

Janitorial SUPERVISOR

Training Program



**Practical Training
for Developing
Supervisory Skills**

JANITORIAL SUPERVISOR TRAINING PROGRAM

Practical Training for Developing Supervisory Skills

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Part 1: ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

The NLRB (National Labor Relations Board) defines a supervisor as:

T *"Any individual having the authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees, or responsibly 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."*

As long as the person has the authority over one or more of the above listed responsibilities, he or she is considered a supervisor. The key to the definition is that the supervisor must be able to use independent judgment in performing his or her job.

Generally speaking, a janitorial supervisor is responsible for the day-to-day performance of a group of cleaning technicians. The primary responsibilities are to guide their crew to make sure goals are being met, to make sure team members are productive, and to resolve problems as they arise.

Rate Your Abilities

Most supervisors are promoted into the position within the company, so they've probably already proven that they have above average job performance skills. But that is just one consideration when deciding whether to promote an employee into the supervisor position. The prospective supervisor must also possess leadership qualities if they are to successfully lead their team.

This is an exercise to help you honestly rate your own abilities as a supervisor. Use this as a guideline to get a better feel for your weak points, so you can work to improve them. Don't take a lot of time to think about each statement – just go with your first instinct and move on.

1. I often lack confidence in my own abilities.
Y ___ N ___
2. I am sometimes unable to make decisions and stand by them. Y ___ N ___
3. I sometimes struggle to make decisions under pressure.
Y ___ N ___
4. I'm sometimes unsure whether I made the right decision.
Y ___ N ___

5. I tend to worry over every decision I make.
Y ___ N ___
6. I sometimes overreact to criticism.
Y ___ N ___
7. I sometimes procrastinate.
Y ___ N ___
8. I want everyone to like me.
Y ___ N ___
9. I sometimes panic when things go wrong.
Y ___ N ___
10. I sometimes struggle to keep a positive attitude.
Y ___ N ___
11. I sometimes don't have patience for other people.
Y ___ N ___
12. I am quick to anger.
Y ___ N ___

Your "Yes" answers will tell you what to work on

Why do Supervisors Fail?

Before we can talk about what makes a successful supervisor, we want to look at why supervisors fail. If you know the common reasons for failure, you can work to make sure that doesn't happen to you.

- **Poor Interpersonal Skills.** A big part of your job is communicating with the people you supervise, so if you don't have good interpersonal skills, you will likely struggle.
- **Negative Attitude.** No one wants to work for a person with a negative attitude. Think about someone you worked for in the past that had a negative attitude – how much fun was that experience? Not very fun, right? So don't bring a negative attitude to work.
- **Lack of Initiative.** A big reason you were promoted to supervisor was because you took initiative. You saw things that needed attention and took

care of them without having to be asked – you took initiative. Don't let your initiative slide because you're now a supervisor. Now is the time to step up your initiative and make things happen.

- **Insufficient Knowledge or Ability.** You have a lot of knowledge about your profession right now. But just because you're a supervisor, doesn't mean you now know everything. This industry is constantly changing and it's your job to stay on top of what's happening, how to be more efficient and so forth. Talk to your boss about how you can stay in touch with what's happening in the industry and how you can get additional training like you're doing here today. Perhaps you can subscribe to industry trade magazines and get on some email lists to stay up to date. Take that initiative and keep increasing your knowledge and ability.
- **Resistant to Change, Close Minded, Inflexible.** Anyone who is resistant to change, who is close-minded and inflexible will never get very far in the work place. If you know this about yourself, then it's time to start being more open to change. Because it's a fact of life so you better get used to it. We recommend you embrace change and be the leader of change with the people you supervise.
- **Difficulty Making Decisions.** Did you answer "Yes" to the decision making statements when rating your abilities? If so, then you've got work to do on your decision making skills. People don't like working for someone that has a hard time making quick and decisive decisions. If you're struggling with this, ask questions of your manager when you have difficulty and pay attention to how he or she would handle the situation – and remember that going forward when it happens again.
- **Unwilling to Improve, Grow.** Do you feel a little too comfortable in your job right now? Do you think things are working fine just the way they are? If you're not willing to stretch and grow in your job, then it will be hard for you to retain your position. You must be willing to improve your own performance and grow with the company.
- **Fail to Plan, Implement, And Follow Up.** Are you a poor planner? Do you have good ideas but have a hard time implementing those ideas? Do you get behind when you're supposed to be following up on employees? Planning, implementing plans and following up are keys to success for a janitorial supervisor.
- **Sees Management as "They" not "We".** You are now part of the management team and you should think of yourself in that way. Some supervisors still feel as if they're part of the cleaning team, and of course you are, but in a different way. You now supervise the cleaners and must view yourself in a new way – as part of the management team.

- **Brings Personal Problems to Work.** Is it hard for you to separate your work life from your personal life? Personal problems can be very difficult to deal with, but you must make every effort to keep them separate so you don't get into situations where you're discussing your personal problems with your subordinates. If you struggle with this, then it may be time to discuss it with your manager.
- **Think Before Speaking.** Some people are very impulsive and say things they later regret. If this is the case for you, work on thinking before you speak – especially if it's a sensitive situation or if you're angry – especially if you're angry. Take a moment to breathe to, calm yourself. Step away for a few minutes if you need to. Then come back prepared so you don't say something you'll regret.
- **Frequent Communication.** Frequent communication is so much more engaging than little or no communication. Check in with the people you supervise to make sure they know you're available if they need you or have questions.
- **Work with Employees.** Employees like working for supervisors who are willing to chip in and get their hands dirty. If you see someone that needs a helping hand, offer it. Fill in for absent employees if there's no one else to do it. Working with your employees from time to time will help build camaraderie and respect.
- **Be Fair, but Firm.** Always be fair when dealing with employees. Don't give slack to people you are friendlier with and be harder on those you don't like so much. You must always be fair, but firm, across the board.

Qualities of a Good Supervisor

There are many qualities that make a good supervisor. Most people will be stronger in some areas than others. It is your responsibility, along with additional training from your employer, to work at improving any areas that are lacking. Following are some of the key qualities of a good supervisor:

- **Technical knowledge and competence** regarding the tasks your cleaners do every day. You are the go-to person if they have questions about how to clean something or how to work a piece of equipment.
- Being a **self-starter, taking initiative and meeting deadlines** are a big part of your job responsibilities and qualities your manager is looking for.
- You must **care about safety** and you must enforce safety rules like wearing PPE and taking care of safety hazards. You must set the example for your employees, so if you expect them to wear PPE, then you must wear it too.

- Having **good communication skills** and being the calm, rational presence is probably one of the best qualities you can have as a supervisor.
- You must be **positive** and you must **get along with others**. If you're the gruff, negative person that people don't like to be around, you won't last very long in this job.
- You must have **empathy and compassion** for people. Empathy means being able to put yourself into their shoes and understanding their struggle. We had a supervisor once that didn't have any kids and simply didn't understand some of the issues that would come up around employees having to take off work to go pick up their sick child from school. Understand that we all have different struggles, so listen and show empathy so they know you care.
- You must have **integrity**, you must be **honest**, and you must be **trustworthy**. These are important qualities for all management personnel.
- **Be confident, yet humble**. Sometimes people go overboard with the confidence level and come off as being domineering or arrogant. If an employee is struggling with something you once struggled with, don't be afraid to share that with them so they know you understand what they're going through and aren't afraid to show you're not perfect.
- You must have the **desire to learn and succeed**. Don't leave it completely up to your bosses to teach you everything about your job. Go to the library or buy books on leadership or team building for example. Always strive for ways to improve YOU. And share some of the things you're learning with your boss so he or she sees that you're serious about becoming a better supervisor.
- You need to **understand the business the organization is in**, and understand the environment around it. In the cleaning industry, you understand the cleaning business and factors affecting it. In other words, you know your industry in general and your organization's role in it.
- You **understand what all the departments** are, who does what, and how things work. You also understand the informal system, how things really work, how decisions are really made, who has the real power or influence. In general, you simply have a good knowledge of how to get things done in your organization.
- You know **what "the team" does**, and what it takes to be successful. We've seen situations where supervisors don't even really know what people do, or have no clue as to how the team is performing.

- Being a good supervisor requires **knowing how to lead**. You know how to lead others. You know how to help others be more productive, help others succeed. You know how to make others great.
- A good supervisor **provides clear directions** about what people are expected to do. You must also be able to provide the right amount of feedback on how well your team members are doing.
- A good supervisor **must be fair, logical and keep their ego in control**. When you do anything, you do it for a good business reason. When you make decisions, you do it based on fact, not guesswork. That means your emotions are in control. As a supervisor, there are higher expectations for you to stay in control. You always do things for a reason. You're not doing things because your emotions have the better of you.

Which of these supervisor qualities do you have and which ones do you need to work on?

I have these qualities:

I need to work on these qualities:

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Introduction to Supervisor Responsibilities

Janitorial supervisors must ensure that each person on the team works productively and to company standards. In order to do this, they must be aware of each person's performance to make sure they're making the best use of their time. Although some of this material may be repeated, it cannot be stressed enough. Becoming a good supervisor means understanding ALL the responsibilities of the supervisor position.

Supervisors must constantly be aware of the following to accomplish their team goals:

- **Is each team member meeting productivity goals?** Each building should have productivity goals (how many square feet one person can clean in an hour). This is important because if only one or two team members are meeting productivity goals, it can cause resentment among the team if not everyone is carrying their weight. It is also important to meet productivity goals in order to keep costs within the budget. If the company is not working within the budget, profits will be down, which can affect how much the employer is able to pay its workers.
- **Is each team member meeting the quality standards set by the employer?** If a team member is meeting productivity goals, but their quality of work is not to standard, it should raise a red flag for the supervisor. Perhaps more training is in order.
- **Is each team member working efficiently?** Are they performing their job according to the methods demonstrated during their training or have they

decided to use their own methods of cleaning? The supervisor must be aware of the methods team members use to get the job done and to make sure they're working efficiently, making the most of their movements, and not wasting time with unnecessary backtracking.

- **Is each team member doing his or her part in controlling costs?** Working efficiently, as mentioned above, will save labor costs. But team members also have control over supply costs. Measuring chemicals properly, not wasting trash can liners, cleaning filters, can all help in controlling costs.
- **Does each team member have a positive attitude? Do they take pride in their work?** Supervisors need to lead by example. Having a positive attitude when dealing with employees and taking pride in your work at all times is important when leading a group of janitorial workers.
- **Is each team member receiving ongoing training?** Providing continuous education and training is an ongoing method of supervising your team.
- **Is each team member working safely?** Safety training is a supervisor's responsibility and it must be ongoing. If you see an employee working in a manner that is unsafe (i.e.: not wearing PPE), you must point it out and remind them of the rules and the reason it's important.
- **Is each team member open to change?** Change is inevitable so when changes need to be made it's the supervisor's responsibility to ease them through the transition and make sure they understand the reason for the change.

Supervisor Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the janitorial supervisor is to make sure client cleaning specifications are followed and that employees are performing to management's standards.

Janitorial supervisors have many job duties. Some of the primary duties are:

1. Check in with employees regularly, talk to them in a friendly manner, assign duties, and ask for feedback.
2. Check client locations regularly to make sure the work is being done according to the schedule and according to standard.
3. Perform inspections. Discuss inspections with management and also employees performing the work and give appropriate feedback.
4. Follow up on all complaints and make sure they are taken care of immediately and resolved to the customer's satisfaction.

5. Inspect janitor closet to make sure it is clean and organized. Also ensure emergency phone numbers are posted and SDS Sheets are available for all cleaning chemicals used in the building.
6. Order and/or deliver supplies.
7. Fill in for absent employees, assist employees as needed, handle emergencies.
8. Report damage or emergencies to customer and/or management.
9. Meet new employees, walk them through their work area, work with and train them; follow up as required.
10. Answer all calls from management and employees, check in with management.

Building Security

As a supervisor, you have Building Security responsibilities that include training your employees on security procedures. If you've ever had an employee set off an alarm and have the police arrive, then you know how important it is to make sure this is a rare occurrence. The building owner or manager is responsible for paying a fee when police are dispatched so it's no fun to be on the receiving end of an angry building owner or manager that is upset about this – especially if it happens regularly.

You must know the policies around assigning keys or key cards or biometrics procedures to get into buildings or interior offices.

You are also responsible to manage any sign-out procedures you have in place for keys.

Supplies and Equipment

You also have responsibilities when it comes to supplies and equipment. You are responsible for monitoring and ordering supplies - both consumables and cleaning supplies.

You must manage waste in the building to make sure it's being properly removed; and if there is a recycling program, that the program is being followed properly.

You must train your employees on the proper use of supplies and equipment.

You are responsible for maintaining equipment so it's in good working order.

You must monitor the cleanliness and orderliness of the janitor closet. Are they disposing of all trash? Are they storing their tools and equipment properly? Are they rinsing out mop buckets? Are they emptying the vacuums? Are they making sure heavy items are stored on lower shelves?

Cost Control

You have many cost controls that you are responsible for. First it's your job to make sure your employees are working productively. If you see ways in which they are wasting time, then re-train them on how to do their job more efficiently.

If you're aware of productivity issues that could be resolved with a new piece of equipment, then it's your job to speak up. Perhaps it's just a matter of replacing an old upright vacuum with a new backpack vacuum that will get the job done faster. Or perhaps you see a cleaning product that requires too much elbow grease to clean the area when a different product might make more sense.

Be aware of ways to reduce waste. If you see that the client is using c-fold towels and you know that roll towels would reduce the amount of waste in the restrooms, make that suggestion to your boss.

Sometimes the frequency of cleaning doesn't match up with how often an area should really be cleaned. If you see an area of the building that is being used more often than it used to and the trash is overflowing each day, you may suggest cleaning the area more often.

Your bosses are always looking for ways to cut costs so if you see waste going on within the company and have an idea on how to improve the situation, be sure to speak up and talk to your manager about it.

Communication with Management

You are now part of the management team so make sure you're meeting with your bosses regularly and that you communicate with your manager daily. Many companies have what they call a 5-minute huddle at the start of the day with the management team to discuss problems, potential problems, solutions and who is accountable to make sure things happen.

