

Foundations of Supervision

SECTION OUTLINE

- 1 SUPERVISION IN A DIVERSE WORKPLACE
- 2 MAKING SOUND AND CREATIVE DECISIONS
- 3 IMPROVING COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- 4 MOTIVATING TODAY'S EMPLOYEES



Supervision in a Diverse Workplace

Learning objectives

After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Define supervision.
2. Describe the work of a supervisor.
3. Present the types of skills necessary to perform the job of supervision.
4. State the key reasons for supervisory success.
5. Describe diversity in the workplace.
6. Explain the glass ceiling.



Supervision Dilemma

Global Insurance is a worldwide company with several thousand employees. Jane Harris and John Lewis are employees in one of the company's claims-processing offices. Both have been with the company for approximately six years. This morning, their department head, Les Thomas, gave Jane and John a big shock. He asked both of them if they would like to become supervisors in the claims-processing office. Les explained that two of the supervisors in the department were being promoted and that he

needed two new supervisors. Les also stated that he felt that Jane and John would make good supervisors because they knew the job and knew the people in the department. Les asked both of them to think it over and let him know their decisions the next day. Later, John saw Jane at lunch and they began discussing the possibilities of the new jobs. However, both of them agreed that they had never given much thought to being a supervisor. Both wondered just what that would entail.

What Is Supervision?

1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Supervision is the first level of management in the organization and is concerned with encouraging the members of a work unit to contribute positively toward accomplishing the organization's goals and objectives. This means that the supervisor does not do the operative work but sees that it is accomplished through the efforts of others.

Although the definition is simple, the job of supervision is quite complex. The supervisor must learn to make good decisions, communicate well with people, make proper work assignments, delegate, plan, train people, motivate people, appraise performance, and deal with various specialists in other departments. The varied work of the supervisor is extremely difficult to master. Yet mastery of supervision is vital to organizational success because supervisors are the management persons that most employees see and deal with every day.

Who Are Supervisors?

The need for supervision dates back to biblical times. When Moses was attempting to lead the people of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land, his father-in-law, Jethro, advised him as follows:

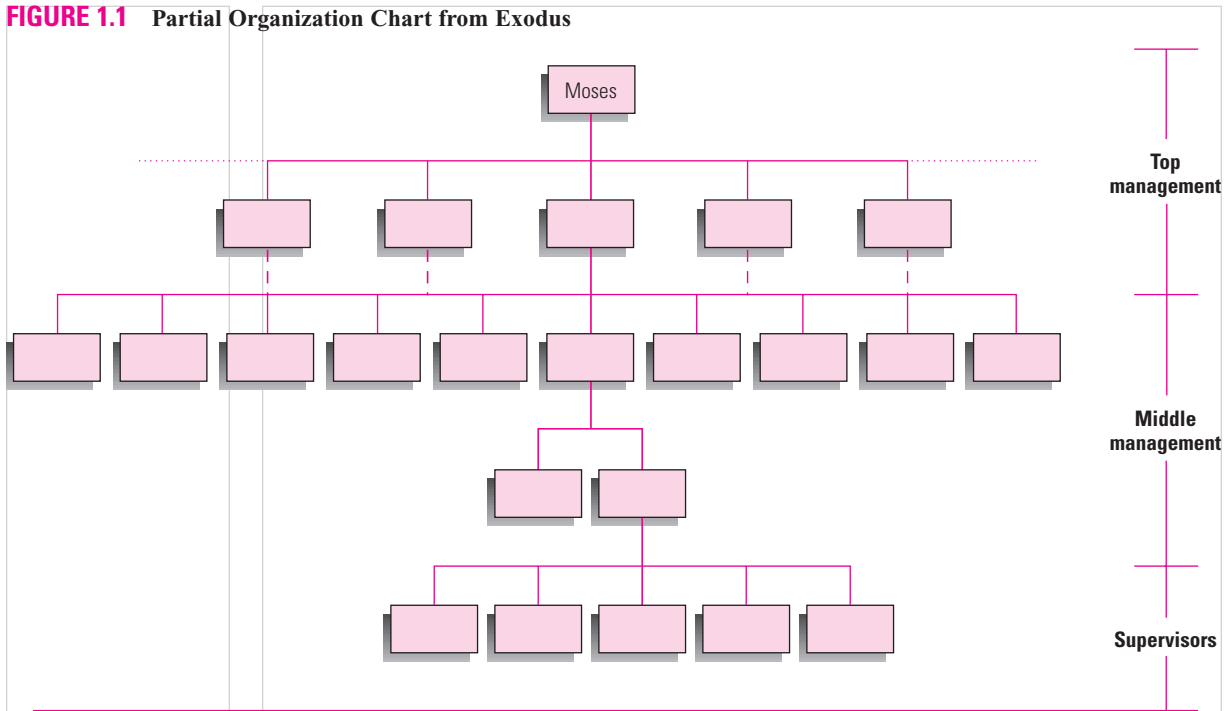
Find some capable, godly, honest men who hate bribes and appoint them as judges, 1 judge for each 1,000 people; he in turn will have 10 judges under him, each in charge of 100; and under each of them will be 2 judges, each responsible for the affairs of 50 people; and each of these will have 5 judges beneath him, each counseling 10 persons.

Figure 1.1 shows the form of organization suggested to Moses. It contains the three levels of management that exist in most organizations. The top management of business organizations usually includes the chairman of the board, the president, and the senior vice presidents. This level of management establishes the goals and objectives of the organization and the policies necessary to achieve them. Middle management includes all employees below the top-management level who manage other managers. A supervisor's boss is normally classified as a middle manager. Middle management develops the departmental objectives and procedures necessary to achieve the organizational goals and objectives.

