Essentials of Supervisory Skills for Child Welfare Managers

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Foreword

The United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) Children's Bureau plays a leadership role in child welfare policy and practice. One of the ways the Bureau tries to improve child welfare service delivery is through training for child welfare professionals. This manual was developed from curriculum materials produced by the University of Michigan School of Social Work's Supervisors' Training Grant. The overall content was generated by conducting focus groups with public child welfare supervisors, their managers, and their staff, professionals working in urban areas, smaller cities, suburban contexts, and rural communities. Building upon the supervisory and management in human services and business literatures, we have developed materials that can enhance skills in managerial supervision. The manual does not focus on child welfare agency policies and practice, but rather on the supervision process, and addresses the intra- and interpersonal skills that supervisors need to supervise efficiently and effectively. Such skills are just one component of the supervisory process, but one that is frequently not covered in in-the-job training for supervisors in child welfare. We hope that by providing materials on supervisory techniques we will make the work of supervisors and managers easier and more efficient.

The manual is divided into eight chapters, each presenting a set of concepts related to particular supervisory tasks. These are:

1. Supervising the planning work
2. Different types of supervision—Training, coaching, teaching, educating, and mentoring
3. Supportive Communication
4. Working with workers (and others) with strong opinions—managing difficult people
5. Making meetings effective and efficient
6. Decision making/problem solving and integrating management strategies with agency policies
7. Supervising the outcomes of work-monitoring/reviewing/evaluating

8. The management of self.

The manual has a companion series of PowerPoint slides and audio that can be found on the University of Michigan Training Program for Child Welfare Supervisors website (www.ssw.umich.edu/tpcws). Other material from the training program can also be viewed on the website.

We have tried to show how concepts, which are widely accepted in human resources and business, can be applied to child welfare management via child welfare case examples. Nevertheless, we recognize the differences in child welfare work and the business world, and even differences between child welfare and other human services agencies. These include, but are not limited to:

- the life and death decisions workers and supervisors must make
- the "involuntariness" of most child welfare clients
- the way in which practice is shaped by Federal and State policies
- the tension between issues of child safety and family preservation
- the challenges of conducting culturally competent child welfare practice
- having way too few resources to do what you are being asked to do

In addition, in the last thirty years, child welfare practice has become increasingly "manualized," that is Federal, State, and County policies and practices are reflected in manuals that spell out how child welfare work must be done, what forms workers, supervisors, and managers must complete, and even how to fill out the forms. Although these manuals vary by geographical location, they are similar because they must reflect Federal policies. Federal funding for much of child welfare service is tied to compliance with Federal policies. As a consequence of the prescribed nature of child welfare practice, opportunities for creativity and flexibility, much that valued in the business and human resource worlds, is not so easily found in child welfare.

Nevertheless, there are commonalities between business and human resource settings where managerial supervision is used and child welfare supervision. For example, being able to supervise staff in a manner that maximizes their potential is a goal in most work settings. Similarly, having excellent group meetings, where high-quality decisions are made, are something that every manager worries about and needs to know how to do. We hope that this manual will help you do your difficult job more easily.

—Kathleen Coulborn Faller, PhD, ACSW, DCSW

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Introduction

Most of us never really learn how to "manage." Even those of us who are managers frequently find ourselves at a loss as to exactly what *manage* is and how to do it. Management can be defined as the accomplishment of work through others. ("Work" consists of jobs and tasks, a formulation in which tasks are interconnected, bundles of jobs.) Managers orchestrate jobs and tasks to produce products; all management is similar in this regard. What differs is the product (a meal, an auto, a well-placed child) and the specific conditions under which it is carried out (a restaurant, an auto plant, a child welfare agency).

Getting work done through people involves understanding the rules and regulations of the place one works, and the styles of involving, motivating, working together, informing, checking, clearing, and planning that work in a particular setting with a particular work group. Some managers make the mistake of thinking that "rule enforcement" is all there is to management. Other managers make the mistake of thinking that the people part is the whole. The good manager blends the rules and regulations with the people to accomplish work in an efficient and effective manner.

Managing involves five targets, four more than you usually think. When most people think of management they think of managing subordinates—direct reports. They are one target. But it is usually good to start with self-management. If you cannot manage yourself, then it is hard to manage others. There is also the managing subordinates piece (managing down), but there is also the management of bosses (managing up), managing peers (managing across), and managing the external network (managing out). In child welfare, these skills involve managing your own feelings about a very tough job, managing your managers so they know what you are up to, managing your peers so you can call on them for help, and managing out—the courts, attorneys, and the like. This manual focuses on the people part of management. It is not the whole thing, but it is an important segment of the managerial toolkit.

John Tropman, M.S.W., Ph.D.

Training Program for Child Welfare Supervisors

For the reader interested in a description of the full spectrum of activities supported by the USDHHS Children's Bureau under the grant that fostered the development of this manual, in this section, we summarize the grant activities that have occurred over a four year period.

The University of Michigan School of Social Work, working with the Law School, and the Michigan Family Independence Agency (the Public Child Welfare Agency), set out to develop, deliver, and disseminate a training curriculum for child welfare agency supervisors to:

1. acquaint them with Federal legislation—the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA); the Multi-ethnic Placement Act (MEPA); as amended by the Inter-ethnic Provisions (IEP) of 1996; the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA); and the Foster Care Independence Program (FCIP);

2. improve their knowledge of skills in personnel and program management, including program evaluation using data from several sources; and

3. Give supervisors opportunities to apply these skills to ASFA, MEPA/IEP, and FCIP.

The curriculum was developed in collaboration with the Michigan Family Independence Agency and with assistance of a national advisory committee, piloted in Michigan, and will be available nationally on a website and in manual form.

The timeframe follows:

Year 1—Develop and refine the curriculum covering provisions in ASFA, MEPA, IEP, ICWA, and FCIP and requisite management skills for public child welfare supervisors: To determine curriculum content, we reviewed the relevant literature, conducted focus groups of child welfare supervisors, workers, and managers, and consulted with our state advisory committee. We then developed training materials, a delivery strategy, and evaluation instruments. The curriculum related to Federal statutes was developed in conjunction with the following child welfare best practices: 1) family focused practice; 2) permanency planning; 3) culturally competent practice; and 4) outcomes based practice.

Supervisory skills sessions cover:

1. Supervising: The Front End: Planning Work;

2. Training/Coaching/Teaching/Educating/Mentoring;

3. Supportive Communication;

4. Working with Workers (and others) with Strong Opinions;

5. Running Effective Meetings

6. Decision Making/Problem Solving;

7. Supervising—The Back End: Monitoring/Reviewing/Evaluating; and

8. Management of Self.

Year 2—Field test the curriculum by delivering it in Michigan: Pilot the curriculum related to ASFA, MEPA, IEP, ICWA, and FCIP with public child welfare supervisors and their counterparts in contract agencies and the courts (3 day training).

Train three cohorts of participants. Two of the training sessions were held in Wayne County (Detroit) and one in Lansing. Begin the training in supervisory skills training for child welfare supervisors (7 half-day sessions delivered monthly).

Year 3—Complete the training in supervisory skills, revise the training materials, develop manuals comprised of the curriculum modules, and develop a website and put the curriculum onto a website that is available nationally.

All components of the training were evaluated on an ongoing basis using appropriate pre and post-test and comparison group designs and instruments developed for this purpose.

Year 4—We received a low cost extension of the grant to continue website development, evaluation completion, to provide additional training services, and write a manual on supervisory skills.

Training modules based upon this work can be found at the website:

http://www.ssw.umich.edu/tpcws

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Chapter One: Supervising: The Front End

Planning Work

Outline of Major Ideas

POSSBO (**P**lanning, **O**rganizing, **S**trategizing**, S**taffing, **B**udgeting, **O**verseeing)

Planning

       Articulate the outcome

       Set a path to that outcome

       Establish milestones on the path

Organizing

       Researching/provisioning your journey

       What do/will you need?

       When do/will you need it?

       Chart your journey

Strategizing

       Understanding the critical parts of you journey

       Using the 80/20 Rule

Staffing

       Assigning work

       Reviewing work

Budgeting

Overseeing

       Inspect what you expect

Introduction

In this chapter, we apply to child welfare supervision a series of strategies represented by the acronym, POSSBO developed at the University of Michigan. POSSBO addresses the assigning and organizing of work. It breaks the supervision process down into Planning. Organizing, Strategizing, Staffing, Budgeting, and Overseeing. POSSBO not only articulates important tasks of child welfare supervision but highlights some of the challenges in child welfare supervision.

Planning

When beginning a project, supervisors should envision what the end result should be and work backwards from that goal. Supervisors should carefully lay out each milestone on the path to their goal. Each step on the path is called a milestone, and the goal is your end result. If you do not know where you are going, then any road will take you there. So, by detailing each milestone, you are choosing one path that you know will get you to your outcome. It is important to ask yourself the following questions when beginning a project: What milestones and end results do I need? By what date do I need them? Answering these questions will not only tell you where you are going but also when you need to be there. Goals are approached through intermediate milestones

In child welfare, ultimate goals are usually child safety, child well-being, and permanency. Intermediate goals may be safety planning, referrals to therapeutic services, home visits, and foster/relative placement. However, time frames may be dictated by the court, Federal guidelines, or state policy, so there may be less supervisor and worker control over timeframes. In addition, ultimate goals may have to be changed. For example, in most child welfare cases, goals begin as family preservation or family reunification. These goals change because families may not be capable of rehabilitation or may not be capable within the child's sense of time or the court timeframes.

The managerial supervisor works with the worker proactively and reactively through a process of planning work, assuring these goals remain center stage. The dates

by which intermediate goals are to be met are understood, and worker actions that move the process appropriately toward goal achievement are defined.

Organization

Organization requires supervisors to ask themselves: What do you need and by when do you need it? Then they can begin to list and compile resources needed for to meet the milestones. The Gantt chart provides a visual tool for supervisors to track what task will be going on during each phase of the journey towards the goal. Figure 1.1 shows that Task A will be a beginning task that ends prior to the completion of the goal whereas Task C will run almost the entire time. Task D in this example will only occur in the completion stage. This example is from everyday life and depicts how the goal of purchasing a new car can be divided up into four general tasks. Before you know what to buy you have to know what you can afford, which in this case is determined during the first month of the process. Task C, negotiating with dealers and lenders, is part of stages 2–4, as it is integral and ongoing.

Figure 1.1: Buying a new car

A. Calculate budget				
B. Research and test drive				
C. Negotiate				
D. Financing and Purchasing				
Month	1	2	3	4

When used by child welfare supervisors, this tool can be used to make planned decisions, such as case assignments, in a manner that prevents taxing workers beyond their skills, prevents possible work overloads, and assures agency timeframes and mandates are met (see Figure 1.2)

Below is an example of the use of a Gantt Chart for the supervisor. In this instance, it lays out a procedure for supervisors who are assigning new cases.

Figure 1.2: Gantt chart
Child Welfare Example: Making new case assignments

Are new cases emergencies?	▓			
Current worker caseloads		▓		
Worker skill level/new case complexity		░	░	
Assigning cases to workers				▓
Hour	1	2	3	4

The managerial supervisor in child welfare can use Gantt charting with workers for each case. When the supervisor sits down with the worker, the Gantt chart review is an excellent way for them to chart case tasks together, to assess case progress, and determine where simultaneity of activities lies in what time frames. If the Gantt Chart is employed with individual cases, there will be commonalities among tasks and timeframes, although the needs of individual families and children must be considered.

A blank Gantt Chart appears below.

Figure 1.3: Gantt Chart Blank

Task				
A				
B				
C				
D				
E				
Time Frame	1	2	3	4

Strategizing and Prioritizing

In this section, we offer some strategies that may assist in strategizing and prioritizing. These are three "80/20 rules" and the concept of harvesting.

80/20 rules. There is never enough time to do the work, especially in child welfare. Added to the time constraints is the fact that frontline supervisors must answer directly for the actions of their caseworkers. In assessing how to allocate their own time and that of their workers, supervisors may want to employ the 80/20 rules. They may be useful to supervisors when they are strategizing about how to accomplish goals.

The first application of the 80/20 rule is to remember that approximately 20% of the work is urgent and important, about 20% needs to be done but it neither urgent nor important; 30% is urgent but not important, and 30% is important but not urgent. See figure 1.4, .but this concept will be explained further in the next section.

Figure 1.4: Urgent/Important Grid

	Low Level Urgency	High Level Urgency
Low Level Importance	About 20% of tasks. Delegated Tasks performed by employee or automatically	About 30% of tasks. Delegated tasks to employee but Supervised
High Level Importance	About 30% of tasks. Tasks that require proactive planning by supervisors but are not urgent	About 20% of tasks. Management or supervisor completed tasks.

The exact proportion of urgent/important work may vary, but the concept is useful, nevertheless.

The second application of the rule encourages supervisors to focus on the 20% of tasks that are usually urgent *and* important tasks. This task focus helps supervisors to

work smart versus working hard by not allowing their time and expertise to be diverted to less important or urgent tasks that can be performed by others. See figure 1.5.

The Urgent/Important grid in figures 1.4 and 1.5 categorizes various tasks as 1) delegated, 2) delegated but supervised, or 3) completed by a supervisor. Important Tasks are those that should almost always be performed by a supervisor or heavily supervised. Urgent Tasks are tasks that require attention immediately and do not involve proactive planning. Both Urgent and Important tasks are split into low and high levels; these four categories intersect and make up the grid.

Figure 1.5 shows the application of the grid to child welfare. An example of a task that is delegated to the worker, or in some agencies to an administrative assistant, is loading cases on the management information system. This task needs to be done, but should never take precedence, for instance, over child safety. Home visits are an example of a task that workers generally perform on their own, but they are supervised. After a case contact, they may need to check with their supervisor before they make decisions. Especially with new workers, supervisors are actively involved in developing parent-agency agreements. Supervisors have more experience and may have greater familiarity with contract agencies and community resources. Some meetings are used as an example of a task that is both urgent and important, and cannot be delegated. Unit meetings and meetings to communicate new agency policies are examples of meetings usually led by supervisors.