Be sure to keep the lines of communication open so everyone is on the same page. Open communication is the key to prevention, so if supervisors and management work together as a team they will achieve their goal of keeping the customers happy.

It can be challenging if things aren't going the way you want, but it's important to maintain a positive attitude when dealing with management. This will help keep the lines of communication open and allow more productive conversations and problem solving.

Also remember that if you have a negative attitude after talking with management, you may inadvertently pass your negative attitude off to your employees. They will often develop an attitude similar to that of their supervisor's, which can lead to problems down the road.

Legal Responsibilities of Supervisors

Believe it or not, you do have legal responsibilities. For example, you need to know what to do when someone in the building approaches you and makes a theft accusation. You must know what to do when an employee damages property – whether it's client property or your company's property. It must be addressed quickly.

If employees are working carelessly and damaging property or not following safety procedures, re-training is in order because if an unemployment claim is filed, your company needs to have documentation that you did everything in your power to re-train the employee before terminating him or her.

Things like slip/fall accidents can result in law suits – whether it's your employee suing your company for not providing safety equipment and training, or if it's an employee or customer of the building who slipped on a floor an employee was mopping. It's your job to ensure everyone is following all safety precautions.

What happens when an employee throws away non-trash and the property is lost or damaged? It's going to fall to your company to replace the property, which can cause financial hardship depending on what it is.

What about confidential information and privacy laws? You may have had to sign a HIPAA agreement at some point because of privacy laws. You must be aware of what is legal and appropriate regarding confidentiality, and make sure your employees fully understand as well. Discrimination and harassment is a big deal in the work place.

You must be fully trained and be able to identify it and report it to management. What is the proper procedure to follow when an employee is injured? If you don't follow the proper procedures and document exactly what happened, there could be financial ramifications for the company.

Comprehensive Look at Potential Legal Issues

Theft of Customer Property – “The janitor did it” is a common accusation when customer property disappears. As a supervisor, you must know how to handle these situations, as it is not always the fault of the cleaning staff. Don't automatically assume that one of your employees did it. First, gather information.

- What is missing? Is it possible the item was mis-placed or moved?
- Who was on duty?
- Were employees of the client working in the area?
- Were there any witnesses?

Question the janitorial staff that was on duty at the time. If the evidence suggests it is in fact a theft situation, then advise the client that the police should be called in order to file a report and so that further investigation can be done.

Accidents, Damage and Liability – Accidents happen, so there will come a time that an employee will damage client property. The cleaning company is legally liable for its employees and their actions, so training for safety and avoiding accidents will save the company money. If the damage is small and under the insurance deductible, the company will pay for the damage out of pocket. When the damage is costly and must be reimbursed by the insurance company, chances are the cost of that insurance will go up.

Be aware of employee carelessness in regards to client property and company equipment. When you see an employee that is not taking care, point out what they are doing wrong and then train them on the correct way to do the task. For example, if an employee is vacuuming with a back pack vacuum in a tight space and is not careful, they could damage property behind them by bumping into it with the vacuum.

Slip and fall accidents are common, so make sure your employees put out wet floor signs and warn people (nicely) that are about to walk across a wet floor.

Accidents can also occur in company vehicles. Have a company policy regarding vehicles and make sure that employees understand and follow the rules. Your vehicle policy should include requiring them to follow all laws of the road as well as your cell phone and texting policy. Also make sure they realize that only employees listed on the company's vehicle insurance policy are allowed to drive company vehicles.

Throwing Away Papers or Property Not Meant for the Trash – Your employer is liable for items thrown into the trash, so make sure your employees understand the trash policy. They must only throw away items that are inside the trash can or are clearly marked trash. If a folder of papers is leaning on the trash can it should not be thrown away. If they aren't sure if it should be thrown away then they should leave a note.

Divulging Confidential Information and Privacy Laws – Clients have a right to privacy, so you must make sure all employees understand what is considered confidential and private, and that they are not to discuss this information with anyone. If your company cleans medical facilities, each employee may be required to sign a form regarding HIPAA Laws. The company is liable if confidential and privacy laws are violated.

Discrimination and Harassment – The Company and its representatives must not discriminate against or harass any employee due to race, sex, religion, national origin, age, or physical impairment. Harassment also includes sexual harassment, which includes verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. If you are involved in

or witness any discrimination or harassment, discuss it immediately with your manager or the owner.

If a law suit is brought against the company and you were involved in the action, you will also be named in the law suit; so it is in your own best interest as well as the company's best interest to abide by the discrimination and harassment laws.

Remember that all employees must be treated equally and fairly. If you go easy on the employees you like and are harder on employees you dislike, they will tell others that you don't treat employees fairly. And employees who feel they haven't been treated fairly will not hesitate to file a complaint to the state or federal labor board. If this happens, the company must prove that the employee was treated equally and without discrimination. Personnel files and written documentation will be investigated, as well as interviews of all employees and supervisors involved.

Many complaints are filed after an employee has been terminated. For this reason, you must make sure you document all attempts to re-train and counsel the employee, and the consequences of their actions including termination.

Worker's Compensation – When employees are injured on the job, the company must provide for the payment of medical treatment. This means paying for worker's compensation insurance. The cost of this insurance is directly related to the safety record of the company. For this reason, supervisors must train employees on working safely and reporting unsafe conditions. The cost of insurance can quickly skyrocket if accidents are on the rise; so if employees want better wages, it is in their own best interest to work safely.

All injuries must be reported and documented immediately. Supervisors must also be aware of potential false claims by unethical employees. Some people may injure themselves at home and then claim it was work-related. This is why it is extremely important to get the documentation and details recorded immediately.

The report should include what caused the accident, witnesses to the accident, if weather conditions played a role, whether equipment failure caused the accident or employee carelessness caused the accident, what part of the body was injured, and whether the employee had any prior physical problems.

Job Safety

Every company should adopt this philosophy into its safety program:

You are responsible for the safety of all your employees. Always remember that no job is so important and no service is so urgent that you cannot take the time to perform the work safely.

Make a sign with this philosophy and put up in the janitor closet to promote a culture of safety in your company.

Why is safety so important? - Because it can prevent debilitating injuries and save lives. Unfortunately, some people never fully recover from work injuries, which can affect their ability to work at full capacity and earn a comfortable living.

Safety is also important for the employer's financial stability because high accident rates adversely affect their Worker's Compensation premiums. If the employer cannot afford the high cost of insurance, it puts jobs at risk.

Why do employees commit unsafe acts? - Most accidents are the direct result of an unsafe act by an employee. So it is the employer's responsibility to train employees on how to work safely, and the bulk of this training falls to the Supervisors. Here are some of the common excuses given for committing an unsafe act:

1. "I always do it this way" (habit)
2. "I wasn't thinking" (not paying attention)
3. "I didn't know" – or – "No one told me not to do it that way"
4. "It's easier to do it this way"
5. "I was in a hurry"
6. "I can do it faster this way"
7. "I was trying to save time"

Supervisors must:

1. Lead by example. Employees do not respect supervisors and managers that do not "practice what they preach".
2. Make safety awareness a high priority and incorporate it into the everyday work atmosphere.
3. Teach company safety policies to all employees and underscore the importance of working safely. Employees must understand the hazards of the job and how to avoid them.
4. Provide PPE (personal protection equipment), teach employees how to use it and ensure that each employee uses it as required.
5. Watch for unsafe conditions and unsafe actions made by employees, and then take corrective action as needed.
6. Investigate all accidents, report them on the appropriate paperwork, find the cause and then take corrective action.
7. Be aware of your surroundings, watch for potential injury situations.

The key to accident prevention - Employees and supervisors alike must be aware of their surroundings at all times; watch for potential injury situations, and take action to keep it from causing accidents.

Planning & Scheduling

Supervisors must become good at planning and scheduling their time. Without proper planning, your job will become very stressful. Do not let circumstances control how your time is spent.

Here is sampling of what could happen when supervisors fail to plan:

- Supplies run out.
- Misunderstandings between yourself and employees, which leads to frustration for both.
- Customer complaints not taken care of in a timely manner, resulting in more complaints or loss of the account.
- Project work does not get done on schedule, resulting in a loss of income and profits.
- Low employee morale, which results in poor quality work.
- Lower production rates because employees don't have the tools and supplies needed and also because of low morale.
- Lower profit due to low production rates.

When it comes to scheduling, use whatever tools work best for you. In these days of mobile technology, there are all sorts of calendars and task lists that you can use to plan your day and keep organized.

One of the most important things to remember when it comes to time management is to keep your schedule simple and flexible. If you schedule out every minute of your day, you'll become frustrated because you will inevitably have interruptions that will affect your schedule. If you continually find yourself moving certain tasks to the next day because of interruptions, it's a clue that you're not allowing yourself time to deal with unexpected situations.

Start by planning what you would like to accomplish this week. Then break it down into what you need to do each day. If you are scheduling appointments or tasks, choose a start time and approximate end time. Be sure to allow for travel time between appointments. When planning for tasks such as project work, decide who is to do the work, and how it fits into their schedule.

As you complete a scheduled item or task, be sure to check it off your list as completed. This will not only give you a sense of accomplishment, but it will make it easier to see what is left to be done.

Below are additional time management tips:

- *Set attainable goals.* Then make daily "to do" lists identifying high priority items.

- *After prioritizing* your responsibilities, delegate those you should not be doing.
- *Never procrastinate*. Rather than checking off several easy tasks from your list, tackle the big projects first whenever possible.
- *Systematize projects whenever possible*. For example, on project work like carpet cleaning, create an equipment and supply check off list so the team never forgets a piece of equipment like an extension cord. Systematizing projects saves time and increases profits.
- *Break down large jobs* into a series of smaller tasks that are easy to complete.
- *Plan travel efficiently*. If your job today is to inspect buildings, plan your route appropriately.
- Make *quick decisions* on trivial matters.
- *When checking email*, deal with it in this way:
 - Do it (if it takes less than two minutes)
 - Delegate it
 - Defer it

If the item does not require action, either File it, Delete it, or Incubate it for possible action later.

- *Use "waiting time" wisely*. Catch up on email, make notes, update your schedule, etc.
- *Use a phone* whenever possible instead of wasting travel time for unimportant tasks.
- *Communicate with employees in groups* when possible instead of going to each one individually. Keep your meetings on task (e.g., have an agenda, keep on time, and stay focused).

My preferred method of keeping my schedule and task list:

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PART 2: CUSTOMER RELATIONS



Often times, supervisors are the ones that have the most interaction with the customer, so you need to know what the expectations are for this role.

In order to be able to relate to your customers, I want you to THINK like the customer. Do you remember when you had a bad customer experience?



Think back to a negative service situation you experienced as a customer.

Describe a negative service situation you experienced as a customer and write it as if you were going to post it as an online review:

Next:

Describe what the customer service provider in that situation could have done to avoid the bad review.

HINT: Many people think of examples in a restaurant where the wait staff dropped the ball on something like forgetting to refill your drink or getting your order right.

In the restaurant example, the wait staff could have offered the drinks for free, a free desert, or a discount off the customer's bill. If nothing is done, the customer may not return, the restaurant loses business and might also have a bad review to deal with.

Now we're going to talk about an example that you might have to deal with as a supervisor.

Example: An employee is working at their desk after hours when the cleaning staff is working. When the cleaner stops by to empty her trash, she says that the light bulb above their desk has been burned out for a week.

The cleaner says; "I'm sorry, but that's not my job!" Now maybe they don't know that your company DOES change light bulbs and they should be reporting it to you to take care of. So you end up with a complaint from the customer. In that situation, it's your job to make sure that your cleaners know all the services you provide so they know how to help the customer.

Or maybe they says it's not my job but I'll tell my supervisor, which is the correct response. However, they move on and forget all about it and don't call so it never gets taken care of. And then you get the complaint call a few days later.



In this situation the employee should have apologized and explained their not authorized to change light bulbs but will call the supervisor right now to make sure it gets done. By calling right then, the building employee sees that it is taking care of right away. Or, if you have an app that your company uses to report issues like this, have them enter it into the app right then and explain to the customer their

documenting it so the supervisor will receive the notification right away. That should avoid the cleaner dropping the ball resulting in a complaint.

What Do Customers Want?

When it comes to customer relations, what is it that customers really want? You need to know this because customers are judging you on everything you and your team do. As I mentioned before, you may have more interaction with customers than anyone else in the company. So how you handle situations can be the difference between retaining and losing a customer.



Here are some of the things that customers want from their cleaning company.

First, they want you to do what you promised. What was specifically written into the proposal? Those are the things you should be doing, and according to the schedule that was submitted.

- They want things taken care of quickly. If they have a concern in the morning, make sure you have a system for getting it resolved right away. Now they may say it's not something that needs to be taken care of right now, but this is where you can over-deliver on your service. If they're expecting that you'll take care of it in the next couple days and discover it was done that afternoon, they'll make a mental note of that. And if you always have that quick response, they'll become a more loyal customer.
- They want you to know how to handle any situation. It's about being a problem solver for them, especially in unusual situations.
- They want someone that takes care of problem situations with a positive attitude and WITHOUT giving a bunch of excuses.
- They want you to admit to mistakes and not get defensive about it. That just leads to tension in the situation. Admit the mistake, fix it and figure out how to keep it from happening again.
- If the problem keeps coming up then it's possible you have a broken system. This happens a lot with restroom supplies. If you don't have a system for making sure they all get checked every day, you can have repeat occurrences of complaints. This happens a lot with soap. Cleaners often forget to check the soap

because it doesn't usually get filled every day. So what can you do to ensure the soap doesn't run out?

- Your customers want a clean janitor closet, they want to see clean equipment in their buildings, they want nice looking vehicles in their parking lot and they want the cleaning personnel to be professional looking. This is where having a dress code is important. Without it, your cleaners might show up in sloppy looking clothes, and that just doesn't go over well with your customers.

Handling Customer Complaints

Have you ever called a vendor to complain about something and then get routed to 2 or 3 different people before someone takes care of your problem?

There is nothing more frustrating when you just want to get someone to quickly take care of your situation.

So what is the experience when YOUR customers complain? How fast does it take you to respond?