The third level of management includes supervisors. Supervisors manage operative employees—those who physically produce an organization's goods and services. Many

Figure 1.1

FIGURE 1.1 Partial Organization Chart from Exodus



names are used to describe the people who supervise. These names vary from industry to industry. Figure 1.2 lists some of the names given to supervisory jobs in different types of organizations. Regardless of the name, a supervisor is the manager who serves as the link between operative employees and all other managers.

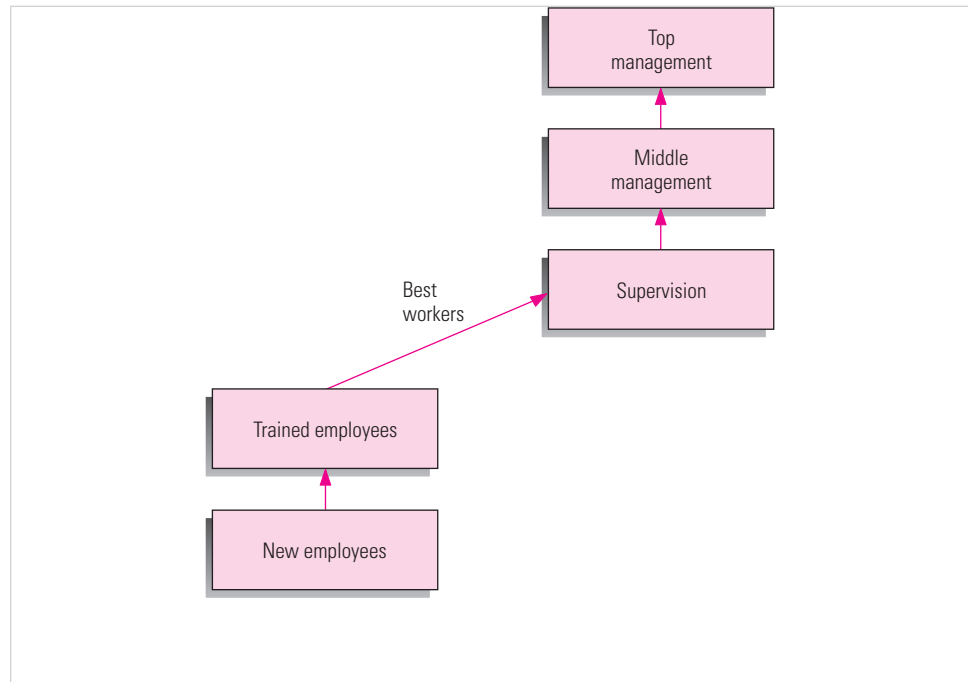
Figure 1.2

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Taft-Hartley Labor Act contain conditions that determine whether a person is considered to be a supervisor. The FLSA states that a person is considered to be a member of management if the person is paid on a salary basis rather than an hourly basis and if the primary duties of the person are administrative, professional, or supervisory in nature. The Taft-Hartley Labor Act provides two guidelines in determining whether an employee is a member of management: (1) an employee is paid a specified base salary that is supposed to indicate managerial or professional status and (2) the duties or responsibilities of the job are associated with managerial or professional work. Generally, such duties require the employee to exercise judgment for a group of employees.

FIGURE 1.2
Supervisory Job
Titles

Assistant cafeteria manager	Records and documents supervisor
Assistant credit supervisor	Records and materials supervisor
Crew leader	Shift supervisor
Employment supervisor	Supervisor for secretarial services
Head nurse	Supervisor of budget and cost control
Lead person	Supervisor of word processing
Meter routing supervisor	Training and safety supervisor
Office manager	Training supervisor
Powerhouse mechanic foreman	Utility foreman
Receiving and warehousing supervisor	Welding foreman

FIGURE 1.3
Progression of Jobs
into Supervision



Sources of Supervisory Talent

The vast majority of new supervisors are promoted from the ranks of operative employees. Employees with good technical skills and good work records are the ones who are normally selected by management for supervisory jobs.

However, it should be noted that good technical skills and a good work record do not necessarily make a person a good supervisor. In fact, sometimes these attributes can act adversely to productive supervisory practices. As will be seen later in this chapter, other skills are also required to be an effective supervisor. Officers of labor unions are sometimes chosen for supervisory jobs. Because union officers are elected, it can be assumed that the voting employees view them as having some leadership abilities. Thus, they are a source of supervisory talent. Another source is new college graduates. Many organizations place such graduates in supervisory jobs after a brief training period.

Figure 1.3 shows a normal progression into supervision. A person who gets into supervision does not necessarily stop progressing. It is possible to rise from supervision to the top of the organization. In fact, developing the skills required for supervision prepares a person for higher levels of management.

Figure 1.3

The Functions of Supervision

The complex work of supervision is often categorized into five areas, called the **functions of management** or the **functions of supervision**. These functions are planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling.

Planning involves determining the most effective means for achieving the work that is to be close by the work groups. Generally, planning includes three steps:

1. Determining the present situation. Assess such things as the present condition of the equipment, the attitude of employees, and the availability of materials.

3

LEARNING
OBJECTIVES

2. Determining the objectives. The objectives for a work unit are usually established by higher levels of management.
3. Determining the most effective way of attaining the objectives. Given the present situation, what actions are necessary to reach the objectives?

Everyone follows these three steps in making personal plans. However, the supervisor makes plans, not for a single person, but for a group of people. This complicates the entire process.

