsibility may include making decisions that are unpopular with employees.

Successful supervisors are *fair.*

- Supervisors who play favorites or behave inconsistently will lose the support and respect of their employees and not be able to lead effectively.
- Also, when supervisors make assignments and decisions on the basis of whom they like best, they will not necessarily make the assignments and decisions best suited to the organization.
- Another aspect of being fair is to follow the rules oneself.

Supervisors also need to be *good communicators.*

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- Employees and bosses alike depend on the supervisor to keep them informed of what is happening.
- Employees who receive clear guidance about what is expected of them will not only perform better but also be more satisfied with their jobs.
- Good communication also includes making contact with employees each day, and listening to what they have to say.
    - Chapter 10 takes an in-depth look at communication skills.

To be successful, supervisors must be *able to delegate,* that is, give their employees authority and responsibility to carry out activities.

- Since supervisors tend to have excellent technical skills, delegating may be a challenge.
- They may resist giving an assignment to an employee who may not carry it out as easily or as well as they, the supervisors, could do.
- Nevertheless, supervisors cannot do the work of the whole department. So, they must assign work to employees.
- Equally important, a supervisor should give employees credit for their accomplishments.
- This, in turn, makes the supervisor look good; the employees' successes show that the supervisor is able to select and motivate employees as well as delegate effectively.

Finally, a successful supervisor must *want the job.*

- People who prefer carrying out the technical skills of their field will probably be happier if they turn down an opportunity to become a supervisor.
- In contrast, people who enjoy the challenge of making plans and inspiring others to achieve goals are more likely to be effective supervisors.

2. Teaching examples to identify characteristics of a successful supervisor:

A list of characteristics of the successful supervisor is more realistic when coupled with an example. The following list provides examples of the characteristics:

a. *Positive attitude*: Employees often are critical of their own work as well as the work of others. They may also be critical of progress on new projects and programs. They will take clues from the supervisor, who can cast the outcomes in a positive or negative light. For example, a group of employees had been working to reduce a specific quality problem. Their effort resulted in less than they wanted to achieve. The supervisor helped them evaluate the outcome over the long run in both the number of errors and the cost savings, which were substantial. The savings for one year were $54,000! As a result, the group was anxious to continue working to achieve further improvements.

b. *Loyal*: A loss of sales orders meant a reduction of employees. Supervisors must go along with the reduction, keeping in mind that the organization has made a decision to ensure its survival. While the supervisors may not like the decision, as managers of the organization they are expected to carry out the mandate with the proper attitude and behavior.

c. *Fair*: Supervisors must follow the rules of the organization. Occasionally an employee may

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try to get special treatment for a personal situation. For example, a rule in the attendance policy states that any time taken off during regularly scheduled work hours will be counted as an incident against the attendance record and subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the policy. An employee indicates difficulty in getting a medical appointment later in the day without excessive waiting in the office. Could the supervisor bend the rule and allow the employee to go during work hours without counting it against the employee? While the supervisor may sympathize with the employee, to be fair to all employees and the organization the supervisor must enforce the rule.

d. *Good communicator*: Supervisors must keep their employees and bosses informed of what is happening and expectations for action. A situation where good communication is especially important is the orientation and training of new employees. New employees need greater detail in instructions and expectations for their performance. Supervisors must make sure employees have sufficient levels of skill and knowledge to carry out the work of the department.

e. *Able to delegate*: Supervisors must be able to assign work to others and resist doing work themselves because it is faster or easier than telling someone else how to do it. It is tempting to do the work when a new employee is assigned to the job. A better approach is to get another employee to help the new employee rather than for supervisors to do the job themselves. The supervisor's job is to see that the entire department has guidance and assistance. Doing the employee's job takes supervisors away from their own work.

f. *Want the job*: The job of the supervisor is not always easy. The supervisor who wants the job is more likely to stick with it through good and not-so-good times. Really wanting the job helps the supervisor do unpleasant tasks such as reducing the workforce.

3. Exercise to identify characteristics of a successful supervisor:

Students will understand the concepts better and will be more likely to remember the information if they practice the application of the material. Have students think of examples of each of the characteristics and share them with the class.

A method of getting students involved is to let them know that the instructor will be going around the class asking for one example from each of them. Give students several minutes to come up with examples. Then start the sharing by randomly asking students for their example of each characteristic.

Remember to be a good role model for the students by being *positively* reacting to them, *loyal* to the rules and norms of the organization, *fair* in selection, a *good communicator,* and *delegating* tasks to students.