- Quick response is the first rule of handling customer complaints.
- The next rule is to not respond by making excuses. Let them talk and explain the situation, listen carefully and take notes.
- If it's something simple like a missed trash can, that's an easy fix. But if it's more complicated, such as dusting or vacuuming not getting done to their satisfaction, inspect the area with the customer and tell them what you'll do and when. And then make sure it happens!
- If you delegate it to the cleaner for that area, make sure you follow up in person to make sure it was done and report back to the client.
- If you need to do some re-training with the employee, be sure to do that so they understand what the customer wants.
- If it's a system problem, fix the system and re-train the employee.

TQM – Total Quality Management

When it comes to quality of work, you might have heard the acronym TQM, which stands for Total Quality Management. TQM is a management approach for long term success through customer satisfaction. These days it's become difficult to retain customers. So in order to create loyal, satisfied customers, companies must do a better job of maintaining quality of work.

If you were to question 10 business owners on the topic of TQM, you would probably have 10 different definitions. But even though everyone's thoughts may differ, there are some basic themes that would probably emerge.

These themes may include the following:

Quality can and must be managed - It's not just one person or one department's responsibility. Everyone is involved with TQM. Every employee, from the front line worker to the CEO is responsible for quality. TQM is an operational "way of thinking" for the entire company. It has to be handled and controlled from top-down and maintained by all levels of management.

TQM requires leadership backing and encouragement - TQM isn't a ground-up initiative. It's not something that certain people or branches can adopt and then let dribble across the company. You can't *somewhat* employ TQM and hope for a favorable outcome.

TQM is customer focused - The final objective of TQM is customer satisfaction. The goal is to meet and hopefully exceed the customer expectations regarding the company's services and products. This requires doing the right things in the right way the first time, every time. It begins with understanding your customer needs and measuring their satisfaction. Remember, the customer is the one who has the final say in the level of quality being delivered.

TQM is process-oriented - You don't inspect quality after the fact; you design quality into the cleaning services themselves. The goal of TQM is all about improving customer satisfaction and avoiding problems. The company has the responsibility to create the step by step processes so that they can be tracked and measured.

TQM requires continuous improvement - Customer needs and expectations change over time. The company needs to continuously improve ALL aspects of its performance outcomes. These changes don't always have to be breakthrough measures, simple and small improvements are better than no improvements.

TQM must involve everyone, including those outside the company - The quality a company can deliver also falls upon its suppliers and vendors. For example, if your cleaning supply company consistently shorts your order of foaming hand soap, and your customer's facility is then constantly out of soap in the bathrooms, how can your cleaning staff then deliver the high quality of customer service your company and customers demand? Perhaps it's time to find a supplier that can!

Those are just the basic themes of Total Quality Management. But let's not stop there; let's take an even more in-depth look at the concepts of TQM. Dr. W. Edwards Deming taught that by adopting appropriate principles of management, organizations can increase quality.

Dr. W. Edwards Deming wrote the TQM Concepts in 14 points:

1. Improve your services with better training. Employees can't provide quality work without comprehensive and ongoing training.
2. Adopting the quality philosophy means that everyone must keep quality in mind without losing productivity
3. Stop depending on inspection after the fact. Now this is not to say you won't do inspections, but you must be more proactive when it comes to quality control.
4. Stop buying solely based on price. This means that you don't buy poor quality tools and equipment because they'll slow down the work and make the employees have to work harder, which will affect both quality and productivity.
5. Consistently improve everything. This means to always be looking for ways to improve quality
6. Some people look at training as a cost of business. But ongoing training is key to consistency in quality control, so it actually pays dividends to the company.
7. Become leaders. You are the cleaners' immediate boss and leader. You need to set the example and practice what you preach. Set the expectation, and lead with better training and feedback.
8. Don't lead with intimidation and fear tactics – it will backfire on you. Be the leader of your team.
9. Break down silos. This means you must get the entire team on the same page so always be consistent with how you talk to them about expectations.
10. Eliminate slogans. This means that instead of being a cheerleader, analyze the problem and see if it's a process issue that can be fixed (for example, why does the soap keep running out?)
11. Eliminate Numerical Quotas. This one can be controversial. You probably have production rates that you need to achieve, so your boss might not agree with this one. I also believe you need to have standards such as production rates to see who are the high producers and who are not performing to standard. But DON'T make that the most important thing. Use it to identify the cleaners that need additional training on producing quality service but at a higher rate of productivity.

12. Remove barriers to pride of workmanship. Teach employees to troubleshoot their own problems and inspect their own work. Do not limit their ability to be involved in decisions, making suggestions and improving processes. They understand the details of their job and if a process needs to be changed, get them involved so they can take pride in their work.
13. Educate employees on TQM. Talk to your manager about introducing the topic of TQM with the employees so they understand how important quality and productivity is to the long term retention of customers.
14. Involve everyone. It won't work if everyone is not on board – in-particular – YOU!

Inspecting the Work

Let's talk about how you as a supervisor should be inspecting the work on a daily basis; because this helps with Quality Control.

You don't want the property manager or your boss to be the one to walk into the building doing their own visual inspection and find all kinds of things not being done. They're going to come right to you to find out why you're not taking care of business.

So the first thing I want you to start doing when you enter the building is to start thinking like the customer. Get into the habit of doing a light, visual inspection, every time you enter a building.



Look at the entryway, lobby area and reception area. What do you see?

- Are there cobwebs in the corner of the vestibule?
- Is there loose soil under the entry mats, indicating they were not picked up and cleaned underneath?
- What about the lobby? Are the magazines scattered around the waiting area and chairs askew?

These may be small things but they affect the overall appearance and first impression a visitor has of the building.

As you go through the building, continue doing your visual inspection –look at the restrooms, look at the floors, check the breakrooms, coffee centers and executive areas, and check for missed trash and dusting.

What I would like to suggest is that instead of checking off items from a specifications list, check for appearance. So rather than checking off the box that says "entryway was cleaned", consider the overall appearance. Is the entryway free of soil, dust, cobwebs and fingerprints? When you inspect for appearance instead of tasks accomplished, your quality control will improve.

Here is another example. Instead of doing a quick look at the toilets and urinals and ticking off the box, make sure the toilets and urinals are free of visible soil, mineral deposits, and buildup around the hardware. These are the things your customers notice – they aren't just looking at the toilet seat.

Productivity Studies

What if your employees aren't getting the job done in the time allowed? If you haven't been able to figure out where the slow-down is, then you may want to do a productivity study to find out where the problem lies. You may be able to narrow down the problem to specific employees, or discover a process that could be improved upon to increase productivity.

You may be asking yourself, how do you do a productivity study? Observe the employee and document relevant information such as extra trips back to the janitor closet to get supplies. If they're not preparing properly, these extra trips waste time and slow productivity rates.

Time each task to find out where extra time is being spent. For example, what is their process for cleaning the restrooms? Are they not following the process you trained them on so it's causing a slow-down on restroom cleaning time?

You'll need to retrain employees on any areas that are not to standard and offer recommendations on how to get these tasks done more efficiently.

Part 3: LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Introduction to Becoming a Good Leader

Successful supervisors are good leaders. If a cleaning company owner or manager is not focused on training their supervisors on how to be a good leader, the supervisors are left to figure it out on their own. When this happens, most end up leading by the "seat of their pants". The result is that the supervisor spends most of their time putting out fires instead of preventing problems.



Here are some tips for becoming a good leader:

- **Set a good example for your employees by always having a sense of urgency.** Your sense of urgency will rub off on your employees. Conversely, if employees see you slacking off, chatting about non-work related topics, moving slowly through the office, etc.; they will have no motivation and no sense of urgency. After all, if the supervisor is slacking, why shouldn't I?
- **Set high standards for yourself and your employees.** Your motto should be to *under-promise and over-deliver*. Your customers will be thrilled with the service and your employees will be proud of the work they do.
- **Pay attention to the details.** It is your job to make sure employees aren't missing the details of cleaning tasks. But getting the point across without seeming "nit-picky" is a sign of a good leader. Always start with the positives of what the employee is doing right. Then let them know about some of the details you'd like them to work on that will help their overall performance go from good to excellent.

- **Good leaders lead balanced lives.** Understand what is important in work and in life. Your first priority should be your health, your family should be second, and work should be third. When you have your priorities in line, you will become less stressed at work and you'll enjoy your work more, which will translate into being a better leader.
- **Don't ask your employees to do which you are not willing to do yourself.** That doesn't mean you should spend all your time cleaning to prove this fact; it simply means that your employees will respect you more if they know you are ready and willing to pitch in if needed.
- **Be tough, but fair.** People may not admit it, but they want a leader who is tough because it keeps everyone accountable, which means everyone is pulling their own weight. But they also want a leader who is fair, so never show favoritism – always treat people equally.
- **Be open-minded and flexible.** Let your employees know they can always come to you with questions and that you welcome their suggestions. Some of the best ideas come from the people that are in the trenches doing the work, so never shut down an idea because it came from a janitor. Never be so in-flexible that you seem uncaring or rigid with employees. Good leaders know when to be flexible when it comes to the rules, and people respect them for it. For example, if an employee makes a reasonable scheduling request that is easy to accommodate, be flexible enough to allow it – as long as it will keep them happy and not affect their work performance in a negative way.
- **Never ignore tough problems, and never delegate them to avoid dealing with it.** When you deal with tough situations head-on, you'll spend less time worrying about it so you can move on to the next task.
- **Don't spend your time worrying about things you have no control over.** Concentrate on those things you *can* control, because it will keep you moving forward.
- **Become a strategic thinker.** When you get wrapped up in putting out fires all day, you don't give yourself an opportunity to think strategically about how you and your team can work more efficiently. When you think strategically, you contribute to growing the company and ensuring a good future for yourself and your team.
- **Know your numbers.** When you have specific goals for your team like productivity goals, safety goals, and customer service goals, you hold yourself and your team accountable. It also keeps you disciplined and keeps your team on track because your follow up will improve.
- **Surround yourself with good people.** Never allow yourself to hire "warm bodies" because you need help quickly. Spend the time needed to thoroughly interview and screen applicants. Ask the tough questions and dig deep to get a sense of how they handle tough situations. Good people expect more of

themselves and the people they work with, so your team will become stronger and more disciplined.

Leadership: From Buddy to Boss

One of the first things you face if you were promoted into your supervisory position from being a cleaning technician is going from “Buddy to Boss”. It can be hard to be a cleaner on Friday, and come Monday, you’re suddenly in a new role; supervising people in the position you just held last week!

Remaining in “buddy” relationships with your subordinates can create conflict in your role as supervisor and claims of bias may ensue. People may feel as though you will be favoring your buddies instead of having an equal playing field for everyone and your every move will now be in question. Real or perceived, the hint of favoritism will end up undermining you and people you now supervise.

You are asking yourself, how do I become a boss to the same people I once had friendships with? The same people I would go out to dinner with and attend parties and other social functions with? One of the key traits of a supervisor is impartiality. If you have favorites, then it’s going to be harder to supervise effectively.

So how do I prevent people from thinking that since my promotion, to a position of authority, I have not become an arrogant snob, simply because we are no longer “buddies”?

Talk about your new position to the people you previously had a buddy relationship with, one on one. Explain the reason why things are going to change because your responsibilities have now changed. The relationship must change from a friendship level to a business relationship level.

Tips for the discussion and what to expect:

- Ask your manager for some coaching ahead of the conversation to get help and pointers on how to best present yourself.
- Discuss the changes. Let them know you’re excited by the opportunity.
- Assure them that even though the relationship has changed, you’re going to use your experience working alongside them to be the best supervisor you can.
- Reassure them that what you think of them as a person has in no way been diminished. You will have an open door policy and they are welcome to voice their opinions or concerns any time.
- Don’t tell them, “I’m the supervisor now. We can’t talk to each other or tell jokes anymore,” or anything extreme like that. That will just backfire.
- Don’t come across as standoffish or distant. You can keep your valued relationships but remember to keep things fair. If you’re going to have lunch

with a previous “buddy”, then it may be wise to also invite a few other subordinates to join. Be inclusive in everything you do.

- Be prepared for the “guilt trip” and push-back from subordinates. Some people may perceive your new position as a way to get favoritism from you. After all, you were buddies and now you’re the boss, and that should be worth something. They may lay a guilt trip on you saying that “we were such good friends and now you’re all business”. Although they may be honest, it may also be a ploy to gain leverage against you. Your one-on-one conversation should help put an end to this line of thinking.
- Remember, this isn’t the first time this type of things has happened. Most likely, you and your previous friends have gone through the same thing before. Promotions are common place in a business environment and everyone will adjust to it. They understand you’re a supervisor now, and things have to be a little different.

This is a transition that lots of supervisors have had to make, and that it’s just something you need to get past. Then it’s on to leading your people effectively.

Assessing Your Leadership Skills

The best assessment of your leadership comes from those you lead

Who better to assess your leadership abilities than the people you lead? Think about it. You have a personal opinion about every supervisor you’ve ever had. Often times in interviews we ask applicants – “Think about the best supervisor you’ve ever had. What was it about him that made him a good supervisor?” So keep in mind that your employees are assessing your leadership skills all the time, whether they know it or not.

How many times have you ever wanted to tell your supervisor what’s on your mind but held back because you didn’t want to hurt their feelings or you thought you might get into trouble, or you just didn’t think it would do any good to offer your opinion.

Here are some of the things employees’ WANT to tell you but don’t – and what they wish you’d understand.

- **You never tell me I’m doing a good job!** They wish you would notice their hard work and acknowledge it. That good feedback and vote of confidence from YOU can make a huge difference in employee’s attitudes.
- **You have no clue how to do your job, much less mine!** Employees support leaders who know what they’re doing. If you are struggling to be a good supervisor, they will notice and get the perception that you DON’T know how to do your job. And if you DON’T know how to do YOUR job, then you certainly DON’T know anything about THEIR job!