Figure 1.5: Urgent/Important Child Welfare Example

	Low Level Urgency	High Level Urgency
Low Level Importance	Delegated Tasks performed by employee or automatically Loading Cases into the Management Information System 20%	Delegated tasks to employee but Supervised Home Visits 30%
High Level Importance	Tasks that require proactive planning by supervisors but are not urgent Parent-agency agreements 30%	Management or supervisor completed tasks. Some case team meetings 20%

Another application of the 80/20 rule suggests that supervisors get 80% of their results from 20% of their workers. This application suggests that about 20% of your supervisees give consistently superior performance, 60% give average performance, and 20% perform below average. It is important for supervisors to manage their own time so not all or most of it spent with the bottom 20%. Superior and average performers need managerial supervision, too. In terms of supervisory time, 30% of time with the bottom 20%, 60% with the middle 60%, and 10% with the top 20% should work. If time spent with the bottom exceeds 30% of supervisory time, it is excessive.

Harvesting. Another important concept in strategizing and prioritizing is *harvesting*. This practice involves identifying those who are really good at one aspect of the job (e.g., writing good court reports). Through your work with them, you can seek to package what they know and distribute it to others. *Package and distribute* means, in this case, to extract the formula or recipe for good court reports into a written model that other workers can use. Approximately the top 20% of workers will have the most to share with colleagues, and they will feel rewarded if their practices become standard practice.

Staffing

Staffing involves two major tasks for supervisors: delegating and reviewing work. Supervisors will be the primary people involved in delegating tasks to employees. Effective and efficient delegation requires the supervisor to first explain the assignment to the employee. Then, the supervisor makes efforts to empower them with resources to accomplish the task. The supervisor should allow the employee to choose how to achieve the desired outcome, and give the employee space to employ, as much as possible, their own work style to get the job done within unit parameters. The most obvious example of staffing in child welfare is assigning cases. Although there are agency policy parameters (e.g., timeframes, risk categories, and different strategies for investigating different types of maltreatment), workers appreciate a degree of autonomy in carrying out their tasks.

Delegation can be difficult for supervisors for several reasons. One common barrier to successful delegation can be thought patterns such as, "It's just easier to do it

myself" or "Nobody else will do it the way I want it." Since child welfare agencies and policies are highly bureaucratic, delegation is common practice. However, it requires a supervisor to trust in the employee's ability to complete the task and to have the flexibility to accept personal differences in style. Another way to say this is that the supervisor has *goal rigidity* (we stand firm on goals) and *means flexibility* (you can approach these goals in different ways). In order have this trust, employees must be trained and mentored appropriately.

Supervisors also take the role of reviewing employees' work. First, it is important to make clear that, following delegation of the task, the worker needs to communicate to the supervisor about their progress, with special emphasis on any difficulties they are having or resources that they might need. In professional managerial supervision, the manager is not so much a "work checker" as a "worker resource." Avoiding being just a work checker is difficult in child welfare because supervisors must sign many of the reports produced by their caseworkers. So perhaps the important part of this concept from the management literature is to be sure also to be a worker resource.

Professional work means that the employee is responsible for the quality of the work they turn in. The supervisor is obligated to review the work episodically and at critical points; the supervisor does not work side by side with the employee.

Supervisors also need advice in how to be helpful to workers. Keep, Start, and Stop (KSS) is a powerful tool to help supervisors give workers what they need in supervision. While you are working with employees, ask them to tell you what you are doing that is 1) helpful, 2) not helpful, and 3) missing. Supervisors should then *keep* what is helpful, *stop* doing what is not helpful, and *start* doing what is missing. This requires communication with all supervisees and the ability to take feedback from them. For example, suppose the supervisor has a practice of sitting down with a worker before the worker does difficult home visits and helping the worker make a plan—eliciting from the worker what he or she thinks are good strategies, offering ideas, and providing

admonitions. After the visit, the supervisor should ask what part of the planning process was helpful, what was not, and what else needs to be done in the future.

Budgeting (Resource Management)

The topic of budgeting may seem inappropriate in the child welfare context. Allocations of funds are set by Federal government, the State legislature, and the State child welfare agency. Supervisors may have a little control, for example, over how emergency funds are spent or contract services are allocated, but often not a great deal, and there is often not enough money to go around.

However, supervisors do have some control over another resource is in short supply—their time and that of their workers. In child welfare, supervisors can create budgets relating to their own time, employee time, and use of time. . They must develop a strategy to assign all of the workable hours to each task that needs to be completed. An advantage in child welfare, compared to other work, is a supervisor already knows more or less how long a task should take.

Two tools for time management will be discussed, though it is acknowledged that in child welfare time and money are insufficient. One is a tool for use on an individual level and the other for planning group allocation of time.

Index the Difference. The Index of Difference (Fig. 1.6) is a tool that supervisors can use with all employees to come to a common understanding about worker time and its appropriate allocation. It is especially useful with those who are having difficulty meeting deadlines. Supervisors must decide how much time each task they assigned to supervisees should take, considering the experience/skill level of the employee. For a new worker, a somewhat experienced worker, or seasoned employee, there may be vast differences in the amount of time a task takes. A new worker may be slower at paperwork due to lack of orientation to or practice with forms and procedures. For example, a supervisor will need to allow more time for a new worker to license a foster home than a seasoned worker. After the supervisors develop these ideal time frames, employees are

asked to calculate how much or what proportion of their time they actually spend on each task. The ideal is then subtracted from the actual time spent. The Index of Difference should then be calculated by adding the result from all the subtractions (regardless of sign) and then dividing by 2. This tells you how far the ideal is from the real.

Figure 1.6: Index of Difference Life Balance Example

Life Balance	IDEAL	REAL	I-R
Personal	25%	5%	20%
Family	25%	15%	10%
Work	25%	75%	50%
Civic	20%	5%	15%
Other/Misc.	5%	0%	5%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%/2=
Sum	100%	100%	An ID of 50%

In order to work with this concept we start with a simple application, the life balance example. Look at the first example The Life Balance in figure 1.6. This example assumes that there are 5 things a person must do to keep themselves in balance in their lives. Ideally, each of them should take 20% of the person's time (Column 1). However, when we look at the actual allocation of time (Column 2) we see that the actual percentages are quite different. Doing the subtraction in each row, without regard for a + (plus) or – (minus) sign (Column 3) we then add the differences in column 3 and divide by 2. In this example we see that despite the desire to balance ones life, there is a 50% discrepancy between actual and ideal times. This does not mean that the ideal or the real is correct, but rather highlights that they are out of proportion. The goal is to bring them into greater harmony with each other.

Now look at the professional example in 1.7. This ideal column is based upon input from knowledgeable supervisors in the child welfare field, who have estimated the ideal that each unit of work should take the average employee. Your proportions may not be exactly like these, but may be similar.

Figure 1.7: Index of Difference Professional Example

Professional activities	IDEAL	REAL	I-R
Paperwork	15%	40%	25%
Direct Client contact	45%	15%	25%
Court	10%	25%	10%
Supervision	5%	5%	0%
Collateral Contact	20%	10%	10%
Other/Misc.	5%	5%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	70%/2=
Sum	100%	100%	An ID of 35%

Ask each worker to fill out their actual proportions, and then you can work with them to allocate their time to standard. The Index of Difference can help calculate how much time employees are spending on each aspect of their job. In this example we also see incongruence between the ideal and the real. The role of the child welfare supervisor is to assist in reconciling those differences and assist the employee in the exploration of the difficulty they are having. In some situations the employee may have difficulty meeting these expectations due to lack of training, lack of experience, or inefficient work habits. The employee can be coached on how to make the time spent in each job task more productive. Supervisors are able to decide if an employee requires more training in one area. Part of a supervisor's job is to help workers to address this difference through better work habits or connecting them with resources. Supervisors may also then realize

that they, themselves, have unrealistic expectations of job performance and may need to adjust what they think are ideal time frames. Supervisors are also forced to deal with federal and state mandates that put too much work on each position.

Below in Figure 1.8 is a blank example for your use.

Figure 1.8: Blank Life Balance

Tasks	IDEAL	REAL	I-R
TOTAL			
Sum			

The Professional Unit System (PUS) of Budgeting Time In addition to creating budgets for each individual that you supervise, it may be helpful to create a time budget for your entire team. The Professional Unit System (PUS) of Budgeting Time is useful for determining how much overall time is available to be allotted to all the goals that need to be completed by your team. To obtain this number, first add the number of weeks your team is available to work. Start with 52 weeks, and then subtract vacation time, sick time, days off, etc. It usually comes out to around 45 actual weeks (excluding overtime.) Now multiply it by the number of workers on the team. If you have eight workers that means you have 360 worker weeks for a given year to the jobs you have to do [8*45]. You can

of course reduce the "weeks" to days or hours if you wish. If your staff works a 40-hour week, that is 14,400 hours in a given year [8*45*40].

Child welfare supervisors can use this equation to calculate the number of worker hours they have available to assign to their caseload. Supervisors can tally the number of cases they have each year, then divide by twelve to estimate the number of cases they have any given month. Supervisors can determine the average amount of time each case is on a workers caseload. Child welfare cases are often complicated and may take more time than anticipated initially. Supervisors should budget extra time when assigning cases that have markers of complication (e.g., chronic mental illness or substance abuse). Supervisors can budget extra time at the assignment stage so that workers do not become overwhelmed if the case goes too long or becomes very time consuming.

PUS can also be employed to highlight that the time is inadequate to meet the work demands. Take an example of a supervisor of an adoption unit with four workers. Workers must do adoption home studies, assess children available for adoption, match adoptive homes and children, orchestrate adoptive placements, supervise adoptive placements, handle court work, and run support groups for waiting, matched, and adoptive parents. An adoption home study takes on average 20 hours. Suppose that the agency received on average 15 promising requests for adoption studies per month. If workers keep up with requests, they will be spending 300 total hours per month on home studies. When 300 is divided by 4, that results in 75 hours per month and close to 18 hours per worker per week—just on adoption home studies. This calculation tells the supervisor it is time to request more staff.

Overseeing/Monitoring

Management should be done by outcome (sometimes called objectives, as in management by objective.). Objectives must be specific: what were you supposed to have/do/accomplish by when? Objectives should be discussed and agreed upon mutually. Supervisors do well to treat employees differently at this stage; equality is not necessarily a good thing. Supervisors have the ability to oversee at different rates depending upon

each employee's skill level and experience. Overseeing senior level employees in ways suitable to for new hires can contribute to frustration and time wasting. Feedback to employees should be non judgmental; it should not feel attacking or personal. It should be given in small amounts. Do not overwhelm employees with negative feedback; break it up if necessary. Large amounts of negative feedback at one time can cause employees to get stuck in the negative. They may then have difficulty moving forward. It should also be given as close to the event as possible so it is fresh in everyone's mind.

Pat is a new worker who expresses a deep commitment to helping children and families. He appears extremely busy and is often late for appointments. Pat has had difficulty coming to meetings on time and prepared. He also rarely turns in reports on time, causing problems for his supervisor, Sam, who has had to write two reports at the last minute just before court and fielded many crisis situations from his cases.

What can Sam do to be helpful in this situation?

Exercise

Use the Urgent/Important Grid below as a supervision tool with Pat, who is not meeting deadlines or having difficulty keeping up with workloads.

	Low Level Urgency	High Level Urgency
Low Level Importance	About 20% of tasks.	About 30% of tasks.
High Level Importance	About 30% of tasks.	About 20% of tasks.

RESOURCES

Electronic

http://www.amanet.org/books/catalog/MGS.htm

This site offers abstracts on books about management and supervision jobs including developing supervision skills, dealing with work place problems, building effective teams, and motivating employees. This site also offers direct ordering of the books. .

http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/usermanuals/supercps/index.cfm

A comprehensive manual about supervision of CPS workers that covers the following topics: provides a conceptual framework for supervisory practice, roles and responsibilities of the supervisor in achieving the agency mission and goals of CPS, practice oriented instruction on how to carry out supervisory instructions, developing a productive team, how to build and assess staff capacity, techniques for monitoring practice on the case, caseload, and unit levels, strategy for recognizing staff performance, conceptual framework for analyzing and responding to performance problems and strategies for increasing job satisfaction and preventing burnout. Adapted from the overview of Supervising Child Protective Services Case Workers by Thomas Morton and Marsha Salus 1994.

Print

Books

Blanchard, K. & Parisi-Carew, E. (2000). *The One-Minute Manager Builds High
          Performing Teams.* New York, William Morrow.
This short book outlines the four stages that all groups go through while becoming a team,--orientation, dissatisfaction, integration and production. Then the authors show how a supervisor can become effective sooner and with less stress. Adapted from book summary on Amazon.com

Middleman, R. R. & Rhodes, G. B. (1985). *Competent Supervision.* Englewood Cliff,
          NJ: Prentice-Hall.
This book written by two social workers, looks at supervision through a social work lens. Its nine chapters include 1] the specialness of social work supervision, 2] entering the world of supervision,3]picturing supervision, 4]the professional in the organization, 5]nine functions of supervisors, 6]the specialness of social work's organizational context, 7] the design and redesign of supervision, 8] organizational imperatives and the opportunity field, and 9]conclusion. It also includes six very useful appendices: A] for further thought and action; B] supervisor preference checklist; c] current profile; D] how I look at supervision, E] your working style, and F] organizational life course profile. Summary adapted from book jacket.

Articles

Cole, M. (1999). Become the leader followers want to follow. *Supervision, 60*(12), 9-
   11.
Abstract:
A set of leadership skills that are critical for developing positive working relationships
are discussed. Five soft skills every leader should practice re sensitization to follower
expectations, inspiring others, building positive affect, communicating and listening, and
individuation. Good leaders are attuned to the characteristics of their followers and will
change their tune. It is important for leaders to process their thinking through the eyes of
the followers, thus enabling the leader to meet the team's performance expectations,
which will alternately facilitate the achievement of the desired outcome.

Hull, W. W. (1999). Passing the buck vs. making an assignment. *Supervision, 60*(3), 6-
   7.
Abstract:
The process of delegating is almost identical to the process of training. It is easy to
understand the principles of delegation, sharing authority, expecting a certain tasks to be
done and expecting accountability. It is more difficult, in practice, to achieve effective
delegation. Some suggested steps include: 1. Select subordinate, 2. Determine goal of
delegation, 3. Determine authority level needed, and 4. Establish controls.