Organizing involves distributing the work among the employees in the work group and arranging the work so that it flows smoothly. The supervisor carries out the work of organizing through the general structure established by higher levels of management. Thus, the supervisor functions within a general structure and is usually given specific work assignments from higher levels of management. The supervisor then sees that the specific work assignments are done.

Staffing is concerned with obtaining and developing good people. Since supervisors accomplish their work through others, staffing is an extremely important function.

Leading involves directing and channeling employee behavior toward the accomplishment of work objectives and providing a workplace where people can be motivated to accomplish the work objectives.

Controlling determines how well the work is being done compared with what was planned. Basically, this involves measuring actual performance against planned performance and taking any necessary corrective action.

Figure 1.4 indicates the relative amounts of time that each level of management devotes to the functions of management. Note that supervisors spend the largest portions of their time on the leading and controlling functions. The other functions are not necessarily less important, but they usually take less of the supervisor's time. The supervisor must perform all of the functions in order to be successful. For instance, organizing is difficult without a plan. Good employees obtained through staffing will not continue to work in a poorly planned, poorly organized work environment. Furthermore, it is very difficult to lead people if planning, organizing, and staffing are not done properly. Thus, the five functions of supervision can be viewed as links in a chain. For the supervisor to be successful, each of these links must be strong. (See Figure 1.5.) It is also important to remember that the supervisory functions do not involve a sequential process, but generally occur simultaneously.

The supervisor's work can also be examined in terms of the types of skills required. Four basic types of skills have been identified:

1. **Technical skills** refer to knowledge about such things as machines, processes, and methods of production.
2. **Human relations skills** refer to knowledge about human behavior and the ability to work well with people.

Figure 1.4

Figure 1.5

FIGURE 1.4
Relative Amounts of Time Spent on the Functions of Management by the Three Levels of Management

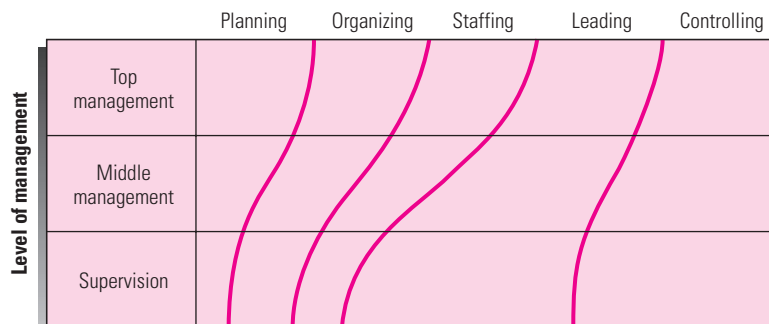
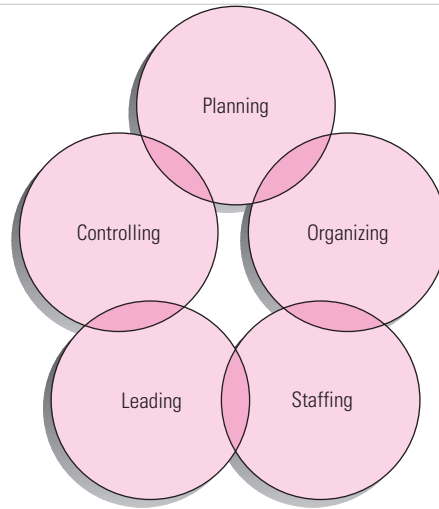


FIGURE 1.5
The Chain of Supervisory Functions



3. **Administrative skills** refer to knowledge about the organization and how it works—the planning, organizing, and controlling functions of supervision.
4. **Decision-making** and **problem-solving skills** refer to the ability to analyze information and objectively reach a decision.

It is generally agreed that supervisors in most organizations need a higher level of technical, human relations, and decision-making skills than of administrative skills. The mix of skills needed changes as a person moves up the managerial ladder. Figure 1.6 illustrates this concept. This does not imply that a supervisor needs more technical skills than a top manager, but that a supervisor needs more technical skills relative to human behavior, administrative, and decision-making skills. A supervisor who is ambitious and wishes to move up in the organization must develop all four types of skills.

Supervisors are successful for many reasons. However, five characteristics are important keys to supervisory success:

1. *Ability and willingness to delegate.* Most supervisors are promoted from operative jobs and have been accustomed to doing the work themselves. An often difficult, and yet essential, skill that such supervisors must develop is the ability or willingness to delegate work to others.

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

4 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

FIGURE 1.6
Mix of Skills Required at Different Management Levels

	Technical	Human relations	Administrative	Decision making
Top management	High	Low	Low	Low
Middle management	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
Supervision	Low	High	High	High

Figure 1.6

2. *Proper use of authority.* Some supervisors let their newly acquired authority go to their heads. It is sometimes difficult to remember that the use of authority alone does not get the support and cooperation of employees. Learning when not to use authority is often as important as learning when to use it.
3. *Setting a good example.* Supervisors must always remember that the work group looks to them to set the example. Employees expect fair and equitable treatment from their supervisors. Too many supervisors play favorites and treat employees inconsistently. Government legislation has attempted to reduce this practice in some areas, but the problem is still common.
4. *Recognizing the change in role.* People who have been promoted into supervision must recognize that their role has changed and that they are no longer one of the gang. They must remember that being a supervisor may require unpopular decisions. Supervisors are the connecting link between the other levels of management and the operative employees and must learn to represent both groups.
5. *Desire for the job.* Many people who have no desire to be supervisors are promoted into supervision merely because of their technical skills. Regardless of one's technical skills, the desire to be a supervisor is necessary for success in supervision. That desire encourages a person to develop the other types of skills necessary in supervision—human relations, administrative, and decision-making skills.