- **You're a control freak!** Your employees want to have control over their own work – they don't want you breathing down their neck watching their every move. Now don't be completely hands off, but strike a balance and give them some autonomy to make decisions and have some control over their work.
- **You never keep us in the loop!** If you want employees to be loyal to the company and feel they play an important role in the company, then let them know what's going on – especially if there are rumors of changes coming down the road, like some new technology or piece of equipment.
- **You never want my opinion!** Sometimes companies make changes that affect employees without ever asking the opinions of those employees being affected by the change! Be the supervisor that solicits feedback and asks for their ideas and opinions. It makes them feel that their opinions and ideas matter.
- **You criticize me in front of my coworkers!** Don't be the supervisor that feels important by criticizing the work of an employee in front of their peers. If an employee has made a mistake or needs more training, pull them aside and offer guidance instead of ridicule.

Here are some additional tips that address some of the challenges I just spoke about.

- **Don't ridicule employees in front of coworkers.** Deal with mistakes in private. Start by discussing the positives of their performance, and then get right into the mistakes or performance issues they're having. Use those mistakes as a learning opportunity – help them become better at their job. And then end the discussion with encouragement, saying something like, "I have confidence in you".
- **Show appreciation.** Always praise the exceptional work your employees do. But be specific in what you're praise is about, and be genuine about it. Find ways to reward work in non-monetary ways. Sometimes just acknowledging it verbally is enough. Or submitting the story of what happened to be published in your employee newsletter for some public recognition. Or maybe you can talk to your manager about some type of reward system you can implement – handing out \$5 gift cards or wooden coins they can collect and turn in for rewards.
- **People like to be in the loop, so be transparent as much as you can.** You can build a lot of trust by sharing information. Be honest and straight forward – don't give them the perception that you're keeping details from them. Address any concerns they have, be open to suggestions and share both good and bad news. Now if you are implementing a change, we'll talk in more detail about that later in the program.
- **If your employees feel you're incompetent at your job, they may feel they can't be as effective at THEIR job.** So set an example of competence. You already know your strengths and weaknesses – you identified your weaknesses at the beginning of this program. This is a good reason to work on

improving those weaknesses. If you have a situation where you need to make a decision, solicit their input. That doesn't make you a weak supervisor, it shows that you value their opinion and want to make the best decision for everyone involved. Just be cautious that you make only realistic promises.

- **Autonomy is giving employees some amount of control over their work situation.** Of course you have processes for the way you want things done, but sometimes they're thrown a curve-ball where they need to make a decision. Look for opportunities to empower them. If they call you with a situation that they're not sure how to handle, that's a good time to ask what they think is the right thing to do – it's a coaching opportunity and it will make them feel empowered when they feel they played a role in deciding what to do. It will also help them the next time the situation arises, and it will help them feel like they have real ownership and control of their job.
- **As they learn from these experiences give them responsibility, but with accountability.** And make sure you provide any needed resources if that will help them do a better job. For example, if they are going to be responsible for minor repairs on their vacuum, provide the manual with instructions so they know how to do it correctly.
- **Always have respectful discussions, encourage everyone's participation so they all feel as if they have a voice.** And be sure to follow through with the discussion and provide them with updates on the situation.

Part 4: LEADERSHIP: GOOD COMMUNICATION

"More than 60 percent of all management problems are the result of faulty communication." ... Peter Drucker

If we only did a better job of communicating, we'd eliminate about 60% of our problems! How good would that feel?



Communicating with Employees

Your top priority every day is to get the job done to the clients' satisfaction. But the way you get it done effectively is with good communication with your employees. To get their best work, you must be fair, consistent and calm. Be the leader with the positive attitude and treat your employees with respect. If you can do that, you'll become a leader they respect and want to work for. And you could become that "favorite" supervisor they mention down the road when they eventually move on to the next step in their journey.

Before we talk about how to become a better communicator, you must be aware of the "costs" when there is a lack of communication.

Here is a story to illustrate that point;

A competitor of ours had a situation of bad communication between a supervisor and a cleaning technician. They had just taken over cleaning of a movie theater and all the restroom sinks needed attention. They had a lot of hard water build-up around the faucets and sink drains, so the supervisor told the cleaner to clean up the hard water deposits. You can probably already imagine where I'm going with this.

Well the supervisor didn't tell the cleaning technician how to clean up the hard water deposits. The cleaner found that all-purpose cleaner and elbow grease wasn't doing the trick. So he saw that there was a product in the janitor closet that removed hard water deposits so he decided to use that. Well of course, he reached for the acid bowl cleaner and ruined all the faucets in the restroom. This was a large movie theater so it had a LOT of sinks!

There were many *costs* that resulted in this huge miscommunication between the supervisor and cleaner. First, they had to replace all the faucets, which you can imagine how costly that was. They also lost the account, which was worth several thousands of dollars each month. And word got around town that this happened so they took a big hit to their reputation, which is sure to have lost them potential new business.

Of course there is also all the lost time and having to re-train the employee, but I don't think that even happened in this case – I'm pretty sure the supervisor and employee were both fired.

Good communication skills are critical to your success as a supervisor. What are the costs when there is a lack of communication?

Money is the first cost to the business:

- If you don't give proper direction when explaining a task you need an employee to do, they may have to go back and re-do the job – and that is probably going to cost about twice the payroll if they have to go back and do it again. Or it might cost even more if YOU are the one re-doing the job.
- If it's a big enough mistake, your boss might have to offer the customer a discount to make up for the mistake. That is not only costing extra payroll, but the company is going to make even less on the job, possibly eliminating the profit on that job.
- There could be a cost of re-training employees that didn't follow the correct procedures.
- And if the miscommunication ended up damaging a surface in the building, it could cost a lot of money to have it repaired or replaced. Even if insurance covers it, the premiums will likely go up as a result – just like your car insurance goes up after an accident.

Time – When there is a lack of communication, it also costs the company time. Here are some examples:

- If a mistake was made, the employer or supervisor must spend time talking to the client to find out what the problem is and to reassure them it will be taken care of. A follow up call should also be placed.

- When employees or supervisors have to go back and spend time correcting a mistake; that is time that could have been spent on an income-generating activity.
- If supervisors are not communicating exactly how much time a project should take, employees may spend extra time than was budgeted.
- The more time supervisors spend communicating from the start of a project, the less time they have to spend correcting miscommunication problems later on.

Opportunities – When there is a lack of communication, it can cost the company opportunities. Here are some examples:

- Lost referrals. If communication problems are causing problems with your clients, they are less likely to refer your company.
- Lost time that could have been spent on marketing and growth of the company.

Reputation – When there is a lack of communication, it can cost the company their reputation. Here are some examples:

- When your company has a bad reputation, you lose possible opportunities to gain new business from good prospects.
- Employees lose their respect for you and let others know that this is not a good place to work.
- Clients lose their respect for you and your company may go shopping for a new cleaning service. They may also bad-mouth you to other companies and post “bad” online reviews.

When you have GOOD communication with in your company, good things happen:

- Employees are happy
- Clients are happy
- It’s easier to grow the business
- You can hire more employees and find better employees because your reputation will precede you
- When you get it done right the first time, you’ll have more profit

In order to have good communication, supervisors must be able to communicate in a way that is friendly and that gets the message across.

There Are 3 Types of Communication

1. Written
2. Verbal
3. Non-verbal (dress, appearance, tone of voice, body language and facial expressions).

We'll take a look at each of these individually and offer tips for improving each type of communication.

1. Written Communication. Supervisors must be able to write instructions, management reports, employee disciplinary reports, and employee reviews, just to name a few.

You may be thinking that what you do doesn't involve a lot of writing – but I would have to disagree. Here are some examples of different situations where you write, and some of the common mistakes supervisors make that can lead to miscommunication.

- **Texting** – most people use acronyms and abbreviations in their texts so if your employee doesn't know what they stand for, they will be confused. I recommend using the audio feature to give the information they need to understand what you want and then proofread it before you hit the Send button.
- **Email** – Do you write emails the way you text? That's not a good idea. Email is meant for full sentences. BUT, it's not meant for writing a book. Make your emails short and to the point, yet comprehensive enough so the recipient understands what you're trying to say. Email is also for more professional use so use proper grammar and punctuation. When it comes to the subject line, stick to one topic and make it descriptive in the subject line so it's easy to find later. For example, instead of saying something like, "Quick Update" for the subject line, say something like, "ABC Bank wants carpet cleaned next week". It's very specific and the recipient knows exactly what the email is about. And don't talk about more than one client or topic per email – it will be too hard to trace back and find later.
- **Assigning tasks** – You must be specific when assigning tasks. Look at what happened to the movie theater faucets because the supervisor didn't explain how to remove hard water deposits and what product to use.
- **Documenting a system** – you may be asked to explain a system, or process for a cleaning procedure. You need to think like someone who has never done the process before. Documenting something that is familiar to you, can sometimes lead to writing in terms that are too general. So be specific and have someone follow your instructions after writing them to see if they're able to follow your process.

Common Writing Mistakes:

- When documenting follow-up feedback for an employee, don't be too general. Trash was missed is too general. WHAT trash was missed? Be specific – was it one trash can or more? Where was it?
- It's important to be very specific when writing up an employee. Describe the circumstances in detail, not in general terms. "Not doing a good job with dusting" is too general. Again, give more specifics.
- And when it comes to evaluations, here again, don't talk in generalities – give examples of what you're talking about.

Written Communication Skills:

- If you're not a writer, I would encourage you to spend a little bit of time each day reading something. Maybe try reading trade magazines in the morning with your breakfast or lunch. Pay attention to how they write and tell stories to paint a picture.
- If you don't write very often, practice a little bit each day before going to bed. Try journaling by writing about your day or starting a gratitude journal.
- When writing, use active words, not passive.
 - Passive example: The restroom was cleaned by the janitor.
 - Active example: The janitor cleaned the restroom.
- Keep it short and to the point – don't ramble on about things that are not relevant.
- Read what you wrote out loud to see how it flows – especially if you're writing up an employee or writing their review. You don't want to stumble over your words in front of the employee.
- Your writing doesn't have to be super formal, you can write as you speak, but without all the slang and jargon.
- Re-read what you wrote a day later. This is especially helpful if it's not an urgent write-up or if it's for an evaluation. Sometimes you'll see where something doesn't flow, or you have another idea to add to it.
- And if you're not sure about what you've written, have a friend or colleague who is a good writer proof read your work.

2. Verbal Communication. Sometimes we take for granted the way our voice sounds to other people. This is the way we speak, take it or leave it! If you're talking to an employee on the phone, she can't shake your hand, look you in the

eye, or see the smile on your face. So you need to make a conscious effort to communicate through your voice.

- **Don't talk too fast.** It's a tendency when people are in a hurry. But if you want to be more effective at verbal communication, pay attention to the person you're talking to. If they're not a fast talker, much of what you say may go in one ear and out the other. So try to match the speed of the person you're talking to.
- **Pause when speaking.** Have you ever felt uncomfortable when there is a pause in the conversation? Some people think that every second needs to be filled with a voice. But if you want to make a point with someone, try pausing after making your point. It gives them time to take in what you're saying. It also adds emphasis to what you're saying.

Here's an example: "Joe, when you call in at the last minute, it makes it hard for us to find someone to fill in for you. And when that happens, Sue and John have to do your work. ...pause... How do you think that makes them feel?" So I paused at Sue and John has to do your work. Did you notice how that pause adds more emphasis to the fact that his action is causing more work for his co-workers? You're making a strong point with that pause.

- **Use inflection when speaking.** When speaking, use inflection. That means putting more emphasis on certain words. If you're a monotone speaker, you might have to practice with this, but it's important because monotone speaking not only conveys your own boredom or lack of interest, it also bores the heck out of your employees!
- **Think about your voice pitch and tone.** Have you ever been in public somewhere, where there is one voice that just drowns out all the other people around? I've had this happen lots of times on a flight, where everyone is talking in normal tones so you can't really discern what the other passengers are saying. But there's always this one person – the one who you clearly hear every word their saying. Don't you find that annoying? I sure do.

I want you to think about what kind of pitch or tone you have in your voice. High pitch, low, soft, loud? If you've got one of those voices, you might want to consciously try to tone it down a bit, especially if there are still employees working in the building and you're carrying on a conversation with your employees. On the other hand, you might be a soft talker – someone that speaks so softly that people have to ask you to speak up, or they just say "What? What did you say?" Find the middle ground with your pitch and tone of voice because too soft of a voice conveys a lack of confidence and too loud of a voice can be annoying.

- **Speak clearly and enunciate.** Be sure to speak clearly and enunciate your words instead of using jargon or dropping the ends of words. So instead of saying, "Hey, you gonna dust the blinds today?" Instead say, "Are you going to dust the blinds today?" It sounds clear and more professional.

- **Eliminate um, uh, you know, and OK from your vocabulary.** This can be hard to do because it's become such a habit for so many people, but work on eliminating the ums, ahs, you knows and OKs from your vocabulary. We don't often notice it when WE do it, but you probably notice it when someone else does it and it's just irritating to listen to. Have you ever recorded yourself? It's pretty easy to do with your phone, and it can be an eye-opening experience when you can hear how you talk. I would encourage you to make a conscious effort to break the habit if you know it's a problem for you.

3. Non-Verbal Communication. There are so many different ways we use our bodies to communicate, but many of us don't have a clue that we're even doing it because it's often times an unconscious thing.

People that are in sales often study body language to figure out what their prospects are thinking or feeling in that moment. And sometimes they use what we call "mirroring" to make a connection with the prospect. So if the prospect leans in, the sale person leans in. If he crosses his legs, the sales person crosses his legs. It's a subtle movement so it's not obvious, but it's kind of like showing the prospect you're on the same page with him.



Here are some basic body language characteristics:

| Negative | Positive |
|--|-------------------------|
| Head is down | Head is up or tilted |
| Slouching posture | Erect posture |
| Weak handshake | Firm handshake |
| No expression | Smiling |
| No eye contact, shifty eyes, rubs eyes, rolling eyes | Eye contact |
| Crossed arms | Open arms |
| Hands in pockets, fidgeting | Hands in lap or at side |

| Submissive | Controlling |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Allows personal space to be invaded | Invades personal space |
| Allows interruptions, soft voice | Interrupts, loud voice |
| Rubbing hands, nervous gestures | Pointing fingers & gestures |
| Quiet, talks little | Loud, talks fast |
| Downcast eyes | Stern expression |

| Hostile | Warm |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Frowns, no expression | Smiles |
| Aggressive posture | Open posture |
| Harsh tone of voice | Warm tone of voice |
| Staring eyes | Warm eyes |
| Invades personal space | Respects personal space |

There can be a perception of being Submissive versus Controlling. Let's look at some examples:

- If you allow your personal space to be invaded, you're being submissive. If you invade other people's personal space, it's perceived as more controlling.
- If you have a soft voice and allow interruptions you're more submissive. If you have a loud voice and interrupt others, you're being more controlling.
- If you make nervous gestures like rubbing your hands together or fidgeting, it's submissive. If you make gestures like pointing your fingers at people it's more controlling.
- If you're quiet and don't talk much, you can be perceived as submissive. If you're loud and talk fast you can be perceived as controlling.
- And if you keep your eyes downcast it's considered submissive. If you have a stern expression on your face, it's controlling.