Weiss, W. H. (2000). The art and skill of delegating. *Supervision, 61*(9), 3-5.
Abstract:
Managers, including supervisors, should be proficient at the delicate art of delegating,
even though it is one of the most difficult skills to learn and use. If you want to be
effective and efficient when delegating, you must plan and decide how to go about it.
Effective delegating techniques are discussed.

Chapter Two: The Learning Connection

Training; Coaching; Teaching; Educating; Mentoring

Outline of Major Concepts

The Flow Journey

Skill: From Novice to Master

       Novice

       Beginner

       Journeyperson

       Expert

       Master

Customized Supervision

       Training

       Coaching

       Teaching

       Educating

       Mentoring
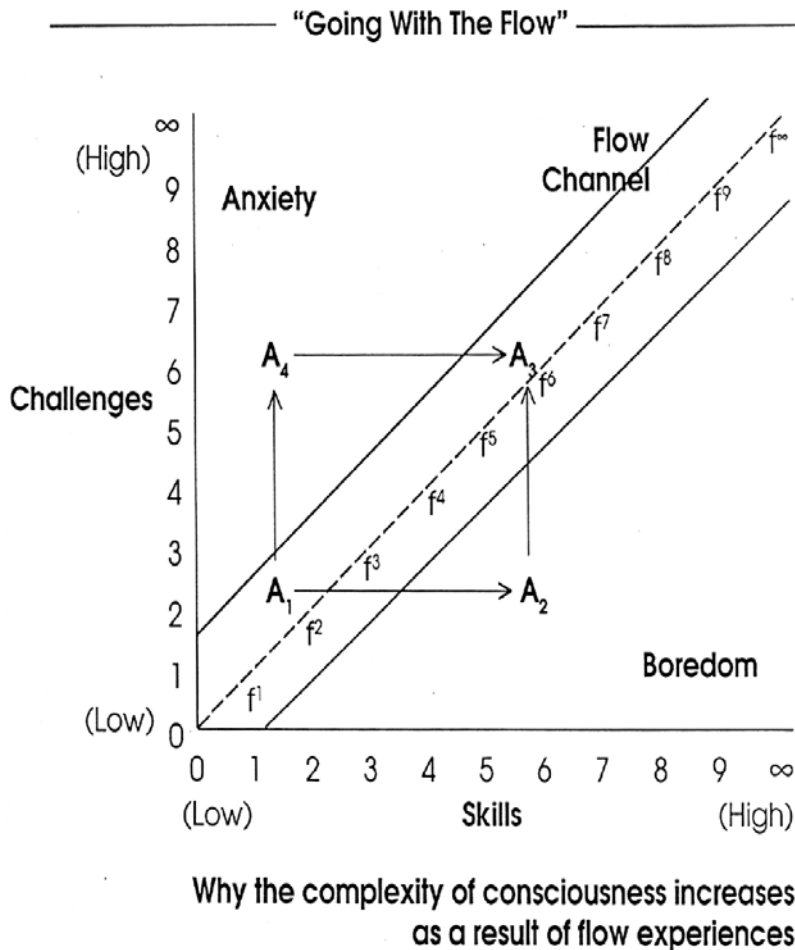
Introduction

        In this chapter we describe strategies which guide supervision so that different supervision strategies are used depending upon the worker's level of skill. Three main topics will be covered: 1) a concept of adjusting work demands to worker skill level (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), 2) a continuum of worker skill level, and 3) supervision strategies suitable to different levels of worker skill.

Flow: The Psychology of Peak Performance

        For workers to perform at their best, they must be at the intersection of challenge and skill. This is called being "in flow." If workers are not challenged, they can become bored. If they are challenged too much beyond their current skill, they become anxious. Anxious or bored workers are prone to worker failure. The Flow Chart (figure 2.1) demonstrates the relationship between worker challenges and skills and the effect of this relationship on caseworker behavior. The flow channel shows the balance between worker task and worker skill that supervisors should target. Once this balance is achieved, it must be maintained by increasing task complexity as skill levels increase.

Ladder of Supervisory Behaviors
figure 2.1

——————— "Going With The Flow" ———————

Why the complexity of consciousness increases
as a result of flow experiences

The need for different skill levels in the child welfare field may be found in the specifics of individual cases, although most child welfare cases challenge worker skills. The role of the supervisor is to understand the level of the worker's skill and which tasks or cases are appropriate for that worker. Although supervisors need to challenge workers to move up in skill level by adding appropriate increases in task level, a more common problem is having skill expectations that are too high for workers. Employee turnover is high, resulting in too many workers with modest skills and not enough skilled workers in many areas. We also recognize that child welfare workers may turnover too quickly to attain higher levels of performance—either by leaving the agency or through lateral transfer.

From Novice to Master

As one examines the flow chart, one can see that at the bottom (1,1) we have a simple task, requiring simple skills. The person here is a novice, whether she or he is a child welfare worker, a cook, a language student, or a cyclist. Over time we should all move up the flow channel, aiming for a 10,10 and beyond. This is the master level. In between are levels of beginner, journeyperson, and expert. In this section we detail the skill levels that characterize these categories of competency and note the type of supervision that should be most effective.

Novice

Novice workers often perform tasks in a slow, painstaking manner. Performance may be uneven. Novices tend to pay close attention to rules and facts. Employees learn the most about procedure and rules during this phase. Sticking close to the manual, however, is important in child welfare work because the many federal and state mandates are reflected in the manual and dictate practice. The problem during this phase is that workers do not gain much reinforcement from the tasks. They may not find the tasks, themselves, gratifying or rewarding because they are doing the best they can and are still not meeting standards for the work. Additionally they may only be receiving negative feedback and reinforcement. The only satisfaction employees may feel at this stage is from completing the task, not from doing it well. During this stage, novices require training from their supervisors.

Beginner

At the beginner stage, performance becomes faster and smoother. Workers begin to discover patterns and practices not mentioned in the manual or rules. These employees do not use the manual as often and they begin rule fade. *Rule fade* is the process we go through when we begin to speak, for example, in a new language without translating from our original language. Employees are still learning at this stage, however. Problems arise at this stage because employees are just beginning to understand what is required of them and may make episodic errors, which can be embarrassing. For example, a child

protection worker may complete the wrong form for a court hearing and be admonished by the judge. Because these instances tend to be episodic, the worker is never quite sure when they might occur, which can result in anxiety and embarrassing moments for employees. During this stage, employees require coaching from their supervisors.

Journeyperson

Journeypersons' performance is notable for its speed and smoothness. At this level, rule fade is almost complete. A journeyperson in the child welfare field consults the manual regularly but knows many of the procedures. Journeypersons tend to attend to only the most important cues in their cases, those they have learned are meaningful, and ignore "noise." Additionally they are now taking calculated and educated risks. Even though they are still learning, they may have begun to teach those around them. At this stage, they still require the supervisor to teach and share information with them. The problem at this stage can be that they think it is the end of their learning process and may be resistant to information from supervisors. Employees at this stage require teaching from their supervisors.

Expert

When an employee reaches the expert stage, the need to calculate and rationalize in their decision-making diminishes. Decision-making tools such as Structured Decision Making become an integral part of their conceptual framework and being to feel intuitive. Their performance becomes fluid, quick and sure.

Their attention shifts as cues (important case information, for example) shift. A *cue* is a vital piece of information about an ongoing process. For cooking, it might be the sound of the frying pan, or the smell; for music it might be a certain note. In child welfare, certain child behaviors might serve as cues, such as children killing pets or having encopresis.

Experts have a holistic and conceptual grasp of the work. They no longer consult the manual, and some might say they could re-write the manual. Experts take on a much

greater teaching role. The challenge for the supervisor is to accept this level of worker skill and mutually explore ways to improve child welfare service delivery. At this skill level, some experts can fall prey to "expert lock," when employees tend to do what they are best at and may inappropriately generalize their expertise to everything else. They may need education from a supervisor to recognize their own limitations.

Master

Once the skill of master is reached, their performance is seamless. It is solid, confident, and sure. It is done at exactly the right speed and it appears effortless. Masters trust themselves. They have a holistic recognition of cues. They understand deeply and see beyond the obvious. In child welfare, Masters will know the constellation of problems a family will have, based merely on the referral information. For example, a report of domestic violence cues an appreciation of its correlation with physical abuse, its impact on the children, its effect on the battered woman's parenting, and a spectrum of behaviors on the part of the batterer, such as stalking, threatening suicide, and threatening to kill or kidnap the children. When investigating a domestic violence case, a Master knows to probe for these problems without any supervisory advice.

At this skill level, employees need a mentor to help them in their career development. Supervisors are also able to use this worker as a teacher for others. The problem employees may encounter at this level is ability to access his/her knowledge and self. People who make it to this skill level tend to be in high demand and supervisors must protect these employees from both formal and informal extra workloads. At this stage employees need mentoring.

The Shifting Strategies of the Supervisor as Employees Move from a Novice to a Master

As suggested in the previous section, supervisors vary their management strategies by the skill level of their workers. In this section, we present a taxonomy of supervisory strategies for the continuum of skill levels. We also suggest approximate percentages of worker tasks that need to be reviewed at different skill levels and commensurate with the supervisory strategies.

Training

When a supervisor begins with a novice, their initial role is to make sure the employee understands workload requirements and role expectations. The supervisor should spend time reviewing these things with the employee. It is useful to narrow the policy/practice gap for employees by giving them simplified and sequential instructions on completing tasks. Supervisors should try to give a small number of cases to new employees to ensure this. Supervisors should be reviewing about 90% of an employee's work at this stage (90/10). Training is often done in groups for new employees or for all employees when new requirements and policies must be disseminated. Training in child welfare may be on the job, in the field, or in an outside educational setting.

Coaching

When working with employees who are at the beginner skill level, it is important to be assured that they understand the job requirements. Because child welfare work is based upon a policy/practice manual, the job of the supervisor is often to interpret manual policy and communicate it to employees. They pass along information, apply standards from manual, and advise workers. By providing staff with adequate information, supervisors can help them to better their performance. When coaching, supervisors should review about 70% of employees work (70/30).

Teaching

Employees who need teaching are in the journeyperson stage. They need help mastering and improving requirements and routines. Rather than provide the answer, supervisors (up to a point) lead the supervisee on a journey of discovery where the supervisee herself or himself comes to the appropriate conclusion. Supervisors should review 60% of employees' work (60/40). The employee reviews manual policy on his or her own and has select work products reviewed by the supervisors.

Educating

Experts are concerned with improving practice routines and requirements as much as possible. Supervisors can assist in this process and also answer questions from the employee. Experts will attend lectures, seminars, and conferences and bring best practice information back to their agency. Based upon this education, they may propose innovations. For example, an expert might decide their agency needs a Children's Advocacy Center and persuade management to support the expert's efforts to start one. Supervisors should be reviewing 40% of employees work at this stage (40/60).

Mentoring

Mentoring is an appropriate supervisory strategy for Masters. While mentoring, it is important to keep in mind that employee growth is the focus of the interaction. Both the worker and supervisor should be looking to the future. Mentoring involves supervisors going beyond their job responsibilities in a voluntary, caring, sharing, and helping relationship. When supervisors mentor, they foster participation in formal educational programs, but they also engage in informal interpersonal relationships with workers. The supervisor mentors workers according to their special needs. Supervisors should only be reviewing 10% of employees work at this stage (10/90).

Supervising workers versus work

It is useful for the supervisor to think of supervising both people and tasks. When one is supervising a person, strategies vary with worker skill and the tasks are part of the person's job/work product. However, when one looks at jobs and tasks, then the supervisor needs to attend to job and task elements. These need to be all handled with the same level of quality, regardless of the worker skill level. Hence, initial investigations need to be done in a certain way, and to a certain standard, regardless of who is doing them. Similarly, phone calls must be timely and demeanor appropriate Written work needs to conform to agency standards of quality and precision. In managing task elements, it is useful for the supervisor to articulate in writing and through example what these standards are, and what the consequences are for not meeting them. "Spot"

supervision of an employee, or a group of employees, around delays in returning phone calls, for example, may be appropriate.

Conclusion

In adapting these concepts to child welfare supervision, we recognize that supervisors must review and sign off on many, if not most case documents (e.g., initial investigations, quarterly reports, court reports). However, workers engage in many other activities that require more or less supervision depending upon worker skill level. Examples of these activities are written work, telephone calls, collateral contacts, client home visits, IEPs, resource accessing, and interagency meetings.

Case Example (answer on pages 120-121)

Jane has just been assigned to your foster care unit. She worked in child protective services for a year in another state and then completed a MSW with a child welfare specialization. She has completed the eight week new worker training, which involves a combination of didactic material (philosophy, programs, and policies) and work on cases under a training supervisor.

Exercise

Based upon the information above, at what level would you tentatively place Jane? Ideally how would you structure her workload? For example, how many and what sorts of cases would you assign her? What type of supervision would you provide? How would you use other workers in your unit to enhance and assess her skill level?

RESOURCES

Electronic

www.mentoring.org (The National Mentoring Partnership)

This site offer information on what a mentor is, what they do, and how to find an opportunity to mentor. They also provide a comprehensive online training on how to become a mentor. This online training includes information about what a mentoring relationship entails, how much time successful mentoring takes, how to foster the growth and development of your mentee and what your mentee wants from you. They also give mentors access to a mentoring expert so mentors can ask questions and seek help. This site also offers information on how to create a mentoring program in your community, access to other mentoring resources, and information for your mentee on how to be mentored.

www.mentoringgroup.com (The Mentoring Group Home Page)

The Mentoring Group offers general information about mentoring and the role that mentoring plays in the professional development of many workplaces. Their website offers videos and other training materials to implement mentoring programs and to facilitate mentoring relationships. Additionally they will do in-person trainings for both mentors and mentees. They also provide a free page of mentoring tips to help guide mentors/mentees.

www.eetimes.com/eesine/mentorboard/ (EE Times Mentoring Discussion Board)

http://www.eetimes.com/career/boards/;jsessionid=HPCV3QJMPRY3YQSNDBCSKHY This is an example of how mentoring relationships can be helpful to professionals. This message board in the engineering field is used by students and professionals who have questions about their work or career path. The questions are answered by seasoned professionals.