The five characteristics discussed above are not the only ones necessary for supervisory success, but they are certainly some of the most important.

The Changing Nature of the Supervisor's Environment

Anyone who reads a newspaper recognizes that rapid changes are occurring in lifestyles, resources, information availability, and the work environment. These changes influence the supervisor. This section reviews some of these changes and examines their impact on the supervisor.

Changes in Information Availability

Because of the increasing sophistication of communication systems and the rapid increase in the use of computers, new data and information are being provided at an accelerating rate. For example:

- Access to the Internet provides a wide array of information that previously was unavailable and/or difficult to obtain.
- Cell phones, e-mail, and teleconferencing enhance the opportunities for improved communications within businesses.

The rapid increase in information availability increases technological change. Increases in information availability and technological change require supervisors to have increased technical skills. Furthermore, these changes require more skilled and trained employees. This then increases the importance of the supervisor's role in training. Higher levels of skill and training require new approaches to motivation and leadership. Thus, the supervisor needs more skill in the human relations area.

Changes in Outlook toward the Work Environment

Some forecasters predict that there will be more emphasis on the quality of work life in the future. The factors that can improve the quality of work life include:

1. Safe and healthy working conditions.
2. Opportunity to use and develop individual capabilities.

FIGURE 1.7
Median Ages of the Labor Force, by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin, Selected Historical Years and Projected 2010

Source: "Labor Force," *Monthly Labor Review*, November 2001, p. 36.

Group	1962	1980	1990	2000	2010
Total	40.5	34.6	36.6	39.3	40.6
Men	40.5	35.1	36.7	39.3	40.6
Women	40.4	33.9	36.4	39.3	40.6
White	40.9	34.8	36.8	39.7	41.3
Black	(¹)	33.3	34.9	37.3	37.7
Asian and other ²	(¹)	33.8	36.5	37.8	38.7
Hispanic origin ³	(⁴)	30.7	33.2	34.9	36.4
White non-Hispanic	(⁴)	35.0	37.0	40.4	42.2

¹ Data not available before 1972.
² The "Asian and other" group includes (1) Asians and Pacific Islanders and (2) American Indians and Alaska Natives. The historic data are derived by subtracting "black" and "white" from the total; projections are made directly.
³ Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.
⁴ Data not available before 1980.

3. Opportunity for personal and professional growth.
4. Work schedules, career demands, and travel requirements that do not regularly take up family and leisure time.
5. The right to personal privacy, free speech, equitable treatment, and due process.

Because some of these factors fall within the scope of supervision, changes affecting them will have a direct impact on the supervisor's job.

One of the more significant changes in today's environment is the increasing diversity of the American population. The latest demographic data show that the United States is becoming older and more diverse. Figure 1.7 shows the median age of the labor force by sex, race, and Hispanic origin for selected years and projected to 2010. Figure 1.8 shows the projected population by race to the year 2050. It is interesting to note that by 2010 Hispanics will have grown to be the largest ethnic group.

Diversity means including people in the workforce of different genders, races, religions, nationalities, ethnic groups, age groups, and physical abilities. Compared with a workforce that historically consisted of white males, today's workforce is diverse, and this diversity is projected to increase.

Another dimension of diversity is related to the increasing globalization of many companies. As companies become more global, diversity must be defined in global and not just Western terms. Defining diversity in global terms means looking at all people and

Changes in Demographics

What Is Diversity?

Figure 1.7
 Figure 1.8

FIGURE 1.8
Projected Population of the United States, by Demographic Group: 2010 to 2050

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004, "U.S. Interim Projections by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin," <http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/usinterimproj/> Internet Release Date: March 18, 2004.

Demographic Group	Total % of Population					% Change from 2010 to 2050
	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	
White alone	79.3	77.6	75.8	73.9	72.1	-9.08%
Black alone	13.1	13.5	13.9	14.3	14.6	+11.45%
Asian alone	4.6	5.4	6.2	7.1	8.0	+42.5%
Hispanic (of any race)	15.5	17.8	20.1	22.3	24.4	+57.42%
All other races*	3.0	3.5	4.1	4.7	5.3	+76.67%
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	

* Includes American Indian and Alaska Native alone. Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, and two or more races.

SUPERVISION ILLUSTRATION 1-1

DIVERSITY A WINNING COMBINATION FOR UPS

“At UPS, it’s not where you’re from or what you look like, it’s how much you care and how good you are at your job,” says Hugo Parades, UPS District Manager, who is responsible for almost 4,000 employees and thousands of customers. Evidence of UPS’s commitment to diversity is widespread in the firm. Approximately one-third of UPS’s 325,000 employees are minorities, and 21 percent are women. Diversity is prevalent on all levels, too 27 percent of the firm’s officials and managers are minorities and women. Senior Vice President Calvin Darden, who is head of U.S. operations and is rumored as being in line to become CEO, is African-American.

Not only is the company committed to diversity within the firm, it also has a Supplier Diversity Program that encourages

small, minority, and women-owned businesses—resulting in more than \$100 million in purchases from these suppliers. The firm’s customers are international and also reflect the firm’s commitment to diversity.

Diversity within the organization has paid off for UPS: consistently ranked as one of *Fortune*’s “50 Best Companies for Minorities,” UPS is also ranked 55th on *Fortune*’s list of America’s top 500 companies. Its steady \$30 billion in annual revenue and solid stock price reflect how diversity within a large company creates winning results.