And then there is the Hostile versus Warm perception:

- If you're always frowning, scowling or never have any expression on your face, it can be perceived as hostile. If you smile frequently you're perceived as a warm person.
- If you take an aggressive posture like leaning forward or you walk fast towards someone, you're considered hostile. If you have an open posture, you're considered warm.
- Harsh tones of voice are hostile, warm tones of voice are of course, warm.
- If you're just staring at someone, it can be perceived as hostile. If you soften your eyes and combine it with a smile, it's perceived as warm.
- If you invade personal space it's hostile, if you respect personal space, it's warm.

If you're talking with an employee and he suddenly folds his arms across his chest and starts shaking his head "no," you're losing them. You might want to try going back and picking up where the conversation took a turn for the negative and see what you can do to change things back to a positive direction.

If the employee is stroking his chin, this means he's making a decision. When you see this, don't interrupt – let him digest what he's heard so you can discuss the situation.

Think about your own body language as well. You want to convey a positive and confident attitude with employees, so study the positive, warm sections and make sure you're using these body language signals. You can also build trust by mirroring the body language your employee is using. It's a way of showing that you like them and agree with them.

Try this when speaking with your employee. If he has his arms crossed, subtly cross your arms. After a few moments, uncross your arms to see if the employee will mirror you. If you notice that he unconsciously matched your movements, this indicates that you're developing trust. On the flip side, if the employee doesn't mirror you, then trust has not been established and you know you have more work to do.

How to Give Instructions

First, make them specific. Give the Who, What, Where, When and Why, that they need to accomplish the task. Explain exactly what you want done, when you want it done, how to do it, where to do it, why to do it, etc. This is especially important for newer employees. Experienced employees may need less information.

When giving instructions, be calm and confident. Have eye contact with the employee and ask questions to make sure they understand. Have them repeat back to you their understanding of what you want them to do. And always give them an opportunity to ask questions.

The “Don’ts” of giving instructions:

- Don’t give too many instructions at once. It will confuse people and they won’t remember everything. When there are a lot of instructions, consider giving written instructions as well as verbal.
- Don’t assume the employee(s) understand what you’re saying. Have them repeat back to you their understanding of what you just told them and ask questions to make sure they understand.
- Don’t issue commands – your employees will resist and they won’t respect you for it. That being said, don’t be indifferent; speak with authority.
- Don’t give conflicting instructions. Be clear and concise.
- Don’t pick on certain people by giving them the “dirty work”.
- Don’t give all the work to the people you know will do whatever you ask – spread the workload evenly.
- Don’t have 2 people giving orders to one employee. Make sure the lines of delegation are clear.

Active Listening



One of the biggest challenges people have is thinking about how you’re going to respond to what someone is saying (as they’re saying it); instead of fully listening to what they’re saying.

Think about when you’re talking to your spouse or a close family member or friend. It’s like you know them so well that you know what they’re going to say anyway, so

why not just interrupt them with your response – right? But when it comes to the workplace (and really any place for that matter), give people the respect they deserve by letting them finish what they’re saying. Then respond.

Remember – you can pause to make a point as well as pause to contemplate your response, so that you make sure to hear everything they’re saying. If you don’t fully listen, you’re sure to miss something, and that’s when miscommunication happens.

As a supervisor, there will be days when it will seem everyone will be demanding your undivided attention. Whether in an office or on the front lines, there’s a lot going on, and it’s easy to misunderstand what people may be trying to say.

So, how do you pay attention and really listen to somebody? Here are some tips:

- **Stop what you’re doing.** Have you ever walked up to someone to ask a question just to have them not even bother to lift their head and look you in the eyes to answer? Not a very good feeling is it? You need to listen and provide your full attention.
- **Shift your mental gears, change your mental focus.** Many times you will be in the middle of something and it will be hard to refocus your attention. Grab a piece of paper and make a quick note of your task at hand. It will allow you to focus on the conversation and also help jog your memory when you pick back up where you left off.
- **It’s OK to ask them a question first.** “Is this a quick yes-no question? Or do you need some time? In fact, if your people are smart, they’ll start the conversation with, “Do you have a quick second?” or “Do you have a few minutes to talk?” so that you’ll immediately know how much time is needed.
- **Clear your mind.** If you’re thinking about the evenings scheduling or an important deadline, it is going to be difficult to absorb what the person is about to say. Don’t allow your mind wander.
- **Remember your non-verbal communication skills.** This is where the positive non-verbal characteristics we discussed earlier come into play. Turn to face them, smile, make eye contact, and free your hands. These are all positive nonverbal listening signals.
- **Listen to what is being spoken and process it.** If you don’t provide your undivided attention and let your mind wander, you will not hear all the words. It’s easy to get distracted so listen attentively, they deserve it. Listening is more than simply letting the words get in; you need to consciously process what you’re hearing.
- **When needed, confirm what you think they said.** People don’t always express exactly what they want to say, and it just comes out wrong. If you’re

not sure what you heard, or if you're uncertain as to what they really meant, then just ask them.

- **Don't talk over people.** You cannot be a good listener if you don't stop talking yourself. You're not listening to other people if you're only listening to yourself. This means you have to resist jumping in before other people are done with what they need to say.
- **Hold your judgment until you've heard the entire story.** As a supervisor, you're a problem solver. It's hard to hear something, think you know what the answer is, and not interrupt. You need to get the whole story before you say anything.
- **Lending an ear is all you need to do.** You don't have to try and solve everyone's problems. Sometimes people don't need an answer or solution, they just need someone to listen to them. When in doubt, you can ask, "Would you like me to provide some advice? Or are you OK as-is?"

Active Listening (Summary)

We are going to be circling back to the main points we just discussed on the topic of Active Listening. Although some of this information may be reiterated, we feel this is an extremely important characteristic of a supervisor and deserves repeating.

Studies show that many employee problems are related to poor communication. In other words, we don't listen to each other very well. You'd be amazed at how many people think they're listening to the employee, when the truth is, they're hearing words come out of the employee's mouth, but they're not truly listening to what he or she is saying.



When talking with employees, do you find yourself thinking about how you're going to respond to their comments before they've even finished talking? Many of us fall into that common trap because we never really learned how to listen.

Active listening is the art of listening with intention by focusing on the person who is talking in order to understand what he is saying. It sounds easy, but so many of us allow other "noise" to invade our head. So while we might hear the employee, we might not comprehend what he is saying.

How can we become better listeners? It takes a lot of practice for it to come naturally. Here are a few more tips that will help you become a better listener:

- Show empathy for the person you're talking to. This is especially helpful when dealing with an upset client.
- Don't judge. If an employee is calling in sick, don't immediately form a judgement that they're lying and just want the night off.
- Leave your emotions out of it. When you listen and start letting your emotions take over, you can't listen effectively.
- Keep an open mind. Don't jump to conclusions and don't form opinions before you have heard the whole story.
- Be motivated to listen. Make it your job to be better. Before going into the meeting or talking on the phone with the employee, remind yourself to actively listen to what he or she is saying.
- Give them respect by looking them in the eye. If you're rolling your eyes or looking off behind the person you're talking to, it shows them that you don't care.

When the employee is finished talking, it's a good time to ask clarifying questions. Is there anything you heard that needs to be clarified? This shows the employee that you were actively listening and want to make sure you understand what he just said.

Additional tips for active listening:

- Lean forward (just slightly – don't invade their personal space) - it shows you're interested.
- Nod your head if you agree, it shows them that you're paying attention.
- Use some positive body language: smile, keep your arms/palms open, feet flat on the floor.
- Avoid distractions, so don't answer your phone or send a text in the middle of the conversation.
- If you need clarification, either ask for it or repeat what he just said. For instance, "Let me see if I understand what you just said." Then proceed to repeat back what you just heard.
- Use a warm tone when asking clarifying questions. Don't sound defensive or aggressive.
- Ask more questions to build understanding.

As a supervisor, you'll need to learn how to separate fact from fiction, and you'll need to listen with an empathetic ear. Oftentimes, if you just let the employee talk through their thought without interruption or input, they end up reaching their own solution.

Remember that listening and hearing are two different things. Most people can hear what is being said, but really listening and understanding what is being said takes practice.

Part 5: MANAGING & MOTIVATING EMPLOYEES

Working Effectively with Employees

Managing and motivating is one of your most challenging roles as a supervisor. In general, you can probably expect to spend about 80% of your time working with employees. It makes sense to spend time learning how to do it effectively in order to get the job done efficiently.

Here are some tips for working effectively with employees:

- First of all, remember that you can't clone yourself. One of the reasons you were promoted is because you were probably pretty darn good at taking care of business for the clients. But not everyone is going to have your same work ethic or set of standards, so don't expect them to perform exactly like you do.
- You can certainly expect the best from your employees, but don't expect perfection. Instead, focus on training them to the best of your abilities and setting them up for success and you'll be pleasantly surprised at how well they can do.
- As the Golden Rule says, treat others as you wish to be treated. So treat them with respect and you'll likely gain their respect over time.
- When there's a problem, don't jump to conclusions and don't assume it's the employee. Get the facts first. It's your job to assess the situation so don't rely on hearsay without an investigation and getting all sides of the story. You may find out it's a system problem, not an employee problem.
- You want to be firm when it comes to making sure everyone is pulling their weight on the job, but also fair. By avoiding the "playing favorites" game, you'll avoid controversy and office politics later.
- Remember that every employee is different – they have their own lifestyle and opinions and as long as it doesn't adversely affect their job performance, it is not your job to judge.

Motivating Employees

When it comes to employees, it takes more than just good pay to keep them motivated. Of course the money is important, but it's not the only motivator; and when it comes to retaining employees, you better have more than just good pay if you want to keep them around for any length of time.

Take a few moments to write down a few ideas that you have on what motivates employees.

Employees are looking for more than just good pay

If you want to motivate your employees, encourage them to grow and set personal goals. Let them know there are job advancement opportunities within your company and spend time learning more about them to see how this may fit with their own plans for advancement.

People become motivated when they feel management appreciates their contribution to the success of the company. Here are more ideas to keep your cleaning employees motivated:

- First, recognize them for a job well done. This is probably the top motivator for any employee – you included. Doesn't it just feel good when your bosses acknowledge your good work? Or when they relay a positive message that a client left about something you did that helped them out or made their life easier? It's such a great motivator!
- Treat your employees with respect. You don't always know everything about them – their experience outside of this job, how they might have helped a fellow employee, or how hard they're trying to do a good job despite something that could be holding them back, such as a learning disability.
- Show trust. If you want your employees to trust you, try trusting them first. Give them a simple task and let them complete it on their own. This simple gesture will help you with learning to trust them. And if your employees believe you will have their back, they will bend over backwards to do the right thing for you.
- Give them responsibility. Just as in the example above, if you give them responsibility and they do a good job with it, be sure to praise them for completing the assignment as requested.
- Keep them informed. Remember that I talked about this earlier in the program, and it's worth mentioning again because it's a powerful motivator.
- Let them offer feedback. Whenever an employee offers feedback, be sure to give them respect by listening to what they have to say, and then thank them for taking an interest.
- Make sure they know that there are job advancement opportunities for them. You never know who might be interested and if you've got someone on your staff that has high potential for leadership, let management know – they may have a program for developing employees with high potential.

If you'd like to create a work environment that encourages self-motivation, follow these guidelines:

- Be a leader but leave your ego at the door. I once talked to the president of one of the largest cleaning companies in the U.S. He told me that he spent at

least a couple days a week getting out into the buildings when the cleaners were working and connected with them. He liked to ask about their concerns and what ideas they have for improving their job. He certainly left his ego at the door by having honest conversations with the employees. Get to know your employees!

- Never ask an employee to do something that you are not willing to do. You'll gain a lot more respect when they know you aren't always dumping on them and that you're willing to pitch in to help.
- Earn the respect of your employees. You'll earn their respect by treating everyone equally, and by being firm, but fair.
- Don't make them feel like you're always looking for a mistake. If you only come around to tell them what they're doing wrong, they'll certainly dread seeing you.
- Guide and train employees. When you do see something that could use improvement, use it as a teaching moment – not as a time to reprimand them for doing something wrong. And be sure to explain why you're doing it a particular way. When they understand the reasoning behind doing it your way, they're more likely to do it.

Advancement Opportunities

Sometimes supervisors are hesitant to help their best people advance because they don't want to lose a good worker! If you've ever felt that way I would encourage you to change your thinking.

You want to be a part of a great team and helping to advance your best employees is a great reflection on you as a supervisor. If you can train and develop your employees, you're proving that YOU are worthy of advancement into a higher management position. So you're not only helping them advance THEIR career, you're helping to advance your own career! So how do you do it?

Here are tips to coaching an employee towards advancing their career:

- Become a good coach by emphasizing their strong points, it helps to build their confidence.
- Point out their weak points and offer guidance for improvement.
- Cross train them on other jobs like carpet cleaning or floor care.
- Become their mentor, and look at your coaching time as an investment instead of a waste of time.
- Challenge the employee with real life situations. For example, if you have a complaint to deal with, have them offer their input on how to handle the situation.

Remember that not all employees are interested in career advancement. Some are perfectly content to continue in their current position. And some are not cut out for a supervisory position.

Managing Different Generations

When it comes to managing employees, it's a good idea to understand best practices for managing the different generations. There are currently 5 different generations living today, we'll cover the 4 that are the primary generations you'll be working with.