Print

Articles

Buhler, P. M. (1998). A new role of managers: the move from directing to coaching.
        Supervision, 59(10), 16-18.
Abstract:
Corporate America has experienced a renewed interest in mentoring today. Teaching through experience is one of the most effective methods of transferring knowledge. Many employees are looking for an edge—and mentoring provides that edge to many. To be an effective mentor requires specific characteristics. First, the mentor must be willing to give freely of their time. Second, the mentor must have the necessary skills and appropriate knowledge to be perceived as valuable to the protégé. The key to a successful mentor relationship is the fit of the mentor and protégé.

Cousins, R. B. (2000). Active listening is more than just hearing. *Supervision, 61*(9), 14-15.

Abstract
Active listening is a technique that can be of tremendous value to supervisors as they try to meet the challenges of multi-dimensional roles. There are several key steps in the active listening process that can often be useful to the supervisor: 1. Listen for feelings, 2. Respond to the feelings, 3. Encourage the speaker to get in touch with his or her feelings, 4. Ask questions, 5. Give your undivided attention. Active listening techniques are especially useful in the counseling process as the supervisor attempts to ferret out problems.

Lindo, D. (1999). Will you ever get it right? *Supervision, 60*(12), 6-8.

Abstract
To be truly effective over the long-term managers must control their reactions to subordinates' mistakes. They need to keep their cool. They need to use communication cushions, humor and demonstrations to get the results they must have to be successful. They need to bear in mind every error is a coaching, not a sniping, opportunity. It is a chance for them to train their subordinates and put an out of whack situation back on track.

Ramsey, R. D. (1999). "Do you have what it takes to be a mentor?" *Supervision, 60*(3): 3-5.

Abstract:
Mentoring has become a key to success and survival in all fields, especially for supervisors. The role of mentors in every factory, shop or office has never been more important. It teaches lessons that are not taught any more or are not available elsewhere. The accelerated pace of change also underscores the need for modern-day mentorship's among supervisory personnel. Ten of the best reasons to become a mentor are discussed, among the most important are: 1. It helps an inexperienced person, 2. It helps you grow too, 3. It keeps wisdom from getting lost, and 4. It multiplies you impact. Tips that can help you make the most of the mentoring experience for both your protégé and for yourself are included.

Shea, G. (1995). "Can a supervisor mentor?" *Supervision, 56*(11), 3.

Abstract:
Mentoring at its core is a developmental, caring, sharing, helping relationship where one person invests their time, know how and effort in increasing and improving another person's growth, knowledge and skills. Therefore, in a supervisory sense, a mentor is one who invests in another person by going beyond their managerial job requirements. The subtlety of this factor is often difficult to appreciate because a supervisor's job requirements are often described so broadly. Mentoring is an extra dimension, which some supervisors add to their relationships with associates who work for them. Mentoring is almost always voluntary and the mentee is key to the relationship. A supervisor can mentor if s/he keeps in mind 3 issues: 1. Mentoring begins when one goes beyond his job responsibilities in a voluntary, caring, sharing and helping relationship. 2. One prepares to work with his mentees across the whole mentoring spectrum from

participating in employer sponsored formal programs to creating informal relationships.
3. One mentors all associates according to their special needs.

Chapter Three: Supportive Communication

Three Major Conversations

Major Concepts

Intrapersonal – with yourself

Interpersonal – with one or two others

Supportive communication

      Coaching: the informal work

      Counseling: the emotional work

Feedback

Introduction

Although much of what supervisors do is communicate with subordinates, they also communicate with peers, managers, consumers or clients, contract agency staff, and *themselves*. In this chapter, we focus on three main conversations: intrapersonal, those you have with yourself; interpersonal, the ones you have with one or two others; and feedback.

Intrapersonal

Intrapersonal conversations are conversations you have with yourself. You may not have thought that the person you talk most with is probably you. This internal dialogue can be productive but it also can contain negative self-talk and negative constructs. Negative self-talk usually sounds like, "I can't," "I'm dumb," "Why did I do that?" These thoughts can impact on a supervisor's interaction with others and erode the supervisor's ability to provide support to those they supervise. Negative self-talk can lead to negative constructs. Negative constructs can be something like "the problem, system, task, etc…is dumb." In the child welfare field, because problems are intractable and resources are scarce, it is easy to slip into negative constructs. For example, a supervisor may conclude that it's no use going to court on a possible sexual abuse case because the judge hardly ever believes the child.

These internal conversations can inhibit organizational change, as individuals complain or blame the system or individuals rather than plan constructively. Instead of giving into these negative internal thoughts, supervisors can work on positive reflections and savor their strengths. They need to engage in positive self talk regularly because in a high-pressure and often overwhelming job, sometimes it seems their problems are greater than their strengths. Similarly, supervisors can remind themselves of the cases where child welfare intervention has made a difference in the lives of children and families.

Much of our internal conversation involves reinforcing our assumptions. We think we "hold" assumptions, but, in reality, many times it is they who "hold" us. When we think of ourselves as choosing the assumptions we hold we can also then recognize the

possibility of changing those assumptions. That's the danger of bad assumptions and that is why we need to scrutinize them carefully. Supervisors' assumptions about workers and their work need constant re-examination and reflection. Charles Horton Cooley, a famous University of Michigan sociologist, said many years ago, "Things thought to be real are often real in their consequences."

Interpersonal

Supervisors need skills in interpersonal communication. They need to understand the dimensions of supportive communication and know when a worker's problem is information based, and needs coaching, and when it is attitude based, and needs counseling. (Whetten & Cameron, 2005)

Supportive Communication

Supportive communication is comprised of four basic principals: integrity, accuracy, honesty, and praise. Integrity means that you are clear about what you say, and actually do what you promise. Accuracy means that the supervisee has confidence that you tell things as they are, not omit, spin, twist, or otherwise compromise communication. Honesty is related closely to accuracy, which requires that you "tell it like it is." They differ in that honesty refers to telling the "whole" truth; accuracy refers to telling the unvarnished truth. (Each can be done with diplomacy, however.) Each of these not only relates to communicating down, but across and up as well. Do you tell truth to power?

Praise and criticism both are necessary in supervision. It is important to praise in public. Praise gives employees the encouragement to continue with their work and also lets them know they are doing the job correctly. Supervisors who practice praising regularly know that they get more leverage from a good comment if others can hear it as well as the intended recipient. Criticism is best done in private, to avoid shaming employees in front of peers or other supervisors. It also avoids people feeling as though they must defend themselves to the group.

Coaching: The Informational Work

Coaching, as used in this conceptual framework, is instruction from someone who knows more to someone who knows less. In the last chapter, we used it slightly differently, as a supervisor skill for the beginner stage. Coaching occurs routinely with beginners because of the knowledge gaps characteristic of that stage of worker competence. However, as with all the supervisory strategies on the ladder discussed in Chapter 2, coaching can be used throughout.

Supervisors coach when they pass along information, give advice, set standards of performance and help staff to improve. If someone doesn't understand a procedure and asks you about it, that is an informational problem and responds to coaching. Take, for example, Munchausen by Proxy, also know as Pediatric Falsification Condition, a form of child abuse in which a caretaker either misrepresents the child as having a medical problem or induces a medical problem, often a life-threatening one. Because the parent seeks medical attention and appears immensely caring, often workers do not even consider the medical diagnosis. Supervisors need to provide workers with literature on Munchausen or arrange for a consultation with the diagnosing doctor.

Problems that require coaching arise when a worker does not have all the information, or does not fully understand the nature of the problem. Supervisors' responses during these times are direct. They must advise, reorganize, and provide information and suggestions.

Counseling: The Emotional Work

Supervisors must counsel when an employee's attitude is interfering with the task at hand. If someone doesn't "understand" a procedure and hates the procedure, that is a problem of attitude. In these interactions, employees may appear defensive and project their difficulties onto others. They also may have difficulty recognizing the nature of the problem and may not show much willingness to change. Counseling problems may stem from fear of fault, blame, failure, and success. Some problems, however, can be simply attributed to temperament clashes. Counseling strategies are non-directive. In situations

requiring counseling, the supervisor must probe for information, reflect upon employee communication, validate the employee's affect, and ask for answers. The goal is to understand why the employee hates the policy and work through those reasons so information about what needs to be done can be communicated, and heard.

Returning to the Munchausen example, suppose the worker has a consultation with the physician, but still does not believe the mother is, for example, administering small amounts of poison to the child. The agency has a policy of petitioning the court when a doctor requests it. The worker refuses to draft a petition to obtain a court order to protect the child, saying, "It's crazy to have this policy. Doctors are not gods." The supervisor needs to listen to the worker's reactions and be supportive of the worker's incredulity about Munchausen and questions about the petition policy. These cases are very difficult to believe. Having heard the worker out, the supervisor needs to say that this is a medical diagnosis and agency policy is to put safety first.

Feedback

Feedback involves non-judgmental and non-fateful observations about how anyone (subordinates, peers, bosses) can improve their performance. We all need and like feedback about the work we do. Positive feedback helps us to know that we are moving in the right direction, and negative feedback can give guidance about places for improvement. Despite this, some employees may experience a fear of feedback. Part of this fear may not come so much from the feedback, itself, but from the awkward way that it is delivered. If feedback is not handled in an appropriate manner, valuable information is lost. The danger lies in supervisors who give feedback so badly that employees do not listen to it and focus only on the emotions evoked by the information. This can lead to each party blaming each other. Effectively given feedback probably is *the* best performance improver. Supervisors need to understand that feedback is different from criticism and should be focused on the problem rather than the person.

Feedback should *be problem oriented, connected to the topic, and close in time to the event*. The supervisor providing the feedback should be able to own his/her part of the

problematic situation. It should be descriptive and validating. Supervisors should avoid criticizing or evaluating the employee when providing feedback. Supervisors must also own their feedback and not make the source an unknown or someone else. Supervisors should allow the feedback to be a two-way conversation and avoid lecturing. Supervisors should share information that is focused on behavior, and should focus on the need of the receiver, and directing the feedback towards something the receiver can change.

It is also best if the employee solicits the feedback, but this is not always possible. When possible, supervisors should avoid giving direct advice. Phrases like, "Perhaps … Something which has worked in similar situations…You might consider … etc, allow the employees to "choose" the suggestions, rather than being ordered to do it. However, in child welfare work, which is governed by policies and procedures, it may not be possible to avoid direct advice.

Another way to open a conversation in which you intend to give feedback is to start by asking the employee about their actions and motives to understand the problem better. Always check for comprehension prior to ending the conversation. Feedback cannot be done once a year, it needs to be done often and as close to in the moment as possible. Most child welfare supervisors have weekly meetings with their workers, which are opportune times for feedback. Feedback conversations need to be distinguished from those of a "disciplinary" nature. When standards of practice have not been met, consequences follow.

Leslie, who has three years of experience in child protective service, is an excellent forensic interviewer. She knows how to form alliances with children and elicit disclosures of abuse that are not contaminated by leading questions. You know this because she is the only worker in your unit who consistently videotapes her interviews. Police officers frequently request that she conduct the interview when they must do a joint CPS-Law enforcement investigation. However, you have had several complaints from the prosecutor that she does not provide enough detail in her written reports of the interviews, or doesn't submit a written report in a timely fashion.

Exercise

Develop a strategy, based upon the concepts of interpersonal communication and feedback, to assist Leslie in completing her written reports in a timely and complete fashion. You will need to determine if she needs coaching or counseling.

RESOURCES

Electronic

http://www.fastcompany.com/home.html (Fast Company Magazine)

Fast company magazine was developed to highlight the most interesting and innovative business and corporations. On their website, they list all of the organizations they have featured and outline the ways in which they have made a name for themselves. Their website also has online guides for improving your management skills in areas such as leadership, motivational strategies, avoiding burnout, and improving communication skills. Their archives section has information on balancing your life and your work, teamwork and leadership strategy and personal growth and development.

http://www.ccl.org/ (Center for Creative Leadership: accessible research and practical training)
Training in both general and advanced leadership topics and human resources. They also offer customized leadership trainings in which they use their leadership strategies and apply them to the specific challenges and needs of an organization. They also offer individual coaching to provide an objective perspective to those within an organization. CCL offers assessment services to help organization identify problem areas and develop new leadership strategies.

http://www.nafe.com/

The National Association for Female Executives provides special offers for its members on insurance, loans, tax services, business services, and professional development tools They have local chapters of their organization all around the country including five in Michigan. Additionally on this site, members can access their newsletter and resources for professional growth.

http://www.forbes.com/forbes/98/1116/6211022a.html

Surviving in no-man's land

This article published on Forbes' website can be purchased for a nominal fee and describes what it is like for men to work in organizations that are staffed mostly by women.

Print

Books

Pollan, S. M. (1996). *Life scripts: What to say to get what you want in 101 of Life's Toughest Situations.* New York: Macmillan.
Whether you're looking for a new job, leaving an old one, cold calling a new account, laying off a subordinate, confronting a back-stabber, dealing with sexual harassment, returning food in a restaurant, or calming an irate client, "Life scripts tells you exactly

how to do it and what to say. Each of the 101 dialogs provides you with an icebreaker opener and a flow-chart of rejoinders to give to any potential response, positive or negative. Pointers on proper attitude, timing, preparation, and more are included. Adapted from book summary on amazon.com.