Source: “Best Companies for Minorities,” *Fortune*, July 8, 2002; www.pressroom.ups.com.

everything that makes them different from one another, as well as the things that make them similar. Differentiating factors often go beyond race and language and may include such things as values and customs.

A multicultural workplace presents challenges for both employees and supervisors. For example, religious holidays, which are celebrated at different times throughout the year by Muslims, Christians, Jews, and other religious groups, have the potential to be a source of conflict among employees. Supervisors need to be sensitive to the needs of their employees when it comes to these holidays. On the other hand, employees should be responsible about arranging to take these days off.

Opportunities and Challenges of Diversity

What challenges and contributions does the increasingly diverse workforce present? From an overall viewpoint, organizations must get away from the tradition of fitting employees into a single corporate mold. Everyone will not look and act the same. Organizations must create new human resource policies to explicitly recognize and respond to the unique needs of individual employees.

Greater diversity will create certain specific challenges but also make some important contributions. Communication problems are certain to occur, including misunderstandings among employees and managers as well as the need to translate verbal and written materials into several languages. Solutions to these problems will necessitate additional training involving work in basic skills such as writing and problem solving. An increase in organizational factionalism will require that increasing amounts of time be dedicated to dealing with special-interest and advocacy groups.

In addition to creating the above challenges, greater diversity presents new opportunities. Diversity contributes to creating an organization culture that is more tolerant of different behavioral styles and wider views. This often leads to better business decisions. Another potential payoff is a greater responsiveness to diverse groups of customers.

The increasing diversification of the workforce is fact. Learning to effectively manage a diverse workforce should be viewed as an investment in the future. Supervision Illustration 1-1 describes diversity at UPS.

SUPERVISION ILLUSTRATION 1–2

BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING

Ken Chenault
CEO, American Express
Brenda Gaines
President, Dairners Club
North America

Pamela Thomas Graham
President and CEO, CNBC
Robert Johnson
CEO, BET

Stanley O'Neal
COO, Merrill Lynch
Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
United States of America

Oprah Winfrey
Chairperson and CEO
Harpo, Inc.
Meg Whitman
President and CEO
EBay

Source: Annual reports and other public sources.

Glass Ceiling

One of the most significant issues facing women and minorities in management is the **glass ceiling**—a reference to a level within the managerial hierarchy beyond which very few women and minorities advance. Much emphasis is expected to be placed by both the government and business during the next decade on breaking this glass ceiling. Supervision Illustration 1–2 lists the names and positions of people who have broken the glass ceiling.

Illustration
1–2

Supervision: Key Link to Productivity

Successful supervision requires the knowledge of, and ability to use, a multitude of skills. The primary measure used in determining a supervisor's success or failure is the productivity of the supervisor's work unit. This book is designed to provide the skills necessary for successful supervision. Practice in applying these skills can be gained by answering the discussion questions, studying the incidents described at the end of each chapter, and completing the exercises also provided at the end of each chapter.

This book is organized into six basic sections:

- Section I Foundations of Supervision
- Section II Contemporary Issues
- Section III Planning and Organizing Skills
- Section IV Staffing Skills
- Section V Leadership Skills
- Section VI Controlling Skills

Section I—Foundations of Supervision—is designed to develop a foundation for the development of supervisory skills. Understanding the job of supervision in a division workplaces making sound and creative decisions, improving communication skills, and motivating today's employees. These should provide a necessary foundation for studying the skills of supervision.

Section II—Contemporary Issues—is concerned with managing change and coping with stress. This section also discusses ethics and organizational culture.

Section III—Planning and Organizing Skills—analyzes the supervisor's role in planning, organizing, and delegating work. Understanding the nature and importance of both formal and informal work groups is also discussed. Finally, the important issue of time management is discussed.

SOLUTION TO THE SUPERVISION DILEMMA

By studying this chapter, Jane and John have learned that supervision is the first level of management in an organization and is concerned with encouraging the members of a work unit to contribute positively toward accomplishing the organization's goals. They have learned what work a supervisor performs. Planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling (pp. 5–6) are the five forms of work that a supervisor must perform. They have also learned that four basic types of skills are required to do the work

of supervision (p. 0). These are technical skills, human relations skills, administrative skills, and decision-making and problem-solving skills. Finally, they have learned five reasons why supervisors are successful (p. 8). If they are to be good supervisors, they must understand the work of supervision, master the skills necessary to perform that work, and consistently apply the elements necessary for supervisory success.

Section IV—Staffing Skills—examines the supervisor's role in obtaining and developing good people. Topics such as understanding equal employment opportunity, and counseling employees are discussed.

Section V—Leadership Skills—discusses human behavior and how a supervisor must have the ability to work well with people. Leading employees, handling conflict, appraising and recording performance, and labor relations are discussed in this section.

Section VI—Controlling Skills—describes the supervisor's role in determining how well the work is being done compared with what was planned. Topics such as supervisory control and quality; improving productivity through cost control; and safety and accident prevention are all described in detail.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to give the reader a clear understanding of what supervision involves. The chapter also discusses several reasons why supervisors are successful.