Baby Boomer Generation

- They were born between 1946 and 1965.
- They have a reputation for being workaholics.
- Since they tend to be workaholics, they like to be recognized for their hard work. They are also looking for employers to say that they are needed and valued.
- They like monetary rewards like bonuses and promotions.
- They are good team players.
- They are excellent mentors.
- They can be resistant to change.

Generation X (Gen X)

- Generation Xers were born between 1965 and 1976.
- They strive for work balance.
- They like to get things done quickly and efficiently. And because they want work-life balance, they don't like overtime.
- Generation X group will ask how they are doing, and want rewards in the form of time off (not a bonus).
- They want to do things their own way and forget about rules and guidelines.

Generation Y, or Millennials

- They were born between 1977 and 1994.
- They are concerned with social responsibility.
- They like open, constant communication, so give them lots of feedback.
- They want to create their own process instead of being told what to do, so ask them for feedback on the process.
- They don't have as strong a work ethic as previous generations, but they want quick career growth so be sure to let them know there's a career path. And something to keep in mind is that 71% are likely to leave before 2 years if they feel their leadership skills are not being developed.
- They gravitate to people who can help them achieve their goals.

Generation Z

- Generation Z was born between 1995 and 2010.
- No surprise here, but they are the most tech savvy and they rely on technology to solve problems. They are the generation that wants instant feedback because they're used to getting it with their technology. Whenever possible, let them use technology in their work. Be sure to train them with technology, include gamification or social learning if possible.
- They want meaningful work so you need to make sure you let them know why cleaning is so important.
- They are more outspoken and have no patience for racism, sexism and unfair treatment.
- They have little company loyalty but they do want to know what makes your company special – it can help them choose which company they want to work for.

Cultural Diversity

Besides the different generations, we are now a multicultural society. In fact the word Diversity has now replaced Minority these days. And when we talk about Multicultural, it's referring to people of different race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.



You want to focus on the commonalities, but appreciate and respect the differences. Depending on where you're located, you may need to understand different cultures. Some companies work with more Latinos while others have more Muslim communities in their areas.



- Some cultures, like Latinos, like to share more personal information. They tend not only to share a lot about themselves but also ask about other people's families. They ask because they care and they expect others to care about them as well. So when nobody asks them about their sick child, they may feel isolated and disengaged.
- Humility is a value in some cultures. Boasting or self-promotion is not particularly appreciated, encouraged or even taught at home. Some cultures are taught to work hard and keep your head down. They've been taught that you'll be recognized by your hard work. And because of this, supervisors and managers may actually miss-interpret this and think that they're not interested in a promotion.
- In the United States, people tend to say what they mean. But in many other cultures, people are more indirect, which can seem confusing or even misleading to some.
- When it comes to time, Americans tend to be very specific; deadlines are deadlines. But in many other cultures, people tend to think more long-term, so dates and deadlines are more flexible.
- Work can be impacted by cultural and religious events. These events can affect the workplace as people require time off to observe their holidays.

Unconscious Biases

It's especially important for those in supervisory positions to strive to recognize unconscious bias in them and to avoid stereotyping. It's your job to treat everyone the same, in as fair a manner as possible. Recognizing your own prejudices is the first step.

You should also discourage harassment, bullying, and abusive conduct of all kinds in the workplace. It really goes back to The Golden Rule - Treat others as you would like to be treated.

Part 6: TRAINING & EVALUATING EMPLOYEES

How many of you have thought at least once, that training employees is a waste of time? Of course, we all have! It's especially problematic if your company tends to have a lot of employee turnover.

When you lose employees soon after you take them through their initial training, it's discouraging because it feels like you wasted a lot of our time. So then the attitude becomes – why should I spend all this time training when they're just going to quit anyway? But that attitude begins a terrible cycle that just keeps making the situation worse. And really, that's why you're doing this supervisor training right now – so you can help improve employee turnover rates in the company and develop more long-term employees that enjoy their job and working for the company.



Whenever you're feeling this way, remind yourself about Henry Ford's famous quote - *"The only thing worse than training your employees and having them leave, is NOT training them and having them STAY!"* ... Right?

One of the problems with training is that people pretty much forget everything they learned in less than a week unless you have a way to continuously reinforce their training. Just like you're going to forget a lot of what you're learning here today; unless you put into practice some of what you learned and revisit the information to reinforce your training.

It's kind of like "use it or lose it" – it's how the brain works. And sure, you're going to train them and they're going to be cleaning every day, but are they going to remember the details of exactly how you want them to do the process? Not unless you reinforce it – and a good way to do that is to explain why they must do things a certain way.

5-Step Training Process

When it comes to training employees we recommend the 5-Step Process you see here.

1. First, **Tell** them about each step of the procedure. Walk them through it and explain why we do it this way – remind them of the safety factors and customer expectations. Giving them the WHY helps them retain the information.
2. Next, **Show** or demonstrate the procedure, talking through it as you go. If there are common mistakes people make when doing this procedure, talk about that too and why it's not a good idea to do it that way.
3. Have them **DO** what you have taught them, providing feedback and guidance along the way.
4. Then, after they've had enough practice, let them **Apply** what they've learned on the job.
5. Finally, **Review** their performance.

Here are some additional ideas for your training sessions.

- When showing videos, pause the video in certain spots to discuss, answer questions and explain tasks in more detail.
- When doing demonstrations, follow them up by getting your employees involved in doing the tasks themselves.
- Have a Q&A session to make sure all their questions are answered.
- Do a live quiz, where you ask questions of the group. You can even make it fun by giving prizes for correct answers. We used to do safety training refreshers, and whoever answered a question correctly got the envelope. Then the next person who answered a correct question could either take the next envelope, or take someone else's envelope and that person would have to take the new envelope. It made it fun for the group because they all wanted to see who ended up with the best prizes in the envelopes!

Keys to Successful Training

Following are some keys to successful training.

- First, you need to be prepared.
- If you want to be a good trainer, you must know the material inside and out and feel comfortable explaining, demonstrating, and answering questions as to why tasks are done in a certain way.

- Next, you must approach training with a good attitude.
- No matter how many times you've covered the same material, you must present it with enthusiasm.
- Repetition and follow up is critically important. You can't expect employees to do a task or procedure once and have it down pat.
- You must review the procedure and repeat it as many times as it takes to make sure he or she understands.
- Make sure you're giving positive feedback on what they're doing right, along the way, because it reinforces their training. Plus, you don't want to only be pointing out the things they're missing, or they're going to feel they can't do anything right!

Here is an example of giving feedback. This first example is NOT the best way to approach the situation.

"John, I just went into the restroom and noticed that there are water spots on the lower part of the mirrors again. I told you last week that you were missing this when cleaning the restrooms and now I'm seeing it again!"

"What's it going to take to get you to remember to fully clean the mirrors?"

You can tell the supervisor is irritated in this example, and that isn't going to help the situation. Instead, try a different approach.

"John, you're really doing a great job at dusting this office. I just walked through and didn't find any heavy dust in the areas that many team members miss."

"I do want to talk to you about the mirrors in the restrooms though. I'm noticing that there are water spots on the lower part of the mirrors. Remember to always be extra careful with these areas because that is where people tend to splash water when washing their hands. If you can take care of that every day, you'll be doing a great job overall on your cleaning."

Do you think John will be a little more motivated to make sure the mirrors are cleaned properly next time? I think so!

Dealing with Complaints

We talked about handling complaints earlier in the program when it comes to customer relations, so now we're going to talk about it as it applies to training your employees on how to properly take care of the customer.



This is a quote from Sam Walton, founder of Walmart:

*"There is only one boss, and whether a person shines shoes for a living or heads up the biggest corporation in the world, the boss remains the same. It is the customer! The customer is the person who pays everyone's salary and who decides whether a business is going to succeed or fail. **In fact, the customer can fire everybody in the company from the chairman (CEO) on down, and he can do it simply by spending his money somewhere else.** Literally everything we do, every concept perceived, every technology developed and associate employed, is directed with this one objective clearly in mind – pleasing the customer."*

A lot of employees don't really care much about the customer; they just want to do their job and go home. But you DO care, so you want to make sure you know the best practices on training your employees to deal with complaints.

One of the most important things to keep in mind when dealing with customers is to Respond rather than React. And as you learn this skill you can train your employees to do the same so that they know what to do when a customer or employee in the building approaches them with a complaint. Let's look at this example.

Customer: *"I put these boxes in the aisle for you to take out to the trash yesterday and they're still here! Why didn't you take them out?"*

Reacting Negatively: *"Well, they weren't marked trash so I didn't take them out!"*

How do you think the customer felt when they walked away after this conversation? Not good, right? Now I'm not saying that they were kind in their approach, but this is how it is when dealing with customers in any industry – if they're complaining they're not happy and some take their frustration out on the first person they see.

So instead of reacting back to the customer with an angry retort, get used to responding with concern. Here is an example of a better way to handle this situation.

Responding Positively:

"I'm so sorry, I did see them and checked to see if they were marked for trash but I didn't see any notes and I didn't want to throw out anything that wasn't intended for the trash. I'll take care of it right now. Let me give you some stickers that you can use to mark the boxes for trash. That way I'll know for sure that I need to take them out to the trash next time."

Doesn't that feel much better? The cleaner can walk away knowing they solved the problem by offering a solution to make sure it doesn't happen again - and they did it in a kind way. And now the customer knows what to do the next time there are boxes to throw away.

employee.

2. Find out the employees point of view so they know you are interested in their side of the story. Then help them find a solution. For example, you could ask, "looking back, do you think you could have responded in a different way that would have kept the customer happy?"
3. Make sure you explain to the employee exactly how to please the customer and why it's so important to keep the customer happy. In the case of the boxes example, there were two responses given, so if the employee gave the angry response, give them the correct way to respond so they know how to turn an upset customer into a happy one.
4. And finally, ask your employee this question: "*If a customer isn't happy with your work, would you want me to let you know?*" Why would you ask that question? Well, it goes back to pride of work and getting the employee to take responsibility for their own work. I mean, who doesn't want the customer to be happy with their work? Naturally they're going to say "Yes, I would like to know if a customer isn't happy with my work", so they're giving you permission to let them know when a customer complains or isn't happy with their work.

Managing Difficult Situations

Employee Personal Problems

Although we all have personal problems, we don't all deal with them in the same way. Some people are able to leave their personal problems at home without it affecting their work. But not everyone is able to do this, so it may show up as poor work performance, poor attendance or tardiness.



The first step is to talk to the person to let them know you've observed a slip in their work performance and it needs to improve. See if they open up to you about what is really going on. It could just be carelessness, preoccupation, or it could be a personal problem that is causing the slip in work performance.

If it is a personal problem, there is not a lot you can do to help them. Listening, being empathetic to their situation and letting them blow off steam may help the employee feel better for the moment, but it is not a long-term solution. Don't let the employee feel as if they deserve special treatment because they have a personal problem.

In some situations, it may be appropriate to offer some time off to deal with the problem, especially if it concerns health problems or a death in the family. But if the employee has an ongoing pattern of letting personal problems affect their work, you don't want them to get the impression that they have temporary permission to slack off or take it easy when it comes to their job. A better approach is to ask how they plan to keep the stress at home, from interfering with work. They need to understand that their current level of performance is not acceptable and improvements need to be made.

Remember that as a supervisor, you are responsible for the performance of ALL employees that work for you. If you find yourself spending most of your time dealing with the personal problems of one or two employees, then it's taking time away from nurturing and developing your "star" employees.

If you find yourself in this situation, don't spend your time offering advice to the employee. Instead, ask what ideas they have about solving the problems, what they've tried, and what resources they need. The key is to get *them* to find the solution instead of just offering a shoulder to cry on. If you continually do that, they'll start taking advantage of you at every opportunity. When you encourage them to solve their own problems, it will help them mature and it will give you more time and energy to do your own job.

Let's reiterate the 3 steps for dealing with employee personal problems:

1. **Ask what ideas they have about solving the problem;** what they've tried, and what resources they might need. Now I'm not talking specifically about helping them solve their personal problem; I'm talking about ideas on how they can better deal with it at work – keep it work-related.
2. **Get *them* to find the solution instead of just offering a shoulder to cry on.** If you can help them come up with their own solution, then they'll be more likely to follow through and work on improving the situation.
3. **Encouraging them to solve their own problems helps them mature in their professional performance on the job.** Everyone has to deal with personal problems throughout their work life, especially in the case of younger workers; you're giving them tools they can use for the future. And dealing with it head-on will also give you more time and energy to do your own job.

Absenteeism and Tardiness

The cleaning business is a service business, dependent on its employees to perform the work. Although it can never be eliminated, excessive absenteeism and tardiness must not be tolerated.

As a supervisor, your job becomes much more difficult when employees are late or absent, because you must distribute the work to other employees or do it yourself. It is in your best interest to keep absenteeism and tardiness to a minimum. Employees need to understand that cleaning companies clean at the convenience of the client; not at the convenience of the employees.



Absenteeism and tardiness is one of the most common situations you'll have to deal with. Some people always seem to be late and some tend to have more absences than others. Don't let them get away with it for a long time, finally having it up to "here", and then get angry and confront them about it. They won't understand why it suddenly seems to be a problem when you never said anything before. It's your job to set the standard from their first day of work and to enforce company rules.

- In the case of tardiness, not only remind them about company policy on being to work on time but remind them that you clean at the convenience of the client – not at the convenience of the employees.
- Companies have different attendance policies so you must be familiar with it and enforce it. And you must document all infractions, so you are treating all employees fairly.

Think of someone who had a tardiness or absenteeism problem. How was it resolved and was it the right decision? Why or why not?

Workplace Politics

Workplace politics can be a problem for any kind of business. It often stems from dissatisfaction with pay, promotions, or fair distribution of work among employees.

Maybe someone found out that another employee is making more per hour and isn't happy about it since they've both worked for the company the same length of time. Or maybe one of your most productive employees is tired of picking up the slack from less productive employees and is starting to voice his opinion about it.



What happens is, the unhappy employee may try to influence co-workers by gossiping or trying to cause tension between the cleaning crew and authority, which is probably you, the supervisor.

In most cases, the leaders or instigators of this group are motivated by their own self-interests, and not what is in the best interest of the company and its employees. Because of their own dissatisfaction, they're trying to make everyone else miserable too.