Tannen, D. (1994). *Talking from 9 to 5: How Women's and Men's Conversational Styles Affect Who Gets Heard, Who Gets Credit and What Gets Done at Work.* New York: William Morrow.
You say something at a meeting and it is ignored; then when someone else says the same thing, everyone embraces it as a marvelous idea. You devote yourself to a project, but don't get credit for the results. You give what you think are clear instructions, but the job is not done, or done wrong. Sometimes it seems you are not being heard, not getting credit for your efforts, not getting ahead as fast as you should. Offering powerful new ways of understanding what happens in the workplace, from the simplest exchanges to the complex contemporary issues of the glass ceiling, Tannen explains a variety of conversational styles and reveals how each of us can develop the flexibility and understanding we need. *Talking From 9 to 5* will have the same dramatic impact on those who are struggling with co-workers, jobs, and companies, and will help entire companies as well as individual women and men thrive in a working world made up of increasingly diverse workforces and ever-more competitive markets. From amazon.com

Whetten, D. & Cameron, K. (2001). *Developing Management Skills, 5ᵗʰ ed.* New York, Prentice Hall.
With Whetten and Cameron's unique five-step model, learn the skills that turn good ideas into accepted practice - and good management! Skills-based, interactive, and cross-cultural, David Whetten and Kim Cameron's newest edition of Developing Management Skills will help you bridge the gap between learning management skills and applying those skills to the managing job at hand. Filled with experiential exercises, examples, and the latest in technology, this book clearly focuses on the skills aspect of management. The authors present a five-step process in each chapter for assessing, learning, analyzing, practicing, and applying your own abilities to build the foundation for effective management practice. Building on your personal, interpersonal, and group skills, Developing Management Skills is an interactive tool based on the authors extensive and updated research on effective managers in private and public companies. Adapted from book jacket found on amazon.com

Articles

Fracaro, F. (2001). Empathy: a potent management tool. *Supervision*, *62*(3) 10-13.
Abstract
Empathy empowers a manager/supervisor to identify and solve problems by knowing why a person acts and feels as they do. Using empathy as a part of his/her management style gives the manager an effective tool to identify and solve problems. The basic types of empathy are cognitive and emotional. A 3-step approach to successfully use cognitive empathy includes 1. Hear the intend message, 2. Analyze the message, 3. Respond to the message.

Fracaro, K. (2001). Two ears and one mouth. *Supervision, 62*(2), 3-5.
Abstract

It is easier to speak than it is to listen because of how the mind works. The listener must continually focus and concentrate on exactly what a speaker says. The ability to listen effectively is an enormous challenge and that is the single most important element in the communication process. Teaching listening skills to managers is one of the best actions a company can take to promote effective communications. The manager's roles in communication are to counsel, direct, decide and resolve problems. How well a manager listens directly relates to his/her ability to communicate. Key elements of effective listening are: 1. Prepare to hear the message, 2. Receive the message, 3. Understand the message, 4. Evaluate the message, and 5. Reply to message.

O'Neil, A. M. (2000). How to implement relationship management strategies.
    Supervision, 61(7), 3-4.
Abstract

Getting things done with and through other people is what management is all about. Relationship management is not a science, but there are different management styles: director, socializer, thinker, and relater. In addition to "style awareness", there are many other things that comprise relationship management, including "impression management". The way you carry yourself speaks volumes. The impact of non-verbal communication should not be discounted.

Pollock, T. (2000). Sharpening your dialogue skills. *Supervision, 61*(8), 13-15.
Abstract

Although mot managers would agree on the desirability of good two-way communication with their people, they often feel that, under the pressure of time and getting the work done, maintaining a continuing dialogue is an impossible goal. Some subjects seem exhausted; others often require secrecy. The fact remains a manager is judged as much by what he does not do as by what he does. And whenever he leaves people hanging on something that are important to them, their acceptance of his leadership is, to some degree, diminished. Guidelines on how to communicate effectively are presented.

Chapter Four: Working with Difficult People and those with Strong Opinions

Employing Emotional Intelligence

Major Concepts

The Potentially Most Difficult Person

A Unique Case in Child Welfare – The Second Most Difficult Person

A Standard List of Difficult People: The Terrible Ten: All The Rest

The Emotion Quotient

Introduction

A challenge for supervisors, regardless of where they work, is working with difficult people and those with strong opinions. The challenge is probably greater in child welfare, where the work evokes strong opinions and the work circumstances may make caseworkers difficult people. In this chapter, we offer some ideas about categories of difficult people and how to manage them that are found in the business literature (Grassell, 1989).

The Potentially Most Difficult Person

Naturally, that person is you. It is for this reason that we have devoted an entire chapter (8) to the topic of managing yourself. It is mentioned here only by way of acknowledgement. You are potentially the most difficult because you typically will be highly invested in your approach, and may not, actually, even understand that approach, or its impacts. As we seek to understand the difficulties of others, self-knowledge is a great place to start. So take a look at Chapter 8.

A Unique Case In Child Welfare

Perhaps the second most difficult person is the worker who becomes a "problem" because she does not agree with a particular policy (problem #1) and you, as a supervisor, actually agree with that person's perspective (problem # 2). Consider the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act, which, in most instances, prevents taking race into consideration in placement (except for Native Americans, where *nationality* must be taken into consideration). A worker feels that these policies are wrong, keeps talking about it, makes life hard for everyone, and cannot seem to accept that this is the law at the moment. And in some of these instances, you as a supervisor, may agree with the worker. Your mission at this point is to interpret agency policy and the law that sustains it. You do not have to agree with it; but that is the law, and that is what you and the worker need to follow. Even if you disagree with the policy and agree with the worker, do not collude with the worker to circumvent the policy.

Returning to the illustration of the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act, suppose there is a case involving an African American 12-year-old boy, who had to be removed from the home, but the only white foster parents are available. The worker is worried about the impact of being in a white home on the boy and wants to put him in a shelter. In the shelter, there will be both African American staff and African American teenagers. In this situation, it is the supervisor's responsibility to remind the worker that not only must they not use race as a placement criterion, they should use "least restrictive placement" as a criterion. Based on these policies, the worker should place the child in a foster home, which, given the lack of availability of African American homes, will be a white home.

A Standard List of Difficult People: The Terrible Ten

There are many types of difficult people. The bad news is we only have the space to deal with a few. The good news is that these few—the terrible ten—capture a large majority of irritating others. One must configure and customize responses to each, and we will be making some brief, general suggestions about ways to handle them. Solomon (1990) outlines ten types that you are most likely to encounter. We have added some "thumbnail" management strategies.

The Terrible Ten:	Dynamics	Management strategies
#1 - Angry /Hostile	This person is angry at the system, at social injustice, at upper management, at the courts, etc. While they are not angry at you, their anger is hard to contain and deal with, setting you and others on edge. The hostile person is, angry at you and lashes out. They seek to hurt you.	Anger: Ask, "Is there anything else?" Try not to let their anger create anger in you. With them alone, explain that their anger may help them, but it has a negative and chilling effect on all the others. Work with them to find appropriate ways to express their anger so that it is less harmful to others. Hostility requires a calm demeanor on your part. Meet with this person at your best time of the day. Ask what would make things better for them, and explore whether any of those requests/desires could be accommodated, within reason. If not, explore with Human Resources ways to relocate them.

#2 - Pushy/Presumptuous	These types of people have no sense of the pace of work at the agency and their pace in it. Pushy ones often like work to move faster, and they move faster as well. Presumptuous individuals think more of themselves than anyone else does and are very self promoting; they have no sense of place.	Pushy: Set narrow limits; remind them that others have needs as well. Their views on pace may, actually, be correct. The agency pace might be too slow. Invite them to think of ways they can make things happen more quickly. Presumptuous. Assign them "menial" tasks that need to be done but are "below their view of themselves" (which would be almost anything!). Explain that everyone needs to chip in.
#3 - Deceitful/Underhanded	Deceitful individuals have no compunction about lying or deliberately omitting information that implicates them. Unfortunately they often look good, and it takes awhile to discover that they are only partial truth tellers..	Deceitful/Underhanded Once you discover them, keep a log. Ask for material in writing; these people are often verbally skillful; you need a chance to review in advance and prepare. Seek legal backup.
#4 - Shrewd/Manipulative	The difference between shrewd/manipulative and deceitful/underhanded individuals is that they sometimes involve others in their schemes, and often these others are unaware they are being used. While the Deceitful employees run under the cover of lies; the shrewd/manipulative person runs under the cover of others.	Shrewd/Manipulative. Pay special attention to the involvement of unwitting others and seek to separate them diplomatically from their "master." Provide limits in advance within which this person needs to work.
#5 - Rude/Abrasive	Rude individuals are often narcissistic and self-centered; they do not, sometimes, understand the impact of their behavior. They do not consider themselves as, actually, rude. They are focused on their issues and that is all. Abrasive individuals are ones who use insults as a form of bullying	Rude. Remind this person that courtesy is always appropriate. Unfortunately the concept of "reminding" implies that they already know something they have forgotten; this is likely not to be the case. Hence, they must be instructed in "please" and "thank you" and the other social niceties. Abrasive: These individuals need to be treated as bullies. Unfortunately, this often means confrontation around the special behavior that is abrasive.

#6 - Egotistical/Self-centered	This individual is characterized by "Enough about me; what do you think about me?" Because they think of themselves as the center of the known universe change is "iffy."	Assign this person tasks which involve helping others. With one kind of luck, they will begin to get the message and think of others; with another kind of luck, they will become incensed and leave.
#7 - Procrastinating/Vacillating	Procrastinators just put things off; ; Vacillators cannot pick from among three, between two, or even select one course of action.	Procrastinators: Set specific limits and deadlines, with consequences for failure. Vacillators: Ask them, repeatedly, is it a, or b.
#8 - Rigid/Obstinate	These are the folks who will not budge. They have a view and they are sticking to it.	Rigid/Obstinate: Provide alternatives from which they can choose.
#9 - Tight-lipped/Taciturn	These people have views, but do not express them in meetings and other appropriate venues. They inhabit the hallways, parking lots, and restrooms and share lots of views there.	Invite them to share; assign them jobs which require oral participation. Point out that "This is your chance; here and now."
#10 - Complaining/Critical	The complainer is always finding something that "explains" why they cannot do what they need to do. The critical person has a complains element, but also finds fault with the system as well.	Complainer: Ask them to do creative complaining. Whatever they complain about requires a suggested solution. Ask the critical one to be the "Angel's Advocate" (taking the positive side of a point for a change).

Obviously we cannot address management problems with these difficult people in a phrase or two. But the list assists supervisors in identifying them, and the possible strategies provide helpful pointers on management strategies. Much more detail is found in the resources suggested at the end of the chapter. The clue for each type is to disrupt their pattern of interaction, with *you taking control of the interaction, rather than them.*

The Emotion Quotient or EQ

The EQ is a recent development that considers and assesses one's level of emotional control and awareness. Called *emotional intelligence*, *eq*, or *emotion quotient* it has become very popular as a way to think about and assess employees emotional readiness for a particular job. (Goleman, 1997) Let's consider an "industry" example. The job is as a car rental agent at an airport. Basically everything is run by the book, it is proceduralized and the paperwork is heavily computerized. Your job is to deal with people who get off a plane, are tired, have had too much to drink, and are in a hurry. And their car is not there. "Deal with" means accept and address their anger, not become angry yourself, work out what can be worked out, and move on. This job requires a certain kind of "emotional intelligence." Not everyone is cut out for it.

Emotional intelligence is a concept developed by Daniel Goleman (1997). This concept deals with the following variables:

1. self-awareness,
2. feeling management,
3. motivation,
4. empathy and
5. social skill.

Self-awareness is knowing what you feel when you feel it. Management of feelings is the ability to control impulses, soothe your anxiety, and have appropriate anger. Motivation involves zeal, persistence, and optimism in the face of setbacks. It is sometimes thought of as "resilience" or the ability to "bounce back" after setbacks. Empathy is the ability to respond and read unspoken feelings. Social skills require the ability to handle to emotional reactions of others, interacting smoothly, and managing relationships effectively.

For a supervisor, having emotional intelligence will be very helpful in a situation in which a child on an open CPS case dies. Be aware of your own feelings—of fear and thinking you are responsible, will be blamed, and will have to endure the investigation of the Child Death Review Team. An appropriate way to manage your feelings is to remind yourself of all the others for whom this death is more traumatic than it is for you. These include the worker and the family, to say nothing of the dead child. In a sad circumstance like a death, motivation may be manifest in examining the case and the record to determine if their were any indicators of high risk, if services were appropriate, and if the worker followed agency policies. These activities will prepare you for the Child Death Review Team. You will need empathy to respond to the worker, the family, and indeed all who are touched by this death. You may need to deal with a weeping worker and a director who scapegoats you. Finally, social skills will help you respond not only to these people, but also to the Child Death Review Team.

If you type in Emotional Intelligence on Google, many sites and books appear.

Below is an EQ test from USA WEEKEND, SEPTEMBER 8-10,1995

	always	usually	sometimes	rarely	never
1] I am aware of even subtle feelings as I have them.	4	3	2	1	0
2] I find myself using my feelings to help make big decisions.	4	3	2	1	0
3] When I am angry I blow my top or fume in silence.	0	1	2	3	4
4] Bad moods overwhelm me.	0	1	2	3	4
5] I can delay gratification in pursuit of my goals instead of getting carried away by impulse.	4	3	2	1	0
6] When I am anxious about a challenge, I can't prepare well.	0	1	2	3	4
7] Instead of giving up in the face of setbacks, I stay hopeful.	4	3	2	1	0

8] People don't have to tell me what they feel - I can sense it.	4	3	2	1	0
9] My keen sense of other's feelings gives me compassion about their plight.	4	3	2	1	0
10] have trouble handling conflict and emotional upset.	0	1	2	3	4
11] I can sense the pulse of a group and unspoken feeling	4	3	2	1	0
•12] I can soothe my distressing feelings so they do not keep me from doing what I have to do	4	3	2	1	0

The Emotional Intelligence Quotient is obtained by adding the scores for the statements.

The reader will note that the individual statements may be scored in either ascending or

descending order.

Total score= _____
36 +   EXCELLENT
25-36   GOOD/USUAL
<25   NOT SO GOOD

You, as a supervisor, are a lateral transfer. You were supervisor of foster care in another county, and applied for your current foster care supervisory position when it became available. The schools are better and you have a child just entering school. One of your workers, Joe, a ten-year foster care veteran, applied for the position but was not selected. Joe is superficially friendly to you and welcomed you to the supervisory position, saying he prefers being in the field anyway. About two months into the job, you have noted that other workers in the unit consult Joe, rather than you, when they need advice. Moreover, Joe often tells them to do the work in a way different from how you have supervised them to do it. Two of the workers in your unit go to the director and complain about your lack of supervision, saying they have to seek advice from Joe because you do not know how things are done in this county.

Exercise

What kind of difficult people are you, as a supervisor, dealing with? What strategies should you use to handle these difficult people?

RESOURCES

Electronic

www.amanet.org/seminars/cmd2/2290.htm

This site provides a listing of seminars that train supervisors to manage effectively and skillfully to get the results the want. These seminars range in topic but include, assertiveness training, building better working relationships, and interpersonal skills development.

www.stressdoc.com/difficult.html

Offers essays written by "the stress doc" on handling stress, organizational change, building teams and managing people.

www.itworld.com/Career/3705/

This site provides access to ten articles about the management of difficult people in your staff. The topics range from defusing workplace angers to nipping failure in the bud.