1. *Define supervision.* Supervision is defined in this book as the first level of management in the organization and is concerned with encouraging the members of a work unit to contribute positively toward accomplishing the organization's goals and objectives.
2. *Describe the work of a supervisor.* The work of a supervisor is often categorized into five areas: planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling. Planning involves determining the most effective means for achieving the work of the unit. Organizing involves distributing the work among the employees in the work group and arranging the work so that it flows smoothly. Staffing is concerned with obtaining and developing good people. Leading involves directing and channeling employee behavior toward the accomplishment of work objectives. Controlling determines how well the work is being done compared with what was planned.
3. *Present the types of skills necessary to perform the job of supervision.* Four basic types of skills have been identified. Technical skills refer to knowledge about such things as machines, processes, and methods of production. Human relations skills refer to knowledge about human behavior and the ability to work well with people. Administrative skills refer to knowledge about the organization and how it works. Decision-making and problem-solving skills refer to the ability to analyze information and objectively reach a decision.
4. *State the key reasons for supervisory success.* Five key reasons for supervisory success are ability and willingness to delegate, the proper use of authority, setting a good example, recognizing the change in role, and desire for the job.
5. *Describe diversity in the workplace.* Diversity means including people in the workplace of different genders, races, religions, nationalities, ethnic groups, age groups, and physical abilities.
6. *Explain the glass ceiling.* The glass ceiling refers to a level within the organizational hierarchy beyond which very few women and minorities advance.

Review Questions

1. What is supervision?
2. What are three general levels of management?
3. Give five names (or job titles) of supervisors.
4. Name three sources that organizations can use when seeking to fill supervisory positions.
5. What are the five functions of management that a supervisor performs?
6. Outline the four classifications of skills necessary to do supervisory work.
7. Identify five characteristics that make supervisors successful.
8. What is the impact of the following changes on supervision?
 - a. Changes in information availability.
 - b. Changes in outlook toward the work environment.
 - c. Changes in demographics.
9. Describe diversity.
10. Explain the glass ceiling.

Skill-Building Questions

1. “A good supervisor in a manufacturing plant could be a good supervisor in a bank.” Discuss.
2. Do you think that supervision can be learned through books and study or only through experience? Why?
3. Do you think that the best worker also makes the best supervisor? Why or why not?
4. “A good supervisor should be able to do any job that he or she supervises better than any of the operative employees.” Discuss your views on this statement.

Additional Readings

Dimitrijevic, Alexander, “Climbing the Corporate Ladder,” *Supervision*, November 2004, pp. 8–12.

Fracaro, Ken, “Modern Management Practices,” *Supervision*, October 2004, pp. 3–6.

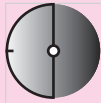
Pollock, Ted, “Tips for Business Success,” *Supervision*, December 2004, pp. 17–21.

Protch, Orest, “The Dynamics of Diversity Supervision,” *Supervision*, October 2002, pp. 14–16

Ramsey, Robert D., “Career Stages for Supervisors: Where Do You Fit In,” *Supervision*, November 2002, pp. 16–18.

Stanley, T. L., “Understanding Management’s Progress,” *Supervision*, November 2004, pp. 12–16.

Weiss, W. H., “Managing Effectively and Efficiently,” *Supervision*, December 2004, pp. 17–21.



SKILL-BUILDING APPLICATIONS

Incident 1–1

Promotion into Supervision

Roy Thomas has been with the Rebco Manufacturing Company for 15 years. He joined Rebco right after his high school graduation and has been with the company ever since.

Ten years ago, Rebco became unionized and Roy was one of the people primarily responsible for its unionization. He helped the organizer from the Teamsters Union plan the union election campaign. He helped get the local union established after the election and then served as its president for its first three years. After that, he continued to serve in various capacities with the local union. Two years ago, he was again elected for a three-year term as its president.

Over the years, Roy has developed a reputation for being firm but fair with the management of Rebco. He is well respected by both the members of the union and the management of Rebco.

Roy was quite shocked when he was recently called into the plant manager's office for the following discussion.

Bill Lindsay (Plant Manager): Good to see you, Roy.

Roy: Yeah, it's good to see you, Bill, especially when we're not arguing over a problem. I hope you didn't call me here for that.

Bill: No, Roy, I didn't. In fact, I called you here to talk about something else entirely. Some of our older supervisors are retiring shortly, as you know, and we would like you to consider becoming a supervisor.

Roy: A supervisor—you've got to be kidding! I've fussed and fought with you and the other managers around here for 10 years. Now you want me to join you. How would the employees react?

Bill: That's just it, Roy. We think they would be pleased. After all, they've elected you president of the local twice already. You've got their respect. A good supervisor just needs to know how to handle people, and you sure know how to do that.

Roy: I just don't know, Bill. Give me a couple of days to think about it.

Questions (Explain your answers in writing.)

1. Do you think Roy would be a good supervisor?
2. What qualities does Roy possess that support your answer?
3. Do you agree with Bill Lindsay's statement that "a good supervisor just needs to know how to handle people"?
4. What do you think the reaction of the employees would be if Roy accepted the job?

Incident 1–2

Not Enough Time to Supervise

Len Massey is a supervisor in a large fire and casualty insurance company. He is in charge of a group of clerical workers who review policies and endorsements, calculate commissions, and maintain records. Before his promotion to supervisor, Len himself was a clerical worker in the department. It was largely due to his reputation as the best worker in the department that he was promoted. "If Len did the work," his co-workers said, "it is right."

This reputation has carried over into Len's supervisory practices. Everything coming out of his group is perfect. In fact, Len rechecks in detail all the work coming out of his group to ensure that it is accurate. It is not unusual for him to turn work back to one of his employees several times until it is perfect. Len's employees quickly recognized his eye for detail and his checking and rechecking of their work. One of them was recently overheard to say, "I don't really worry about accuracy in my work too much, because if I make an error, I know Len will catch it."