Think of a workplace politics situation you observed or have been involved with. How was it resolved and was it the right decision?

employees on their side, which causes a bigger problem if more people end up getting in the middle of their conflict.

- When employees don't get along it sometimes leads to harassment. If you have employees making harassing comments, it's time to step in quickly.
- There may be a conflict with you or the company if an employee feels they're not being treated fairly with things like schedule changes.
- Employees can get upset if they were expecting a promotion and someone else got it.
- If an employee didn't get the pay raise he expected, it can cause conflict with management.

So how do you solve the conflict?

First, you stick to the facts. Remember, you are the calming force in this situation so by sticking to the facts, it makes it easier to keep the emotion out of it.

- Start by stating the observed performance or behavior.
- Next, state the required performance or behavior.
- And lastly, get agreement from all parties on the resolution.

Here is an example of observed performance. In this example, you have an employee that came to you because another employee on the team has been clocking out early, every night this week.

So you verify the clock outs and have a talk with the employee:

"Sam, it was brought to my attention that you finished working at 9:30 the past 3 nights and clocked out early."

Next, state the required behavior:

"Our policy is that if you finish early with your regular cleaning, you are to ask if anyone else needs help."

And finally, get agreement:

"Sam, can I count on you to offer your help in the future when you complete your work early?"

Of course Sam will agree to those conditions, and now you have leverage if it happens again.

Employee Discipline

Employee discipline is probably the hardest thing you'll have to deal with as a supervisor.

It's certainly not a fun part of the job, and it means you'll have to deal with employee emotions, from anger to tears. This makes many of supervisors uncomfortable. But it's part of your job, so we have several best practices you'll want to get familiar with.



- First, it's your job to make sure each employee is aware of company policies and the consequences of breaking the rules.
- Not only will enforcing the rules keep them safe and in compliance, it will mean they'll be less likely to break the rules, making your job easier.
- Enforcing the rules also reduces the chances of being sued because of unfair practices. And in case you don't know, if an employee does sue the company, it doesn't mean you're off the hook. You'll be brought in to testify and give your side of the story. And if you haven't done YOUR job in enforcing the rules properly, your own job could be at risk.

Here are some tips for enforcing company policies:

- **First, get the facts. Don't discipline based on hearsay.** For example, let's say John comes to you to say that Tom clocked back in after taking a lunch break but then proceeded to sit back down and take 10 more minutes of break while clocked in. You can't simply write up Tom based on what John said. You're better off talking with Tom, letting him know that it was brought to your attention that this is what he did. Then listen to his side of the story. Even if he won't admit to it, he'll know he's been caught and got off easy the first time. Chances are he won't repeat it.
- **Once you do have the facts, act quickly.** If you witnessed an infraction or have more than one witness, don't wait to talk to the employee. The more times you let someone get away with infractions, the harder it will be to discipline later. Take the example of someone who is chronically late. If you've let it slide for a couple months and then confront them with it when you're sick and tired of it, they'll wonder why it was ok for so long and now suddenly it's NOT ok.
- **Be sure to document everything.** Even if you give a verbal warning for a first-time infraction, take notes on what was said. Then when it happens again, document it on a discipline form and have the employee sign it. Be

sure to document every write-up and have them sign it. If they refuse, have a witness present and have the witness sign it.

- **Don't discipline in front of others.** It doesn't matter what the problem is, it should be handled in private. All you do when you discipline in front of others is give them reasons to gossip to other employees.
- **Don't play favorites when it comes to the rules.** If you have two employees that are chronically late, then make sure you talk to them both. Don't let your "favorite" slide because you like him. The other employees will know what's going on and will lose respect for you when it's obvious you're not treating everyone equally.
- **This should go without saying, but never discipline when you're angry or upset.** Step away, take a few deep breaths, or if it's something that can wait a couple hours or until morning, wait and then do what it takes to calm yourself down.
- **Don't just accuse them of breaking a rule.** Explain what is unacceptable about it. If they were 15 minutes late for work and didn't call anyone to let them know they'd be late, let them know the ripple effect it can have on you and their co-workers because now you all have to stop and communicate about it, start making phone calls to the employee, and potentially to a replacement. It can affect several people and put them behind in their own work.
- **Explain the next steps and monitor progress.** This is especially important if it's a performance issue. You'll need to let them know specifically what they need to do to improve performance and schedule a follow up date to review their progress.
- **If it's a serious violation** such as being suspected of driving a company vehicle under the influence of alcohol, chances are you might suspend the person pending further investigation. Or if it is cause for immediate termination, make sure you are familiar with what kind of offences warrant immediate termination and that you follow the proper procedures.

Disciplinary Discussion Examples

When it's time to have a disciplinary discussion with an employee, get to the point quickly. Here are two examples of disciplinary discussions.

In the first example, we've got an employee that is leaving work early so the building isn't getting cleaned properly and it shows.

"I asked you here to discuss a problem that I've noticed. You are spending less time than the budgeted amount allowed at City Bank, and it's starting to show in the cleanliness of the building."

This example is about an employee that isn't following the correct process for cleaning the restrooms.

"I wanted to spend some time discussing how you are cleaning the restrooms at Town & Country Insurance.

Next, state why you are having the conversation.

"I'm concerned about the dusting. Since you are spending less time at the bank, some of the dusting isn't getting done."

"I'm concerned that you are not cleaning certain items because you are not following our restroom cleaning system.

In both cases I've used the words "I'm concerned", and then proceeded to tell them why I have a valid concern. I'm being very specific here.

Next, describe what you know.

"When this was brought to my attention, I visited the site and noticed that many areas hadn't been dusted in quite some time, such as the tops of the partitions, window sills and table tops.

"I saw you start with cleaning the toilets, then go to the countertops and sinks, then fill the dispensers, and then go back to the toilets. In the meantime, you didn't clean the mirrors and didn't check the soap. This is not our restroom cleaning system."

Notice I mention that it was brought to my attention, and then I personally went to check it out to validate what I was told.

In this example, I start with "I saw you", which means I personally witnessed that they're not following procedure.

Next, ask the employee to share their side of the story.

"This is how I see it. Can you tell me why you are not spending the budgeted amount of time at City Bank?"

"So that is what I know about the situation, but I'd like to hear your view of what is going on."

In both of these scenarios, it's pretty clear that they're not following company policy so no matter what their excuse is, they don't have much of a leg to stand on.

Based on the response from the employee, ask questions to further understand the situation from his or her perspective.

"How do you know that the customer doesn't want you to dust those items?"

"If you followed the system, then why did you miss cleaning the mirrors and checking the soap? And why did you go back and forth between the toilets and countertops?"

Next, explain the consequences of the continued behavior.

"When I look at this from the customer's perspective, I would assume I'm paying for a service that I'm not receiving."

When you bring in the customer expectations, it's pretty clear that they're not only breaking your policies, but that it has a visible, negative affect on the customer. And that is simply not acceptable because accounts can be lost for these kinds of performance issues.

"What I'm going to do is re-train you on cleaning restrooms. But "if this continues after the re-training, then I'll have to put you on probation."

In this case, you're giving them the opportunity to improve by re-training them on the proper procedures. But you also state the consequences if they don't follow procedures after the training.

Next, describe how you feel about what you know.

"I'm concerned that you are in too much of a hurry to finish your job, and are skipping tasks that are important to the customer."

This one re-states the fact that you are concerned because this is important to the customer.

"I am upset that this is the second time we've discussed this and you continue to reassure me that you'll follow our systems, but then don't keep your word."

In this case you are upset because you've already discussed this twice and they're not keeping their word to improve.

And finally, decide the disciplinary action, how much time they have to improve, and when you'll next speak to them about the problem.

"I'll give you two weeks to get the dusting back to the level it should be. I'll check in on you during that time and in two weeks I'll let you know if your performance is up to standard."

"I believe you need to go through restroom training one more time, and then I'll give you 30 days to get the system down. I'll check in on you to see if you have any questions during that time. If improvement is not made at the end of 30 days I'll have to put you on probation."

More Verbiage to Use

Sometimes it's hard to come up with the words to use in disciplinary situations. So I have some tips for you to use and practice.

Here are some conversation starters:

- *I like how you are conscientious about taking care of the equipment.*
- *I appreciate when you take the time to make sure the equipment is clean and put it in the proper place at the end of your shift.*
- *You are really good at making sure you take care of the equipment and tools you use every day.*
- *I have a problem and need your help.*

The next section is for addressing performance or behavior issues:

- *I noticed that you are quick to anger if I have to talk to you about a customer complaint.*
- *When you get angry like that, the impact is that you don't hear what I'm saying when I'm trying to get your side of the story.*
- *Sometimes your anger is too aggressive and it makes your co-workers uncomfortable.*

Here are a couple drama stoppers:

- *I agree it may seem that way, but we have good business reasons for following this policy.*
- *It may seem like your co-workers have different rules but we're talking about your performance/behavior.*

Here is some verbiage for ending the conversation:

- *I need your agreement that you will hear me out if I have to talk to you about a customer complaint.*
- *Will you agree to hear me out if I have to talk to you about a customer complaint? You will get a chance to tell your side of the story.*

- *Starting tomorrow, I need you to make sure you follow the process we re-trained you on, for cleaning the restrooms.*
- *Can I count on you to follow the process?*

How to Handle Yourself

I'd like to re-iterate how important it is that you handle yourself in a calm and courteous manner. Whether you're dealing with one or more employees, you must be the peacemaker.



- So after you've told them why you're having this discussion and your observations, listen to what they have to say so they can give their side of the story. Then you can respond.
- Be sure to document the meeting.
- Remember that conflict can be beneficial. If someone is struggling with their job performance, perhaps the extra training you're going to give them will help and you'll end up with a great employee! Or if you're able to resolve a conflict between 2 employees and make all parties happy with the result, then you've probably headed off a worse situation by procrastinating and letting it escalate.

5 Step Disciplinary Process

1. **Documented verbal warning.** Talk to the employee to make sure they understand that their performance is unacceptable. Then explain that if it continues, a written warning will be given. Be sure to document the discussion.
2. **Written warning.** Document the situation on an incident report and then review it with the employee. Have the employee sign the form and place it in their employee file. If they refuse to sign, have another supervisor or your manager sign as a witness.
3. **Probation.** Give the employee 30 to 60 days to improve their performance. Be sure to give feedback during this period. When probation is over, either remove them from probation if performance has improved, or terminate their employment. Termination should not be a surprise to the employee at this

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Evaluating Employee Performance

Evaluating performance is an ongoing process, but for new employees, it should be scheduled. During their first 90 days of employment, you should be working closely with your new hires, following up and offering feedback to improve their performance. At 90 days, it's a good time to sit down with them to review their performance.

During their first year of employment, employees should be evaluated at least three times – at 90 days, 6 months and one year.



A lot of people no longer believe in written evaluations, but there is value in sitting down with your employees one on one and discussing their performance. The idea isn't that you sit down and tell them all the things they do well, all the things they do so-so, and all the things that need improvement. The idea is to have a constructive conversation about their contribution to the company and to customer satisfaction, and about what the company can do to make their job easier and more enjoyable.

Here are a few of the benefits of evaluating employee performance:

- Employees receive constructive feedback on their performance, which they can use to improve. The key is not to just provide feedback, but to give them specific recommendations on how they can be more efficient; and giving them the reasons for doing things in a certain way.
- Evaluations can help to identify areas in which the employee needs more training. If a simple re-training in dusting will help improve their overall performance, then it's important to identify these areas.
- Taking the time to sit down privately with employees opens up the lines of communication and allows them to share their thoughts. Again, this is not a one-way conversation where you do all the talking. The most productive evaluations are about open conversation with the employee so they can share their thoughts in a safe setting.
- Evaluations are written documentation of work performance, which can be used to decide on promotions, raises and terminations.
- Feedback received from the employee may identify areas in which your supervision needs improvement. This might not be a fun thing to consider, but remember earlier in the program when I shared some of the things your employees wish they could tell you but don't? This is an opportunity for you to get this feedback. Now they probably aren't going to tell you that you're not doing a good job in certain areas, but you can pick up on things that would indicate you may not have communicated as effectively as you could have when training or assigning tasks. So take it as an opportunity to improve your own performance as well.

How to prepare for the evaluation

- First gather documentation from the employee's personnel file, such as building inspections and write-ups. And keep in mind that you should not just be doing negative write ups. You should also be looking at the good things your employees do, where they've gone above and beyond for a customer, for example. Be sure to document those positive situations too.
- Some companies have employees write their own review. We do this in our company because it makes it a lot easier to facilitate open discussion.

- Don't wait until the day before the evaluation is due to get all this done. Schedule out at least a couple weeks in advance, the time to write the review so you're not rushed. And schedule a time with the employee to give the review so you don't just pop in on them one day and say, "Let's sit down and do your review". Give them a little time to prepare and think about questions they may want to ask. And it's always a good idea to check with your HR Department or whoever is in charge of payroll, to see how far in advance they need the review turned in. This is especially important if there is a raise involved so the employee gets their raise on time.
- Put the employee at ease and then listen to what he or she has to say.
- Employees should be able to walk away from the evaluation knowing what to improve upon and feeling good about the things they're doing right.

How to Write an Effective Evaluation

Most supervisors are told they are responsible for writing evaluations but are never taught how to write them effectively. Below are several areas you may need to evaluate for each employee. Under each topic are questions and things to consider when forming your comments.

What to evaluate:

1. Knowledge, Skills, Abilities
Degree to which employee exhibits the required level of job knowledge and/or skills to perform the job.
2. Quality of Work/Productivity
Does employee complete assignments meeting quality standards? Consider accuracy, neatness, thoroughness and adherence to standards.
3. Accuracy, Meets Deadlines
Consider the results of the employee's efforts. Does the employee demonstrate the ability to manage several responsibilities simultaneously; perform work in a productive and timely manner; meet work schedules?
4. Work Habits, Adaptability
To what extent does the employee display a positive, cooperative attitude toward work assignments and requirements? Consider compliance with established work rules and organizational policies. Consider ease with which employee adjusts to any change in duties, procedures, work environment or work schedule. How well does the employee accept new ideas and approaches to work, respond to constructive criticism and to suggestions for work improvement?