III. Answers to Review and Discussion Questions

1. What are some ways that a supervisor's job is similar to those of managers at other levels?

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How does a supervisor's job differ from those of other managers?

A supervisor's job is similar to those of managers at other levels in that both of them carry out the functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling. A supervisor's job differs from those of other managers in that typically, supervisors spend most of their time leading and controlling, because they work directly with the employees who are producing or selling a product or providing support services. Planning, staffing, and organizing take up less of a supervisor's time. In contrast, higher-level managers are responsible for setting the overall direction for the organization; thus, they spend more time on planning and organizing.

2. **Imagine that you have just been promoted to supervisor of the cashiers in a supermarket. List specific technical, human relations, conceptual, and decision-making skills you think you might need to succeed at this job. How might you develop them continually to achieve the job of store manager?**

The list of skills that one would require to succeed in the job is as follows:

- Technical skills might include knowledge on how to use the cash register, procedures for punching the time clock, procedures for scheduling breaks, how to authorize a personal check, and the like.
- Human relations skills include the ability to inspire cashiers to process customers quickly and accurately, to schedule cashiers' breaks, vacations, and other time off satisfactorily, and to deal directly with customers when necessary.
- Conceptual skills might include understanding how the efficiency and attitude of cashiers affect the overall sales in the store.
- Decision-making skills might include determining when it is appropriate to authorize or decline a customer's personal check, when to call in more workers or open up an extra counter, how to assign baggers to certain registers, and so forth.

In order to continually develop his or her skills, the supervisor can undergo training programs and have feedback sessions with his or her superiors. The supervisor must continue his or her learning process.

3. **Identify whether each of the following skills relates most to task-related, people-related, or change-related activities.**

a. The ability to communicate well with one's manager: People-related
b. The ability to evaluate whether sales clerks are delivering polite and timely service: People and task related
c. The ability to plan a safety training program for the housekeeping staff: Task-related
d. The ability to involve employees in making good scheduling decisions to accommodate their vacation preferences: People-related
e. The ability to see how new technology can help the department meet its goals: Change-related
f. The ability to teach an employee how to machine a part without unnecessary changes in the setup of equipment: Task-related

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4. **Population trends suggest that the workforce will become increasingly diverse. What are some advantages of greater diversity? What challenges does it pose to the supervisor?**

   Diversity in culture and experience brings diversity in ideas for improvements and ways to solve problems. The growing diversity enables supervisors to draw on a greater variety of talent and gain insights into more perspectives than ever before.

   Supervisors may be uncomfortable dealing with individuals perceived as different. Stereotypes may negatively affect the perception of employee skills and ability. Supervisors may have to learn more about specific group behavior and attitudes. Also, they may have to deal with more discrimination in the work place. That is, other employees may also treat people who are perceived as different in negative ways. Supervisors must be aware of their own perceptions and behaviors as well as eliminate unfavorable behavior of others in the department.

5. **What are the basic functions of the supervisor? On which functions do supervisors spend most of their time?**

   The basic functions of the supervisors are planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling. Supervisors spend most of their time leading and controlling because they work directly with the employees who are producing or selling a product or providing support services. Planning, staffing, and organizing take up less of a supervisor's time.

6. **What responsibilities do supervisors have to each of these groups?**

   a. **Higher management:** Supervisors are responsible for carrying out the duties assigned to them by higher-level managers. This includes giving managers timely and accurate information for planning. They should look for ways their group can contribute to achieving the organization's larger goals. They also must keep their managers informed about the department's performance. Supervisors are expected to serve as a kind of bridge, between employees and management. Thus, their responsibilities include building morale and carrying employee concerns to the relevant managers.

   b. **The employees they supervise:** Supervisors are responsible for giving their employees clear instructions and making sure they understand their jobs. They must look for problems and correct them before employees' performance deteriorates further. They also need to treat their employees fairly and speak up for their best interest to upper management.

   c. **Co-workers in other departments:** Supervisors should respond promptly when a co-worker in another department requests information. They should share ideas that will help the organization's departments work together to accomplish common goals. And supervisors should listen with an open mind when co-workers in other departments make suggestions about improving the way things are done.

7. **Emma has just been promoted to an office manager position in a small real estate office. Some of the people she will supervise are her former peers; she is aware that one of them also applied for the office manager's job. How can Emma prepare for her new position?**

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What might be the best way to approach the co-worker who did not get the manager's job?

Emma should learn about her subordinates. To get to know them, she can talk to her own manager and read performance appraisals, but the most reliable sources of information are the subordinates themselves. She should take time to discuss goals with her subordinates and observe their work habits.