Print

Books
Solomon, M. (1990). *Working with Difficult People*. Paramus, NH, Prentice Hall.
This hard hitting desktop reference provides you with all the proven techniques and strategies to create better relationships with the people at work who make your life miserable—putting you in complete control of even the most difficult office situations. Adapted from book jacket found on amazon.com

Stone, D., Patton, B., & Heen, S. (1999). *Difficult conversations*. New York, Viking. Based on fifteen years of research at the Harvard Negotiation Project, Difficult Conversations walks you through a proven step-by-step approach for how to have your toughest conversations with less stress and more success. It shows you how to prepare yourself; how to start the conversation without defensiveness; and how to keep it constructive and focused regardless of how the other person responds. Adapted from book jacket found on Amazon.com.

Whetten, D., & Cameron, K. (2001). *Developing Management Skills*. New York: Prentice Hall.
With Whetten and Cameron's unique five-step model, learn the skills that turn good ideas into accepted practice - and good management! Skills-based, interactive, and cross-cultural, David Whetten and Kim Cameron's newest edition of Developing Management Skills will help you bridge the gap between learning management skills and applying those skills to the managing job at hand. Filled with experiential exercises, examples, and the latest in technology, this book clearly focuses on the skills aspect of management.

The authors present a five-step process in each chapter for assessing, learning, analyzing, practicing, and applying your own abilities to build the foundation for effective management practice. Building on your personal, interpersonal, and group skills, Developing Management Skills is an interactive tool based on the authors extensive and updated research on effective managers in private and public companies. Adapted from book jacket found on amazon.com

Articles
(1992). When Managing Gets Tough. *Black Enterprise 22*(8) 63-68.

Abstract
Managers must measure the value of an individual employee's performance not only in terms of technical competence but also in ability to support he work of others, advance departmental and corporate goals, and boost morale. According to Kaye A. Craft, president of the management and organization development firm K. Craft Associates, managers often push good employees into negative behavior by not making full use of their talents. When coaching difficult employees, managers should let the employees know that they want to help improve their behavior not set them up for a dismissal. Banker Carl Fields, who coaches in this manner, believes that, if you change the behavior first, the attitude will follow. In union environments, a manger must first confer with the employee relation's coordinator before any counseling session takes place so that the employee will not take advantage of an appeals process. Managers must deal immediately with any infraction of company rules. For relatively minor offenses, managers can inform employees that they are aware of the infractions and that they will continue to be watchful of the situation.

Grassell, M. (1989). How to Supervise Difficult Employees. *Supervision 50*(7), 3-6.

Abstract
A supervisor's primary responsibility is to get things done through people. In order to get the best return on the payroll dollar, supervisors must be able to build an effective team that produces. Most supervisors are well trained for their jobs, but most are unable to handle even the least difficult confrontations because they have never been taught how to handle difficult people. The secret to handling a difficult situation is to start with questions, not statements. By asking non-threatening questions, the burden of responsibility shifts from the supervisor to the employee. To use the question approach, the supervisor should first state the purpose and then begin with easy questions. The employee should be allowed to talk until all is said that needs to be said. The supervisor should then continue to use questions to convey the message.

Lake, S. (1989). Revitalizing an employee's job interest. *Supervisory Management 34*(3), 3-10.

Abstract
Many managers find themselves supervising employees in dead-end jobs that continue to work for the company without their former interest or zest. Managers need to ask employees what they wish to do and where they visualize themselves in the future. Employees should be encouraged to: 1. Read current journals in their area, 2. Attend conferences or seminars as much as possible, 3. Serve on committees, 4. Be involved in

interdepartmental activities. Managers should arrange for guest lecturers and informal discussions of new developments pertinent to the job. Encouraging continued professional development tells employees that there is really no dead end in terms of professional growth and development. Cross training is another means of widening the scope of an employee's job. Participative management can help, too. It can be practiced by increasing delegation or increasing subordinate decision-making. Delegation is important because it gives an employee a sense of fulfillment.

Woodruff, M. J. (1992). Understanding and Supervising the Twentysomethings.
        Supervision 53(4), 10-13.
Abstract
There are only 48 million US citizens between the ages of 18 and 29, not nearly enough to sustain a growing economy. To make things worse, many of those 48 million are unemployable. Thus, supervisors should recognize that today's labor market is not a buyer's market. In order to survive, companies must learn how to supervise and motivate the "twentysomethings". In order to recruit and manage twentysomethings effectively, supervisors should: 1. Provide on-going training for supervisors, 2. Strive for greater corporate flexibility, 3. Shorten work assignments, 4. Provide frequent feedback, 5. Offer creative perks, 6. Develop or expand the company's internship program, 7. Share decision-making, 8. Offer high-quality childcare. If labor forecasts are accurate, the twentysomethings will have a significant impact on the way that employees are supervised.

Chapter Five: Holding Effective and Efficient Meetings

Getting as little done as you do now in half the time.

Major Concepts

Meeting components

      The three parts of a meeting

Conceptual frameworks that help structure effective meetings

      Orchestra analogy

      Purpose/Three characteristics of meetings

      The Agenda Bell concept

Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on meetings you, as supervisors, control. Meetings are events during which supervisors are able to communicate a considerable amount of the information necessary to the job to their supervisees. Meetings are a stream of decision actions and issues. Supervision and meeting are not the same. We will discuss components of meetings: announcements, decisions, and brainstorming In this chapter , we also describe and several approaches to meetings from the business world that assist supervisors in running more efficient and effective meetings.

Components of meetings

Three things are done in good meetings: announce things, decide things, and brainstorm about things. Decisions are formalized agreements that may or may not necessitate action. Action is the behavior that follows the decisions made. Brainstorming involves looking downstream at what needs to happen next. Brainstorming allows for the generation of a wide range of ideas. Then team members and the supervisor must select plausible solutions, as well as ideas for future brainstorming.

Only brainstorming and decisions necessitate a meeting. If you do not have things to decide or brainstorm about, do not have meeting. Meetings without decisions and brainstorming are called newsletter meetings and could easily be canceled and committed to a memo.

Some supervisory meetings in child welfare might be thought of as newsletter meetings because they involve announcing new agency policy or practice, but they also usually involve brainstorming about how to implement the policy and a discussion of its implications for future practice.

The Orchestra Analogy

Meetings work best if you run them like an orchestra, that is orchestrate them. An orchestra performance represents the end of a process of development. The meeting should also represent the end of a process rather than the beginning. Orchestras have

scores, which outline what will be played; meetings have agendas. Orchestras have the skilled musicians present to play the music; meetings also have the appropriate players present including lawyers, teachers, and parents. Additionally, members of the orchestra have properly prepared prior to the performance. Key players in your meeting also should have prepared in advance.

For example, take a multidisciplinary team (MDT) meeting on a case with an infant with multiple fractures. Some MDTs in child welfare are free-standing and the supervisor merely refers the case to the team, but others are constituted within the agency by the supervisor and management. The decision that needs to be made is whether or not to return the child to the mother. Preparation of the team members might be in the form of a telephone call from the supervisor or worker, or a memo about the case and the decisions to be made and what information members need to be prepared to discuss.

Orchestra members for the case team meeting include the physician, the agency lawyer, the worker, and community professionals who have been working with the mother. The physician will need to be there and prepared to discuss the medical findings and possible causes of the child's injuries. The agency lawyer must be ready to discuss legal issues—there are Federal and usually State requirements for handling severe abuse. Additionally, the lawyer will be ready to discuss how the court can and should be used in this case. The worker and the therapist must be ready to talk about the interventions they have tried and their success or failure.

Suppose the decision is not to return the child to the mother because she cannot give an adequate explanation for the child's severe injuries, despite worker probing, an interview by police, and therapeutic work. The child has been with the grandmother for close to a year. All members of the team agree that termination of parental rights should be sought, except the mother's therapist who would like to give the mother a little more time. After the decision is made, the plan for carrying it out includes who will write the petition, what should go into the petition, who will tell the mother and grandmother, and how the therapist and worker will support the mother after the decision.

Brainstorming might focus on how to intervene earlier on cases of battered child syndrome or how to apply the MDT process to other cases.

Ordering the Components of Meetings

Order of issues covered matters in meetings has an impact on meeting effectiveness. It is best to put all the decision items second, after a few announcements. After the decision-making items are completed, brainstorming can take place. Brainstorming items are for topics that will become decision items at future meetings. It is important to keep in mind that decision-making involves an intellectual process, in which initially there are many possible solutions, then few, and then one, the decision. Brainstorming involves the generation of potential solutions, beginning with one to a few to many. Social science knowledge informs us that people perform better when they do not have to switch back and forth between different intellectual processes, that is between decision-making and brainstorming (Tropman, 2002). In addition, decision-making is best done before brainstorming because decision-making breaks up group cohesion and usually causes people to become winners and losers. Brainstorming brings people back together and working towards the same goal. Brainstorming helps heal the emotional scars that decision making leaves.

Another rationale for ordering items during meetings is based upon the likely attention and effort available from meeting participants. As noted, material should be categorized into 1) announcements, 2) decisions, and 3) brainstorming items. The supervisor acts as the agenda scheduler and requests that meeting participants submit these items ahead of time. The supervisor can then put each item in its appropriate place and get any additional resources to deal with an item.
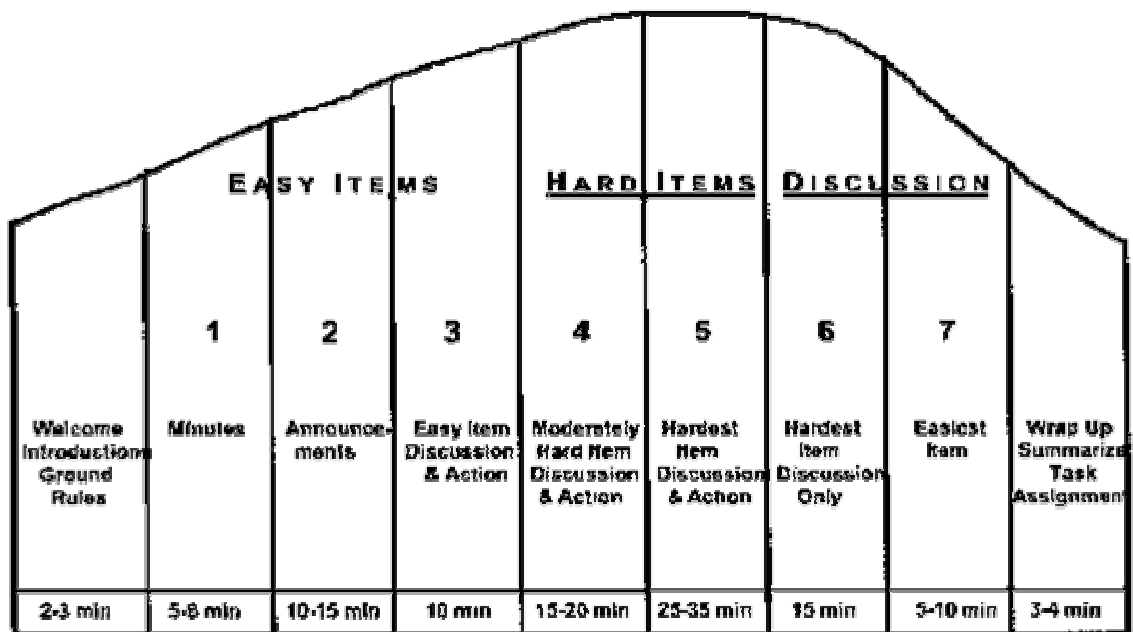
Another framework divides the meeting in terms of time into three sections (Tropman, 2002). The first third is called the Get Go, which involves a few easy decision items and some announcements. The middle third is called the Heavy Work part, during which difficult decisions are made, and the last third is Decompression. During

Decompression, people may "check out" and drift away mentally. Brainstorming allows people to switch gears and start thinking a new way. This process helps re-engage group members. Brainstorming is usually fun and non-threatening, and it gives people something new to focus on.

The Agenda Bell Concept

The final framework for thinking about effective meetings is called the Agenda Bell (Tropman, 2002). The Agenda Bell suggests that meetings can be conceptualized as a bell-shaped curve on a graph, with the greatest amount of time and effort going into the middle part of the meeting. See Figure 5.1.

Agenda Bell Figure 5.1

		EASY ITEMS		HARD ITEMS		DISCUSSION		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Welcome Introduction Ground Rules	Minutes	Announce-ments	Easy Item Discussion & Action	Moderately Hard Item Discussion & Action	Hardest Item Discussion & Action	Hardest Item Discussion Only	Easiest Item	Wrap Up Summarize Task Assignment
2-3 min	5-8 min	10-15 min	10 min	15-20 min	25-35 min	15 min	5-10 min	3-4 min

Thus, meetings begin with minutes, followed by announcements, and some easy decision making items. Then the harder decision making items and then the most difficult decision items. The most difficult item is always located in the middle of the meeting when the most participant attentiveness and energy are available. As noted earlier, group cohesion may diminish or disintegrate around difficult decisions, which will occur in the

middle of the bell-shaped curve. Hence, brainstorming follows to restore group cohesion. The meeting ends with less important and energy-taxing items like adjournment or an agenda for an upcoming meeting. It may take some time for your workers to acclimate to this meeting strategy but once they do, it can be self-reinforcing and enjoyable.

<u>Case Example (answer on pages 121-122)</u>

You are a supervisor of a foster care unit. You need to take care of the following business at your weekly meeting: Share with your staff that the State agency director has resigned rather than be fired and the name of the interim director, assign new cases, discuss the plans for the Christmas party, talk about new rules regarding administrative leave, and discuss how well contract agencies are providing services to unit clients.

Exercise

1.   Using the various strategies described in this chapter, order your agenda.

2.   How much time would you allot to each item?

3.   How would you keep your workers on task?

RESOURCES

Electronic

www.cul.co.uk/ Creativity Unleashed

http://www.cul.co.uk/crashcourse/mlinks4.htm

This is the website that provides information on the trainings that Creativity Unleashed puts on for innovative ways of managing and business strategies. They are based in the UK so they also provide links to website with step by step procedures for implementing efficient and effective meeting processes and structures, things to avoid and how to lead leading meetings.

http://dir.lycos.com/Business/Training_and_Schools/Management_Training/Consultants/ Lycos selected sites of business and management consultants that help business, institutions and organizations improve.

www.thinksmart.com

The Innovation Network website includes information on how to utilize creativity to revolutionize your industry, reinvent your organization, and increase productivity.