5. **Safety Compliance**
Does the employee work safely, report safety hazards, follow safety training guidelines?
6. **Communication, Interpersonal Skills**
Does the employee express ideas clearly both orally and in writing, listen well and respond appropriately? Does the employee communicate well with co-workers? Does the employee stay in touch with the supervisor and give regular updates on progress of assignments?
7. **Teamwork, Cooperation**
How well does the employee work with co-workers and supervisors as a contributing team member? Does the employee maintain rapport with others; help others willingly?
8. **Initiative**
Consider how well the employee seeks and assumes greater responsibility, monitors projects independently, and follows through appropriately.
9. **Decision Making and Problem Solving Skills**
Consider how well the employee effectively analyzes problems, determines appropriate action for solutions, exhibits timely and decisive action; thinks logically.
10. **Planning and Organizing**
Consider how well the employee plans and organizes work; coordinates with others, and establishes appropriate priorities; anticipates future needs, carries out assignments effectively.
11. **Attendance, Punctuality, Dependability**
Consider absences, punctuality, adherence to work schedule, excessive time off requests. Consider the amount of time spent directing employee. Does the employee monitor projects and exercise follow-through; adhere to time frames; is on time for meetings and appointments; and responds appropriately to instructions and procedures?
12. **Understanding Company Policies**
Does the employee understand company policies and follow them? Does the employee regularly violate any company policies (e.g. dress code, attendance, etc.?)

Evaluating Employee Performance

If you are going to have employees write self-evaluations, there are several questions to consider asking.

Self-Evaluation Questions:

- What do you consider to be your top accomplishments this past year?
- List your areas of strengths and areas needing improvement.
- Do you have the tools, equipment and training you need to perform your job effectively?
- What additional resources, information or training would be helpful?
- Are there components of your job that you would like to change and, if so, how would you change them?
- What skills or new knowledge would you like to develop to improve your performance?
- What are your long-range career objectives and what are your plans to accomplish these objectives?
- What can your supervisor do to help you to reach your professional development or career goals?
- What goals would you be interested in working toward between now and the next performance evaluation?

Part 7: HOW TO INTRODUCE CHANGE

In the business world, change is pretty much a fact of life and if you can't adapt to change and help employees through the transition, then you probably won't make it very far in your career.



It doesn't matter what kind of business you're in – change will happen. Now, you can do it the hard way or you can introduce change in a more compelling way that gets the team on board.

The price of doing the same old thing is far higher than the price of change ...Bill Clinton

Think about where we would be in the cleaning industry if we hadn't been making some of the changes we've made in the last 20 years:

- We wouldn't have safer cleaning chemicals for our employees to use.
- We would still be using heavy upright vacuum cleaners with cloth bags that send all kind of pollutants back into the air.
- We would still be filling out paper time sheets by hand and collecting them from employees every week.

The list of industry changes goes on and on. When we look back, we wonder how in the world we ever did our jobs effectively without our cell phones. Do you remember the days of pagers? We thought *that* was high tech at the time! Look how far we've come! But it didn't happen without a LOT of change.

There are 3 Truths of Change:

1. People support what they help create. So we will be talking more about how to get the team involved.
2. People never argue with their own information and ideas.
3. People can't support what they don't know about and understand.

Always consider these three points when making a change in your organization.

Change: Involve People Early and Often

Involving people early and often is the key to implementing change. Here is how to do it.

1. **Awareness:** Provide the information others need about the change and how it will be implemented. You'll work with management on how they want to roll out the change, so be sure to have the discussion about how to provide awareness to the team.
2. **Input:** Ask for feedback about the change and your plans to implement it. When it's time to discuss the change with the team, there will be certain areas that you can get them involved with in order to get their input.
3. **Participation:** Involve others early to understand their questions, concerns, and issues about the change. And ask for ideas about the desired result and their approach for getting there.

In some cases, you may want to gather some of your key people for some initial input. For example, if you have a team with some key full-time people and the rest are part-timers, you may want to involve the full time employees first. Or if it's a change that primarily involves the floor crew, then get their input and participation since they are directly affected by the change. For example, if the company is thinking about making a change in floor machines, have the floor crew test the equipment and give feedback on its usability and practicality for the building.

4. **Collaboration:** Work in partnership to develop a solution that meets everyone's needs. There will be give-and-take when making change. Some things will have to be implemented in a certain way, especially if it involves technology. So make sure you're creating a collaborative atmosphere when discussing the change, let the employees know if there are things that are non-negotiable, and make sure you focus on the things you need their input on.

5. **Empowerment:** Give others control over the decision and implementation. This could include asking for recommendations and then approving them.

Tips for Successful Change

Next we'll talk about additional tips for successful change. Unfortunately, magical things don't just happen if you don't make any changes at all.



**“What if we don’t change at all ...
and something magical just happens.”**

The first thing you can do is prepare yourself by anticipating the resistance statements that you can expect from the team. Then you can prepare your responses in advance. Never start talking about making changes without being prepared. So what kinds of resistance statements might they make?

Here are a few:

- *We’ve done it that way before and it doesn’t work.*
- *The way we do it now works just fine.*
- *I like the vacuum I use right now; I don’t want to use a different kind.*
- *I’m going to quit if they make this change.*

Additional tips for successful change:

1. **Respect others’ opinions and assume the resistance is well-intentioned.** Make sure you’re able to empathize with your employees and

remember what it was like to have to deal with changes when you were in their position. So give them respect and assume the resistance is well-intentioned.

You may have a couple employees that always tend to go against anything management asks of them, but most people will have legitimate concerns or fears so be sure to hear them out.

2. **Pull, don't push.** If it's a big change and you anticipate resistance, then expect them to push you. It may be natural for you to want to push back but resist that impulse.

It's your job to be the calm presence in the room. Instead of pushing back and forcing the change down their throats, open a dialogue by asking questions and then listening to understand their concerns. If you've prepared ahead of time, then you'll have already considered their concerns and are prepared to address them.

3. As much as possible, **keep your eye on the goal** and be flexible about how it's achieved.
4. **Be open to new ideas and approaches of others.** Again, there may be some things that you can't be flexible on, but listen to their ideas because they may have a better one than even management has thought of.
5. **Know when to support the change.** Management is going to come to you first when a change is coming, so YOU must be open to change and be the champion of change.
6. **You may not agree with the change initially** so if that's the case, raise your concerns because you may have a perspective that management hasn't considered.

You work closely with the front-line cleaners and can probably anticipate their concerns better than your bosses can. Assuming the change is inevitable, offer your ideas, accept the change and work with management on how best to present the change to the employees and get their involvement.

FINAL ADVICE: What Great Supervisors Do Every Day

I'd like to end the program by sharing this list of things that great supervisors do every day:

- Improve their communication skills.
Remember, we communicate in 3 ways (written, verbal and non-verbal). I suggest you go back and review the tips in this section and focus on ways you can improve in this area because it's a key to success for great supervisors.
- Read industry publications and leadership books.
Great leaders are always reading and I recommend you do too!
- Get to know their people - be interested in them.
Take an interest in your employees as individuals and you'll start to gain their trust, respect and loyalty.
- Deliver feedback continuously.
And do it as a coach, not a drill sergeant.
- Reinforce those who do what's expected and exceed expectations.
This means recognizing the good work your employees do and not always being so focused on everything they do wrong.
- Encourage an innovative, accepting environment.
This will help with employee engagement. Let them know that you welcome their suggestions and feedback.
- Keep their employees informed and keep their bosses informed.
Open communication at all levels is important for individual and company success.
- Are personable, approachable and positive.
Be that person.
- Make timely decisions.
Get better at making good, timely decisions.
- Tackle difficult issues immediately.
Don't procrastinate or the situation will only get worse.
- Address substandard performance immediately.
Don't procrastinate or the situation will only get worse.
- Solicit feedback – especially when making changes.

Now, as a great supervisor, what will YOU do every day?

**This completes your Supervisor Training.
The next step is to take the Supervisor Quiz.**

SUPERVISOR QUIZ

Circle the correct answer.

Part One: Role of the Supervisor

1. What are the primary responsibilities of a supervisor?
 - A. To resolve problems as they arise
 - B. Make sure the team is productive
 - C. Guide the crew to make sure goals are being met
 - D. All the above
2. Supervisors may fail because they make changes too fast.
 - A. True
 - B. False
3. What can you do as a supervisor to increase your chance of success?
 - A. Be friends with the cleaners
 - B. Have weekend parties and invite the cleaning staff
 - C. Earn the respect of the cleaners
 - D. Establish low expectations for the cleaners
4. Which of these are NOT qualities of a good supervisor?
 - A. Believes safety is an important part of the job
 - B. Has a desire to learn and succeed
 - C. Can talk his/her way out of a sticky situation with a client
 - D. Has integrity, is honest and trustworthy
5. One of the supervisor's common job duties is to keep all the company vehicles clean.
 - A. True
 - B. False
6. Who pays a fee when an alarm is set off by cleaners?
 - A. The building owner or manager
 - B. The supervisor
 - C. The cleaner
 - D. The owner of the cleaning company
7. Which of these is not a cost control activity?
 - A. Increase productivity
 - B. Double the frequency of an area clean
 - C. Reduce waste
 - D. Use efficient products and equipment

8. A Supervisor should communicate with their manager:
 - A. Once per month
 - B. Once every other week
 - C. Once per day
 - D. Once per week

9. If an employee is working carelessly and damaging property or not following safety procedures the supervisor should terminate that employee.
 - A. True
 - B. False

10. When are employees allowed to commit unsafe acts?
 - A. To save money
 - B. If they don't have time to complete the job
 - C. They have a better way of completing the work
 - D. Never

11. Which is NOT a time management tip?
 - A. Prioritize and delegate
 - B. Procrastinate
 - C. Use waiting time wisely
 - D. Break down large jobs into series of small tasks

Part Two: Customer Relations

1. When employees talk with customers, what should they never say?
 - A. We don't provide that service
 - B. It's not my job
 - C. I don't have time to do that
 - D. All of the above

2. What do customers want?
 - A. To have you bring them coffee
 - B. Give them a reason why you didn't dust their desk
 - C. For you to do what you promised
 - D. To clean their computer screen without asking

3. When investigating a customer complaint and you find a problem with the system, what do you do?
 - A. Contact the Operations Manager
 - B. Fix the system and retrain the employees
 - C. Edit the system
 - D. Put in a work ticket

4. The acronym TQM stands for Total Quality Maintenance.
 - A. True
 - B. False

5. The worst time to do an inspection is:
 - A. Right after the cleaning
 - B. After the complaint come in
 - C. Before the customers' business opens in the morning
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 - A. Work is not getting done in the time allowed
 - B. Employees are not following a cleaning process
 - C. Employees are not meeting production rate standards
 - D. All the above

Part Three: Leadership: Skills

1. To remain fair, you have to maintain a bit of distance from your people.
 - A. True
 - B. False

2. Employees want to tell you: you always talk to me about what is wrong but never about the good job I did!
 - A. True
 - B. False

3. Showing praise for exceptional work is a form of?
 - A. Inclusion
 - B. Transparency
 - C. Appreciation
 - D. Competence

4. Which one of these is NOT showing competence?
 - A. Make only realistic promises
 - B. Set an example of competence
 - C. Not soliciting input
 - D. Know your strengths and weaknesses

5. If you want people to feel included in the team you must encourage participation and then call on each person to get their input.
 - A. True
 - B. False

Part Four: Leadership: Good Communication

1. To get your team's best work you must be fair, consistent and calm.
 - A. True
 - B. False
2. Which of the following are a cost of POOR communication?
 - A. Re-training employees
 - B. Replacing or repairing property
 - C. Offering discounts
 - D. All the above
3. What are the 3 types of communication?
 - A. Text, phone, letter
 - B. Text, verbal, email
 - C. Written, verbal, non-verbal
 - D. Email, written, video
4. Which is NOT a verbal communication tip?
 - A. Always have the person repeat what was just said
 - B. Don't talk too fast
 - C. Use inflection when speaking
 - D. Pause when speaking
5. Having your hands in your pockets or not having eye contact are examples of what kind of body language characteristic?
 - A. Positive
 - B. Negative
6. Which of these are a Warm body language characteristic?
 - A. Staring eyes
 - B. Open posture
 - C. No expression
 - D. Staring
7. To show you're an active listener you should:
 - A. Ask for clarification
 - B. Take your ear buds out
 - C. Glance up at the person occasionally
 - D. Give your opinion as soon as possible

Part Five: Managing & Motivating Employees

1. When managing employees, you can expect their best work to turn into perfection over time.
 - A. True
 - B. False
2. Treat others as you wish to be treated is an example of?
 - A. Managing employees
 - B. Coaching employees
3. As a supervisor, what is a way for you to hinder your own career advancement?
 - A. Become a mentor
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 - C. Become a good coach
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4. What do Baby Boomer workers want?
 - A. Meaningful work
 - B. Monetary rewards
 - C. To do things their own way
 - D. Lots of feedback
5. What do Generation Z workers want?
 - A. Meaningful work
 - B. Monetary rewards
 - C. Do things their own way
 - D. Lots of feedback
6. What do Generation X workers want?
 - A. Meaningful work
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7. What do Generation Y workers want?
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 - A. Sharing personal information
 - B. Self-promotion
 - C. Speaking directly
 - D. None of the above

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1. What is the only thing worse than training your employees and having them leave?
 - A. Having a client cancel service
 - B. Not training them and having them stay
 - C. Have a client accuse you of theft
 - D. Having a client take your employee
2. A good 5 step training process is:
 - A. Show, do, tell, apply and review
 - B. Do, tell, review, show and apply
 - C. Tell, show, do, apply and review
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3. If you want to be a good trainer, you don't need to know every step in a cleaning process.
 - A. True
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7. The largest reducible cost in many businesses is:
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 - C. Supplies
 - D. Resolving conflict

8. When a serious company violation has occurred, what is the proper procedure?
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9. Which one of these is not part of the 5 step disciplinary process?
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10. It is recommended during the first year of employment the employee should be evaluated at:
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Part Seven: How to Introduce Change

1. People support what they help create!
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