Last week, at Len's annual performance evaluation, his boss, Pam Levine, said that Len was spending too much time on detail work and not enough time on supervision. In fact, she said that he must start spending more time in supervision and less time in doing the work of others. Len's response to Pam was, "People in my unit don't seem to care about sloppy work, and since I'm responsible, I feel obligated to check it before it goes out."

Questions

1. Is Pam Levine right?
2. What does Len need to know about supervision?
3. What do you think of the reasons given for Len's promotion?

Exercise 1–1

Understanding the Job of a Supervisor

Exhibit 1.1 Exhibit 1.1 gives a job description for a maintenance supervisor in a manufacturing company. From this job description, classify the duties and responsibilities as to whether they are planning, organizing, staffing, leading, or controlling.

Also identify the specific skills of supervision—technical, human relations, administrative, and decision making—that are described in this job description.

EXHIBIT 1.1

Position of Maintenance Supervisor

Source: Reprinted from *Job Descriptions in Manufacturing Industries* by John D. Ulery. Copyright © 1981 AMACOM. Used with the permission of the publisher, AMACOM, a division of American Management Association International, New York, NY. All rights reserved <http://www.amacombooks.org>.

Exercise 1–2

Required Attributes of a Supervisor

1. From the supervisory jobs listed on the next page choose the one that is most attractive to you.
2. Form into groups of four or five with others who selected the same job as you.
3. Develop a group list of required and desirable skills for the job.
4. Present and defend your group's list before the entire class.

Exercise 1–3

The Supervisor's Personal Inventory

The following inventory has helped many supervisors determine to what extent their behaviors or practices

Basic Purpose

To supervise the maintenance activity through the implementation of a preventive maintenance program and an ongoing maintenance repair program for the facility, vehicles, production maintenance, and process equipment.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Plans and implements effective procedures and policies for the maintenance department to ensure that all equipment, facilities, and utilities are in an acceptable state of repair.
2. Coordinates with vendors, suppliers, and contractors the installation of new equipment or equipment processes.
3. Establishes, with direction from the plant manager, priorities of all maintenance activities through a work order procedure.
4. Supervises all daily activities of the maintenance department through subordinates to ensure completion of assigned projects that will result in the least amount of machine downtime.
5. Monitors completion of maintenance projects to ensure that safety and quality standards are met.
6. Approves all requisitions relating to new and replacement parts, supplies, machinery, and equipment for the maintenance department.
7. Provides technical knowledge and expertise to solve problems of a mechanical, electrical, or hydraulic/pneumatic nature.
8. Develops and maintains responsible labor/management relations consistent with the labor agreement, including representing the company in certain grievances.
9. Schedules and assigns hourly personnel to maintain good housekeeping for the facility grounds and administrative offices.

Organizational Relationships

This position reports to the manager/engineering and maintenance and indirectly to the plant manager. Coordinates work with all service and production departments.

Position Specifications

Must possess 8 to 10 years' experience in maintenance, engineering, or related fields. Prefer minimum of 3–5 years' supervisory experience. Must be familiar with each of the following areas: boilers, air compressors, heating and air-conditioning, plumbing, welding, carpentry, electrical/electronic equipment, pneumatic hydraulics, and heavy manufacturing equipment.

**SUPERVISOR
RIGHTS-OF-WAY AND LAND**

ABC is a diversified energy company making important contributions in the pursuit of new energy resources around the world. A position of Supervisor—Rights-of-Way and Land is currently available at ABC's Houston location.

A college education is required, with a degree preferably in business, law, or engineering. Strong experience in pipeline right-of-way work is required with a minimum of three years of right-of-way field experience. Additional experience must include a minimum of five years of general right-of-way office experience, with a heavy supervisory background in right-of-way. The responsibilities will include supervising the acquisition of right-of-way and the settlement of claims; following litigations; and conducting and coordinating contact with the state and local authorities. The ability to negotiate and prepare amendatory, alteration, and relocation agreements is mandatory.

ABC offers competitive salaries, a comprehensive employee benefits program, and a variety of career challenges. If interested, send résumé and salary history to:

P.O. Box 000
An equal opportunity employer
Principals Only!

WEEKEND PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR

XYZ Corporation, a smoke-free environment and manufacturer of soft contact lenses and solution-related products, has an immediate opening for a Weekend Production Supervisor. This individual must be able to plan, organize, and control staffing, equipment, and facilities in an efficient manner within budgetary guidelines. This includes being held accountable for the quality and quantity of products produced, compliance with CGMP and OSHA standards, and guiding the department toward achieving departmental and company goals and objectives. BS/BA and one year production supervisory experience required. Solid background in highly technical production environment. Good written and oral communication skills. Must work weekends (11:00 PM to 11:00 AM), and a minimum of one additional day per week is required. We regret that we are unable to respond to all inquiries. We will only respond to those candidates selected for an interview.

Qualified applicants should forward résumé with salary requirements to:

XYZ
Corporation
P.O. Box 000

**ACCOUNTING
A/R SUPERVISOR**

Progressive company with high-volume receivables department is looking for a sharp individual with accounts receivable supervisory experience. Excellent starting salary and benefits. If you are a motivated self-starter, respond with salary history to Box 000.

SUPERVISING

Senior Auditor: Plan, direct, and conduct audits for client operations. Review and prepare corporate tax returns, develop budget forecast and analysis, and develop and improve accounting systems. Must have Bachelor's in Accounting for Business Administration with two years' experience in job or as Analyst or Accountant. Hours 9:00 AM–5:00 PM, Monday–Friday, overtime as needed. Those qualified, résumé to P.O. Box 000.

