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Professional Development



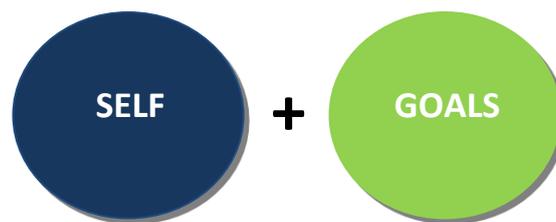
White Paper

**What are Supervision and
Team Leading Skills?**

What are Supervision and Team Leading Skills?

Supervisions skills are the tools and behaviours that should be adopted by first line managers, or team leaders, at the point at which they take on their first managerial role. They include the skills required during the transition from managing self to managing others.

This first step on the Leadership ladder requires a significant psychological shift where individuals move from:



to



The individual needs to adapt his mindset so that his focus is no longer on how he can achieve his personal workplace objectives, but rather how he can communicate objectives set by his new manager to his new team in a way that they understand them and are motivated to deliver them. It may take some time for him to understand the new role and the responsibilities attached to it, therefore this training should be planned in advance and implemented early on in the new supervisory role.

This transition might require an individual to build, for example, communication and delegation skills and begin to adopt the behaviours of a leader – assertiveness, decisiveness and team motivation.

According to a survey carried out in the US in 2010 by Career Builder ‘...26% of managers said they weren’t ready to become a leader when they started managing others... and 58% said they didn’t receive any management training...’.

Recent research from the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) found that 'Just 18% of employers expect managers to have management training before being appointed', meaning most newly appointed managers have no prior training.

Based on the figures above, it appears that many new supervisors or first line managers are put into their new role unprepared for and possibly even unaware of the demands it will have on them. Why does this matter?

Are Supervision Skills important in the workplace?

The Supervisor or First Line Manager is the one person likely to have the more influence on the day to day working life of the team than any other manager. How they approach their role, therefore, will have a profound impact upon the performance of the team and thus the organisation as a whole.

According to an article entitled 'The Rise of the Informal People Manager' by the Corporate Executive Board, an effective people manager has the potential to improve employee performance by 25%, improve employee engagement by 52% and employee retention by a substantial 40%.

The key to being an effective supervisor or team leader lies in their ability to communicate effectively:

- ✦ the organizational vision must be understood by all and team focus and effort must be directed on the objectives that will realise that vision
- ✦ the team feel must feel motivated and inspired to achieve because of the words and enthusiasm conveyed by the supervisor
- ✦ the supervisor can provide constructive feedback to the team as a whole and individuals within it, addressing any areas for development

Listening skills must be developed to ensure that the Supervisor can:

- ✦ recognise and address the mood of the team and report this back to his line manager
- ✦ navigate and deal with tensions and negativity amongst the team
- ✦ identify and reward successes and strengths

Assertiveness in a new supervisory role is essential in order that:

- ✦ the new leader can carefully set himself apart from his former peers
- ✦ get the balance right between delegation and control

- ✦ difficult situations are dealt with efficiently

The new team leader will also need to feel confident in their new role particularly when;

- ✦ overcoming barriers and obstacles
- ✦ meeting new challenges
- ✦ reporting back to the new line manager on progress
- ✦ working with the manager to achieve goals
- ✦ establishing a leadership style

Are team leading Skills essential for a new-in-role Supervisor?

According to the Corporate Leadership Council, *Driving Performance and Retention Through Employee Engagement - Executive Summary, 2004*;

'...A good manager has the potential to increase an employee's commitment to their job by 34%, yet has the power to increase emotional commitment to the organization by 38% and to the Team by an astounding 47%...'

Bad supervisors or first-line managers cause higher staff turnover rates, an increase in unauthorised absence and lead generally to a disgruntled team.

In summary, if your organisation wants new managers at supervisory level to make a positive impact on organizational goals by enhancing the performance of their team – training is going to be essential.

Accredited training can also be sought, such as an ILM Level 3 Award in Leadership and Development which addresses all of the skills and behaviours mentioned above.

Where can I learn more?

- See our Related Article – The Leadership Pipeline
- Visit our [ILM Level 3 Award in Leadership & Development](#) course page

Sources

Career Builder Survey, www.careerbuilder.com. The nationwide survey was conducted among more than 2,480 U.S. employers and 3,910 U.S. workers between November 15 and December 2, 2010.

Business Wire, September 2007, 'Learning and Development Roundtable Identifies New Strategies for Improving Frontline Management and Performance'.

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