Print

Books
Adams, J. (1985). *The Care and Feeding of Ideas.* Reading, MA: Addison Wesley. Explains the creative process, looking at such areas as brain chemistry, memory, the senses, and personality and shows readers how to create the proper environment to nurture creativity amazon.com editorial review.

De Bono, E. (1985). *Six Thinking Hats.* Boston: Little Brown.
A practical and uniquely positive approach to making decisions and exploring new ideas. It is an approach that thousands of business managers, educators and government leaders around the work have already adopted with great success. Through case studies and real-life examples, Dr. de Bono reveals the often surprising ways in which deliberate role playing can make you a better thinker. He offers a powerfully simple tool that you and you business, whether it is a start up or a major corporation can use to create a climate of clear thinking, improved communication and greater creativity. His book is an instructive and inspiring text for anyone who makes decisions, in business or in life. The hate refer to different kinds of thinking, portrayed as differently colored hats. A white hat represents analytical thinking; a red had represents feelings and emotions; a green had represents new and creative thoughts; a yellow hat represents positive thought; a black hat represents negative and critical thought, and a blue hat represents the "control of other hats". Team leaders (blue hats) need to be sure that all the different kinds of thinking are brought out during the discussion.
Adapted from book jacket displayed on amazon.com

Simon, H., D. Smithburg & V. Thompson. (1991). *Public Administration.* New Jersey: Transaction Books.
This classic book, originally written in 1950 by the Nobel Laureate Herbert Simon and two colleagues was reissued in 1990. Though called Public Administration it has come to be recognized as a book for all supervisors, managers and leaders. Its 25 chapters address all aspects of the supervisory and managerial life, from organization context to recruitment to formal and informal controls, to the costs of change. A must read.

Smith, P. & Kearny, L. (1994). *Creating Workplaces Where People Can Think.1st ed.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
Boost employee performance by providing a pleasant, working environment. This unique reference offers detailed guidelines and methods for determining how design problems in your organization may interfere with performance. Through real-life examples and a case study this book will help you implement, evaluate, and monitor a work environment performance intervention. You'll get hands-on reusable worksheets, checklists, surveys, and cost-estimate forms to help you plan workspace for optimum performance.

Tropman, J. (1998). *Managing Ideas in the Creating Organization.* Westport, CT: Quorum.
Of the three key resources important to organizations--money, people, and ideas--the least developed in corporations and organizations of almost any type is the third resource: ideas. Tropman goes beyond the popular notions of the "learning organization" to propose the "creating organization," an organization which understands that the initiation, development, and implementation of ideas is the key to organizational success in the next century. Who, for example, handles the store of ideas? Management knows who handles the money, but what about ideas? Tropman introduces the concepts of Idea Management and Idea Leadership and calls them central to success at work in both the public and private sectors. "The ability to generate ideas and put them quickly into action will be the next competitive edge," says Tropman. How this works in today's organizations and how it must work in tomorrow's is laid out here. Important reading for management at all levels and for their colleagues in the academic community.

Tropman, J.(2002). *Making Meetings Work,2nd.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

A best-seller in its first edition, ***Making Meetings Work: Achieving High Quality Group Decisions, Second Edition*** covers everything you need to know about organizing engaging meetings, including preparing agendas, controlling what happens behind the scenes prior to and after meetings, and managing conflicting values and personalities. Through the Meeting Masters Research Project at the University of Michigan, author John E. Tropman observed and interviewed the nation's most successful meeting experts to find out how to make meetings both stimulating and productive. Based on his findings, Tropman formulated seven principles and fourteen commandments for implementing dynamic meetings.

Articles

Buhler, P. M. (2001). Decision-making: a key to successful management. *Supervision, 62*(2), 13-15.

Abstract
Decision-making is an integral part of the success of managers. Decision-making is crucial at all organizational levels. While the type of decisions to be made may vary with the position occupied within the organization, the basic principles remain the same. Decision-making is the choice that is made among differed courses of actions. Part of the decision making process for the manager is to also decide who should make the decision and how it should be made. There are tow major categories of decisions. Programmed decisions are those that are routine in nature. Non-programmed decisions are those that are new. The rational decision making model is perhaps the most common framework used for making decisions. Organizations today are facing new challenges and mangers may need alternatives models. Computer-mediated decision-making methods have grown in popularity recently.

Pollock, T. (2000). A personal file of stimulating ideas, little known facts and daily problem solvers. *Supervision, 6*(1), 16-18.

Abstract
A method of dealing with worry at work is presented. A method of problem solving is discussed, including a list of some suggested criteria for finding a solution. A satirical list of ways to be a miserable is introduced. Finally, a list of suggestions for helping solve complex problems creatively is also provided.

Chapter Six: Decision Making/Problem Solving

Sidestepping Group Think and Other Decision Foibles

Major Concepts

Decision-making in child welfare

Using steps in the decision process

Avoid bad decisions

Decision rules

Manage the mosaic

Manage elements

Manage rounds of discussion

Manage decision crystallization

Introduction

In this chapter, we share some ideas about decision-making found in the organizational and decision making literature, which can be useful in child welfare. These include understanding and managing decision rules, managing the decision mosaic, managing elements of the decision, managing rounds of discussion, and managing decision crystallization. Before we describe these decision tools, we discuss the ways in which child welfare decision-making differs from decisions in other organizations.

Decision-making in child welfare

In many respects, decision making in child welfare differs from decision-making in other organizations. Ways in which child welfare decisions are somewhat unique are that such decisions may have life and death consequences, they often must be made without all the desired information, either because they must be made emergently or because families are concealing information, and they have to be timely.[1] The child welfare system is governed by timeframes, including deadlines for completing investigations, time limitations on family rehabilitation, and court dates. Decision-making processes in child welfare must also take into account workforce issues, like workers who lack child welfare background and training, high worker turnover, and high caseloads. Finally, it is increasingly the case that decision-making processes and tools in child welfare are scientifically based, that is they rest upon reliable and valid research. For example, we know from research that parental substance abuse increases the likelihood of re-report for child maltreatment and decrease the likelihood of family reunification, there is a high correlation between domestic violence and child abuse, and that special needs children are at increased risk of child maltreatment.

These unique factors in child welfare are part of the reason for the evolution and implementation of highly structured decision-making processes. Highly structured decision-making processes cue workers to seek certain kinds of information in their investigations and assessments, such as information about past CPS reports and parental

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[1] There are other organizations that have similar problems—emergency rooms, flight control towers, and nuclear power plans. When these are studied by organizational analysts they are given the name "High Reliability Organizations."

substance abuse history. They reduce the incidence of failure to consider and put adequate weight on important family and child factors and variables. They protect against workers relying heavily upon personal feelings and intuition when making important child welfare decisions.

Decision-making tools employed in child welfare, such as risk assessment measures, safety assessment instruments, and family functioning surveys, all help child welfare staff consider appropriate factors when they make decisions. They also assist in classifying cases (e.g., as high, moderate, and low risk). Moreover, they provide guidance about how intense casework services should be and what types of services will help families and children.

Yet, most such instruments do not <u>require</u> workers and supervisors to follow a strict formula, based entirely upon the numbers. There is not only room for professional judgment, there also is room for decision-making error. What we are doing in this chapter is providing wisdom from the organizational and human services literature that can alert supervisors to decision-making processes and ways in which they might go astray.

Steps in the Decision Process from the Organizational Literature

Good decisions are the foundation stones of any family, organization, community, or nation. Unfortunately, we often make bad ones—individuals, groups, communities, organizations, and societies do this. There is no certain way to avoid bad decisions, but there are some techniques that can help us move toward good ones. The following section describes bad decisions and suggests some ways to avoid them.

Problems in Effective Group Decision Making

Let's begin by looking at some popular and well-developed processes for making "bad decisions."

Folly

        Folly, an idea developed by Steve Kerr (1995), is a situation in which one makes a decision for A and hopes it will result in B, while actually focusing on A. It is important for the supervisor to try to understand the work that employees do and get into the substance of that work rather than stay at the surface of "objective" criteria, overemphasis on visible behaviors and a constant reporting of activities rather than results

Folly example: A supervisor might focus on CPS workers getting their investigative reports in (A), when the real goal is to assure investigations are in sufficient depth (B). As the example suggests, in child welfare, Folly can have disastrous consequences.. One of the dilemmas of supervisors is that the child welfare system, itself, places a great deal of emphasis on "objective" criteria, such as the proportion of investigations completed within the required timeframe (A), and less emphasis on the depth and adequacy of the investigation (B), until a child welfare disaster occurs, such as the death of a child. At that point, the investigation (B) comes under severe scrutiny.

Group Think (Janis, 1983)

        There are two versions of Group Think decision-making. The first is the "don't break the peace" version, which is found in very cohesive teams. No one in these teams wants to provide bad news. The team members covertly agree with everyone else until something catastrophic happens to break up the team. It is sort of a non-decision (but recall that not to decide is to decide) in which participants hold back their thinking and observations from the group.

        The other version of Group Think, "capitulate to power," applies when a powerful administrator who makes a suggestion that everyone agrees with publicly but disagrees with privately. In this situation, people often hesitate to speak up with concerns and issues due the power dynamic.

Group Think example: You are an African American supervisor in a child welfare agency in an urban area. Your agency has several contracts with traditional voluntary agencies in the community as well as with newer agencies that service populations of color, for

example African American, Latinos, and Arab American clients. For about 20 years parenting classes have been provided to your agency's clients by Sectarian Social Services. You have become concerned that parenting classes this agency provides don't meet the needs of African American parents. You are attending a meeting of your fellow supervisors where a discussion of who should get the parenting class contract for the next three years is a major item. However, you keep quiet during the meeting about your concerns about Sectarian Social Services because the other supervisors at the meeting seem to believe that these parenting classes are good classes and the best option of those available. After thinking it over, you decide to speak up after all, despite the feeling that you are the only one who seems to disagree. You change your mind after your director tells the group that she thinks the Sectarian Social Services parenting classes are the best in the county.

The Abilene Paradox: The Abilene Paradox (Harvey, 1974) is about the mismanagement of agreement. It is the case where everyone does something that no one wants to do, but everyone thinks that everyone else wants to do it. Here again, speaking up is one of the issues, but it is a different kind of "speaking up," one which articulates the decision clearly so everyone can actually know what the decision is. The example below illustrates this point. Supervisors need to create a climate in which people are free to do so. Supervisors can ensure this by asking the group, "Ok, now that we have decided; is everyone in agreement with the decision?"

Abilene Paradox example: When you, an African American supervisor, think back over the decision to select Sectarian Social Services to provide parenting classes, you realize that you do not know how the decision got made in the first place, although you remember a disorganized discussion of options and then the director's assertion. As you leave the meeting, you share your misgivings with an African American colleague, and he replies, "You might be right. Whose idea was it in the first place?" Later informal discussions with other supervisors confirm that no one thought the decision was the best option.

The Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice

Michael Cohen (1972), who proposed this idea some years ago, asserts that all organizations have four kinds of people within them: 1) people who know the problems that are being faced by the organization; 2) people who can solve the problems that the organization faces, but may actually not know the problems because they are somewhere else; 3) people who control the allocation of money and other resources to solve a problems; and 4) decision-makers who put it all together. Cohen argues that most organizations tend to assemble these people randomly, as if tossed into a garbage can, rather than systematically planning to have the right people at meetings. As you construct a meeting agenda, for a meeting at which decisions will be made, ask yourself, "Do we have the people in the room who know the problems? Do we have people who can solve the problems? Do we have the relevant resource controllers? Do we have the relevant decision-makers?" If you are missing one of those groups, you will have to meet again. That is called re-work and it is costly.

Garbage Can Example: Despite the misgivings you, an African American supervisor, and your colleagues have about the Sectarian Social Services parenting classes, you fail to act. The child welfare agency management does not consult with agencies in the community who serve African American clients and know of other parenting resources. The management moves forward and contracts with Sectarian Social Services to provide parenting classes. At this point, you and two other supervisors go to the director and state your misgivings. Your director says to you, "Why didn't you speak up when we were first discussing who should provide parenting classes for our families?"

The Boiled Frog

This concept is based upon an old science experiment (Tichy & Devanna, 1986). If you put a frog into cold water and very slowly heat the water, the frog won't notice the water is getting hot because it is a cold-blooded animal. The frog will eventually boil to death. If you put a frog in boiling water it will jump right out. Change has this effect on us as well, it slowly works its way around us and it may not be noticeably different

enough for us to take action. Suddenly we are dead. So we have to pay attention to when we act and act proactively rather than waiting for external pressures. The rate of change in your organization has to be slightly greater than the rate of change outside your organization or it will die.

Boiled Frog Example: To return to the parenting class example, when you, the African American supervisor, first became a supervisor five years earlier, there were two agencies that provided parenting classes, Sectarian Social Services and an agency that did African American family adoptions. Both agencies held contracts for two years, with Sectarian Social Services providing parenting classes to a variety of parents and the adoption agency mostly serving African American families. The following year there was a budget cut, and fewer parenting classes could be offered. You did not speak up when the decision was made to let the contract to Sectarian Social Services, even though this decision concerned you. During that contract year, Sectarian's only African American parenting teacher left the agency. At that point, you had a conversation about the lack of African American role models at Sectarian Social Services with the parenting class supervisor. She told you she had just been to a seminar where she learned that race doesn't matter when it comes to parenting techniques. Your child welfare agency renewed Sectarian Social Services' parenting classes contract for three years. Your workers are not referring clients of color to the Sectarian program, as they should, and when they do, families do not attend regularly. This situation has come to the attention of the county juvenile court.