With regard to the co-worker who did not get the manager's job, she can acknowledge the co-worker's feelings, ask for the co-worker's support, and discuss his or her long-term goals.

8. **What are some ways a new supervisor can use power and authority effectively?**

   To acquire power upon assuming the job of supervisor, the new supervisor should ask his or her boss make an official announcement of the promotion at a meeting of the employees. There the supervisor can take the opportunity to state his or her expectations, desire to work as a team, and interest in hearing about work-related problems.

   A new supervisor should not rush to make changes in the department but instead should first understand how the department works and what employees expect. Making changes quickly and without seeking their input can alienate employees and put them on the defensive. The supervisor can build support for change by introducing it gradually after inviting suggestions when appropriate.

9. **List the characteristics of a good supervisor. In addition to the characteristics mentioned in the chapter, add any others you believe are important. Draw on your own experiences as an employee and/or supervisor.**

   A good supervisor has a positive attitude, is loyal, is fair, is a good communicator, and is able to delegate.

IV. Skill-Building – *Meeting the Challenge*

This exercise asks students to reflect back to the opening case concerning the supervision of remote workers. The exercise asks students to consider any work experiences they may already have had or would like to have.

The students are asked if they would enjoy working remotely, away from supervisor's eyes, or would they rather be on site, making daily connections with coworkers and people in other parts of the organization.

Students should form groups and within the groups form two teams, one in favor of working remotely and one in favor of working on site. Each group should come up with a list of five actions they would like their supervisor to take on a regular basis. Compare lists. If they are very different, discuss why.

Problem-Solving Case: *Refereeing the Referees of the Atlantic Coast Conference*

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Suggested Answers to Case

1. **Which supervisory skills would be most important to you in this situation and why?**

   Answers will vary but may include: human relations skills in handling questions from referees and coaches, and in conducting training meetings and performance appraisals. Critical to carrying out these tasks are technical expertise and decision-making skills. Planning work schedules is a conceptual skill.

2. **What types of responsibilities does Clougherty undertake?**

   Clougherty keeps his staff informed and up to date, is accessible to those under his supervision, conducts evaluations of the referee's progress, keeps in touch with his industry, is able to perform the duties of those he supervises, follows proper hiring practices, knows the law as it applies to his job, and adheres to the workplace rules and regulations.

3. **How important do you think Clougherty's experience as a referee was in preparing him to be a supervisor? Other than that work experience, what experiences and qualities do you think would be important for someone to succeed in Clougherty's job? Do those experiences and qualities apply to most supervisory jobs?**

   Clougherty's experience is vital to his preparation in his role as a supervisor over ACC's officials. The case suggests that Clougherty is fair and is also a good communicator. Other important qualities that would be important for someone to succeed in Clougherty's job would include a positive attitude, loyalty, the ability to delegate, and the desire for the job. Experiences and these qualities apply to most if not all supervisory jobs.

Assessing Yourself: *Is Supervising Right for You?*

This self-quiz lists a few questions that will help students understand if supervising is right for them. Ask them to give themselves 1 point for each "Yes" as the answer. If they score 6 or more, it indicates that they might be happy as a supervisor.

Class Skills Exercise: *Recognizing Management Skills*

This class exercise consists of different situations where students are asked to identify which management function would they rely on in each situation.

1. Leading and Controlling
2. Staffing and Controlling
3. Planning, Organizing, and Controlling
4. Planning
5. Leading and Controlling

Building Supervision Skills: *Defining Your Role as Supervisor*

This exercise can be used in one of the following ways:

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1. As a pre-class assignment that students bring to class, completed and ready to discuss.
2. As an in-class exercise used at an appropriate point in the discussion to get the students involved in understanding the five supervisory functions.

Objectives

1. Apply supervisory function definitions to supervisory situations.
2. Understand how the supervisory functions relate to one another and often overlap.

Answers

1. P (determining how to meet goals)
   L (getting employees to do what is expected of them)
   O (assigning work)
   C (monitoring performance and making needed corrections)
2. S (developing employees will be a priority with this group)
   L (looks like it will be a challenge to get these employees to do what is expected of them)
   C (monitoring performance babysitting)
3. S (developing Andy)
4. P (setting a goal of implementing the change and determining how to make the change)
   O (deciding who will do what to make the change work)
   L (getting the employees to accept the change)
5. P (determining budget needs)
6. S (finding quality employees)
   C (monitoring performance of new hire and making needed corrections--discipline and eventually discharge)

Building Supervision Skills: *Leading a Team*

1. Technical, conceptual
2. Technical, human relations
3. Technical, conceptual, decision making

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