**SUPERVISOR &
SALES MANAGER**

French-owned, U.S.-based corporation seeks National Supervisor & Sales Engineer to supervise and coordinate the U.S. marketing and distribution efforts. Experience in the processes of importation of European products into the United States as well as fluency in written and spoken French are required. Applicants must have four years' experience in the stone products industry as well as six years' experience in construction supervision and sales of stone products. Send résumé to: P.O. Box 000.

contribute to difficulties for their employees. The items below represent important supervisor behaviors and practices that build positive work relationships. Rate yourself and your company on each item, giving yourself one (1) point if the item rarely applies, two

(2) points if it sometimes applies, and three (3) points if it applies to you most of the time.

If you are not a supervisor, discuss how your current boss/supervisor behaves.

	Rating Scale		
	Applies Rarely 1	Applies Sometimes 2	Applies Most of Time 3
1. Know my job	•	•	•
2. Know my employees' jobs	•	•	•
3. Know my company's objectives and standard procedures	•	•	•
4. Convey my objectives and procedures to my employees	•	•	•
5. Define my objectives and procedures clearly	•	•	•
6. Try to resolve those objectives and procedures that are in conflict	•	•	•
7. Establish clear performance standards	•	•	•
8. Convey performance standards to my employees	•	•	•
9. Insist that performance standards are met	•	•	•
10. Try to improve substandard performance	•	•	•
11. Set standards for myself and follow them	•	•	•
12. My employees know what to expect from me	•	•	•
13. Avoid self-centeredness	•	•	•
14. Am employee-centered	•	•	•
15. Know my employees' strengths and weaknesses	•	•	•
16. Keep my employees well informed on matters affecting them	•	•	•
17. Keep channels of communication open	•	•	•
18. Actively lead, direct, and control employees when necessary	•	•	•
19. Allow my employees to lead and control themselves when they are able to	•	•	•
20. Avoid unjust criticism	•	•	•
21. Criticize employees in private	•	•	•
22. Give credit when it is earned	•	•	•
23. Commend employees publicly	•	•	•
24. Avoid taking credit for things my employees did	•	•	•
25. Show respect toward employees	•	•	•
26. Command respect from employees by my conduct	•	•	•
27. Discipline fairly	•	•	•
28. Discipline only when needed	•	•	•
29. Back employees to fullest when they are right	•	•	•
30. Refuse to back employees when they're wrong even though such refusal may lessen my popularity	•	•	•
31. Delegate as far down the line as possible	•	•	•
32. Value my employees' input	•	•	•
33. Provide opportunities to get employee input	•	•	•
34. Use the input I receive	•	•	•
35. Encourage employees to develop their sense of responsibility and initiative	•	•	•
36. Use my authority appropriately	•	•	•
37. My employees have pride in their accomplishments	•	•	•
38. Actively try to build esprit de corps	•	•	•
39. Practice what I preach	•	•	•

(continued)

	Rating Scale		
	Applies Rarely 1	Applies Sometimes 2	Applies Most of Time 3
40. Recognize my shortcomings	•	•	•
41. Compensate for my shortcomings	•	•	•
42. Retain my sense of humor in dealings with employees	•	•	•
43. Admit my errors when I'm wrong	•	•	•
44. Apply the same standards of conduct and performance to men and women	•	•	•
45. Continually strive to improve myself and my company	•	•	•

Scoring: Total all your points for the 45 items. If you scored 125 or above, your supervisory behaviors and company practices promote positive work relationships. If you scored between 100 and 124, some of your behaviors/practices may contribute to difficulties with employees, but no urgency for change is indicated unless one or more items scored very low. If you scored between 75 and 99, probably many of your behaviors/practices contribute to difficulties with employees, and you should ask yourself what you can do to improve the low scoring items. If you scored below 75, improving your overall supervisory behaviors/practices should be a high priority for you.

Regardless of your score, the awareness that comes from taking such an inventory is the prerequisite for self-improvement. Your inventory results can serve as the basis for eliminating managerial blind spots and creating a personal development plan to ensure that the impact of your behaviors and practices is a positive one.

Source: Adapted from "Eliminating Managerial Blind Spots," by Gary W. Hobson, *Supervision*, August 1990. Reprinted by permission of © National Research Bureau, P.O. Box 1, Burlington, IA 52601-0001.

Exercise 1–4

Understanding Diversity

As a part of communicating that an organization is truly committed to supporting a highly qualified and diverse workforce, supervisors should take every opportunity to demonstrate the use of nonsexist language.

A. In this vein, try and identify a nonsexist word to use in place of each of the following words that may carry a sexist connotation:

- Man-hours Waiter/Waitress
- Girl Friday Watchman
- Layout man Repairman
- Salesman Man-made
- Foreman Spokesman
- Policeman Draftsman

B. List additional words or terms that you think might carry a sexist connotation.

Selected Supervisory and Related Periodicals

This list provides the names of the more commonly referenced supervisory and related periodicals.

- Academy of Management Review*
- Administrative Management*
- Arbitration Journal*
- Business Horizons*
- Business Week*
- California Management Review*
- Forbes*
- Fortune*
- Harvard Business Review*

- Human Resource Management*
- Journal of Business*
- Management Review*
- Management Solutions*
- Management Today*
- Personnel Administrator*
- Personnel Journal*
- Supervision*
- Supervisory Management*
- Training and Development Journal*
- Wall Street Journal* (newspaper)