Managing the Decision

Decisions, like most things, go better if one follows well-established practices rather than approach them haphazardly. In addition to the many structured decision-making strategies used in child welfare, there are structured approaches to decision-making from the management literature that can be helpful. The leader in the decision process, which we will assume is the supervisor, needs to help the group or unit of workers take the steps one at a time, in the same order, and there must be a distinction between each step. Start with the problem, then look at the evidence, next argue about

what the evidence proves, then decide, and finally implement the change. One really good framework, which comes from a training film on meetings staring John Cleese (*Meetings, Bloody Meetings*, 1978) identifies the following steps:

1. Identify the problem;
2. Present evidence about the problem;
3. Argue about what the evidence means;
4. Make a decision;
5. Implement.

The Deeper Structure of Decision Making

The step-by-step approach is enhanced if one has a bit more understanding of the dynamics of the decision process. This understanding involves some new concepts: Decision Rules, Decision Mosaic, Decision Elements, Rounds of Discussion, Decision Crystallization, and Decision Sculpting. Each needs to be managed by supervisors and other management personnel.

Manage Decision Rules

There are rules to the decision making process that can help the process go better and increase the likelihood of a high quality decision. These rules are norms that make decisions legitimate, and reflect who should be included in the decision-making process. Most of the time most of the rules are simultaneously "in play", and thus need to be understood. Further, each has "winners" and "losers" if applied alone, hence the need for simultaneity. The *extensiveness* rule takes into account what most people want. It is aimed toward satisfying the greatest number of participants and stakeholders. In your role as supervisor, the extensiveness rule might apply to the majority of workers in your unit. The drawback to this rule is that it always disadvantages the minority.

The *intensiveness* rule counteracts drawbacks to the extensiveness rule by satisfying those who feel strongly, and taking into account how strongly they feel and what can be done to accommodate them. As a supervisor, that might be workers most

directly impacted by a decision—for example those workers who have the most cases to which the decision relates.

The *involvement* rule gives power to the people who have to carry out the decision. What do they want, and how do they feel about it? Since they are responsible for seeing that the decision is actually implemented and in some instances might undermine a decision, it is important to consider their views. In addition, they will have knowledge about the feasibility of carrying out the decision.

The *expert* rule takes into account what the experts have to say. In child welfare, these include physicians (especially those who work on Child Protection Teams), mental health experts, lawyers, sometimes researchers, and those with direct experience in child welfare work. Experts are not always right, but we do not want to ignore them.

The *power* rule is what the people in power or powerful stakeholders want. In child welfare, these people may be judges, the state director, the county director, and community leaders. Sometimes foundations that supplement child welfare services are powerful stakeholders. And sometimes, as in the Group Think case, the "power" is a powerful boss.

These five perspectives are important to include when child welfare policy and practice decisions will be made. Not only do they all have a legitimate place in the decision-making process, but diverse perspective need to be considered in order to build a decision that can meet and be shown to have met stakeholders' needs.

Manage the Mosaic

In fact, most decisions are made up of many small decisions that comprise the ultimate decision. For example, take the decision of what to eat for dinner. The menu is made up of several decisions, peas or beans, chicken or fish, rice or pasta, chocolate cake or strawberry pie. Although it is important to consider the multiple small parts of a decision, nevertheless decision-making should begin with a discussion of the dominant

element. This is the element that will or most likely will affect all the other elements. To continue our dinner example, the dominant element that will affect all subsequent decisions would be eating in or dining out. By first considering the dominant element, decision-makers can avoid re-work. Decisions can be thought of as "built," not as "made." It is a mosaic of elements that are assembled together to form a composite decision.

From the child welfare field, consider the task of developing an intervention plan, sometimes called a *parent-agency agreement* or *contract*. Before developing a parent-agency agreement, the worker and supervisor must first decide what problem or problems need to be addressed. Next they must prioritize these. Next, they must work with the parent to make sure there is some level of consensus about the problems and their priorities. Finally the worker, with supervision, examines a list of available resources to put together an intervention plan. By conceptualizing the development of intervention plans as a mosaic, workers and supervisors can avoid the "cookie cutter approach," a challenge sometimes raised about intervention plans (USDHHS, 2003).

Manage Decision Elements

A decision element is an individual piece of the mosaic. There are lots of elements in most decisions. Consider the simple decision of what to have for dinner tonight. There are all kinds of elements from food to location to participants, all of which depend, in some way, on the others. Therefore, developing a structure that takes the elements in a logical order is very helpful. That order is called a Guttman Scale (figure 6.1). Lets say we have four elements to decide upon, A, B, C, and D. Element A effects B, C, and D whereas element C effects D but not A or B. In order to avoid re-work, begin decision making with A because it effects all the other elements. Then you can address B, etc., throughout the array. A Guttman Scale looks like a long triangle. A is the most impactful, followed by B, and so on.

FIGURE 6.1

A   B   C   D   E   F   G   …………………..I^{TH}
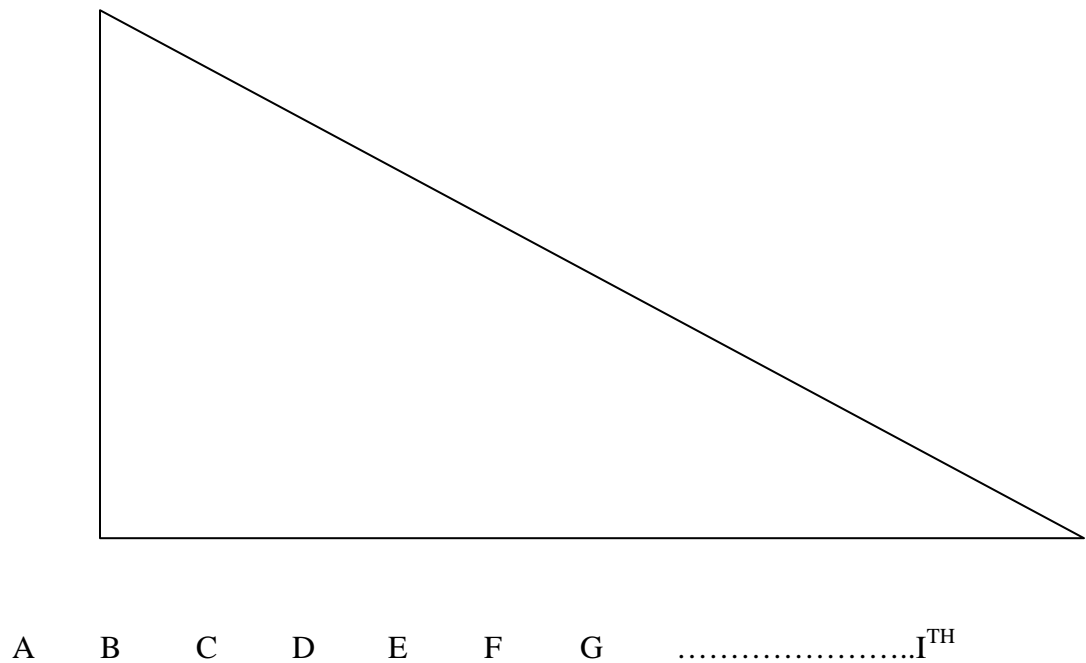
Let's go back to our dinner example. It is hard to know what might be a candidate for "A", and often there is no right answer. But one good choice would be "in or out" because the decision there impacts everything downstream. If "in" is the answer, then one set of b…I comes into play; if "out" is the answer, they you start looking for restaurants.

Manage Rounds of Discussion

A round of discussion occurs when everyone in a group has said one thing to contribute to the discussion. At that point, in almost every group, there will be a little pause or trough in the participation. A supervisor/meeting leader can intervene and speed up the meeting process in that crucial moment. A supervisor should move the group to the next stage. If this does not happen it is our natural tendency to continue talking about the same thing and sink into unnecessary conversation. Discussions are like freeways, when you see your exit you have to take it or else you will just go on and on.

Manage Decision Crystallization

Decision crystallization involves four steps. First the supervisor summarizes what has been said during the round of discussion. He or she might use language like what I heard was this, that and the other thing. This is a neutral summary, which organizes and presents to the participants what they had been suggesting. The next step, which flows right out of the summary, is a suggestion for action. This is called vocalization and presents an action to the group that it can take. But presenting the action is not enough in and of itself. That action needs to be legitimized; the group has to be given reasons *why* that action is the right one. At this point, we return to the decision rules to justify the reason that solution was presented. It may be because most people wanted the same thing (extensiveness) or one team member has had a similar decision to make and has already done this before (expertise). Finally, the leader needs to refocus the team on its next decision task. In a CPS unit, decisions about how on-call responsibilities are handled could be illustrative. The supervisor guides the discussion of what will be an equitable division of on-call responsibilities, how the pager will be passed from one worker to another, and who will back up the person who is on call. At the end, the supervisor summarizes the series of decisions, which is later put into a memo.

Decision Sculpting

This involves assembling the mosaic piece by piece and then stepping back to see what needs tweaking. You cannot see the whole thing from close up just as you cannot see the whole decision early on in the process. Once you look at the whole thing you can see what adjustments need to be made to make the whole decision better. For example, when you look at an entire menu for a meal you can see that there might need to be an adjustment in some of the ingredients to make the overall meal more integrated. Similarly, as one looks over all the elements of a case there may need to be some adjustments to the decision elements, which comprise it.

Overall, then, decision-making is something that has parts and elements to it. One needs to have a sense of the entire process as well as the specific. Managing the decision process is a key managerial task.

You are a supervisor in child protective services. You have noted lately that frequently your workers' petitions to the court to take jurisdiction are being challenged unduly in court. These challenges have made it very difficult for your workers to get court orders to protect and remove children from dangerous situations. In one instance, the judge did not authorize the petition to remove children from a domestic violence/child abuse situation and the police took the children into custody in the middle of the night. In another situation, the court declined to remove an adolescent from a home where she reported sexual abuse by mom's boyfriend. The girl ran away from home and was picked up on a delinquency charge for soliciting.

Exercise

Return to the decision rules (i.e., the different stakeholders, extensiveness, intensiveness, involvement, expert, and power). Develop a strategy for considering all of these stakeholders as you address the problems your workers are having it court. You will note how helpful it is to consider all of these stakeholders in your decision-making process.

RESOURCES

Electronic
http://www.liftingtheveil.org/decision.htm
A report on decision making in child welfare which includes a review of current literature, discusses when and where decisions are made in this field, and how not having clear definitions about what child abuse and neglect is in child welfare is harmful to families.

http://www.liftingtheveil.org/decref.htm
This site contains a bibliography of articles on decision making.

http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/otherpubs/children/index.cfm
A discussion of children of color in the child welfare system that examines the issue of over representation and ways to meet the needs of these families.

Print

Books
Kaner, S., Lind, L., Toldi, C., Fisk, S., & Berger, D. (1996). *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making.* Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers.
    Although it's focus is specifically on facilitating participatory decision making, it is an excellent resource for all who facilitate or teach. I particularly like the concrete suggestions on how to navigate a whole-room discussion (stacking, mirroring, paraphrasing, etc.). However, my favorite part of this book is a beautifully done 3-page section describing common difficult situations - someone is making jokes in the back, your audience is falling asleep, one person won't shut up. The book goes on to detail the ways that facilitators usually deal with these problems, every one of them a power play of some sort, and offers suggestion for BETTER ways to handle the situation. As a trainer myself, I rely heavily on this book when I conduct "train the trainers" sessions. Especially for those who train around sensitive or controversial issues, this information is invaluable.

Weick, K. E. & Sutcliffe, K. M. (2001). *Managing the Unexpected Assuring High Performance in an Age of Complexity.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
    High reliability organizations (HROs) such as ER units in hospitals or firefighting units are designed to perform efficiently under extreme stress and pressure. Using HROs as the model for the 21st century organization, Karl Weick and Kathleen Sutcliffe show readers how to respond to unexpected challenges with flexibility rather than rigidity and to reduce the disruptive effects of change by using tools such as sensemaking, stress reduction, migrating decisions, and labeling. Introducing the powerful new concept of "mindfulness," the authors outline five qualities of the mindful organization and the organizational skills needed to achieve them. Each concept is clearly expressed in vivid case studies of organizations that demonstrate mindful practices in action.

Yates, F. J. (2003). *Decision Management: How to Assure Better Decisions in Your Company.* San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass.
Why do the people in some companies continually dazzle us with their brilliant decisions while those in others make one blunder after another? Do they understand their businesses better? Are they just plain smarter? Or is it all a matter of luck? The answer, says J. Frank Yates, is none of the above. The real key, rarely recognized, is how the leaders manage the company's decision processes— the leaders' decision management practices. Drawing on his thirty years of research and experience as well as scholarship from psychology, economics, statistics, strategy, medicine, and other fields to explain the fundamental nature of business decision problems, Yates highlights the ten cardinal decision issues crucial to managing the decision-making process— and ultimately better company decisions. He covers problems ranging from recognizing whether a decision is actually called for to assuring that a preferred course of action will be implemented. He shows how solid decisions result when managers ensure that deciders resolve every cardinal issue effectively for every decision problem facing the company. He also reveals how, conversely, chronically poor decisions are traceable to managers allowing— or even creating— conditions that encourage deciders to fall short in how they address at least one of those critical issues.

Stein, T. J. & Rzepnicki, T. L. (1984) *Decision Making in Child Welfare Services.* Boston, MA: Kluwer-Nijhoff.

No description available.

Thomas, N. (2002). *Children, Family and the State Decision-Making and Child Participation.* International Specialized Book Services, New Ed.
This study of children's participation in decisions about their care draws on recent work in sociology and anthropology, psychology and legal philosophy in order to understand this challenging area of social life. It also reports on original and groundbreaking research into children's views of decision-making processes. The book has important theoretical implications and important lessons for social welfare policy and practice.

Articles

Drucker, P. F., Hammond, J., Keeney, R., Raiffa, H., & Hayashi, A. M. (2001). *Harvard Business Review on Decision Making*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
The Harvard Business Review Paperback Series is designed to bring today's managers and professionals the fundamental information they need to stay competitive in a fast-moving world. From the preeminent thinkers whose work has defined an entire field to the rising stars who will redefine the way we think about business, here are the leading minds and landmark ideas that have established the Harvard Business Review as required reading for ambitious businesspeople in organizations around the globe. *Harvard Business Review on Decision Making* will help people at all levels understand the fundamental theories and practices of effective decision making so that they can make better decisions in their personal and professional lives.

Kerr, S. (1995). On the folly of rewarding A while hoping for B. *Academy of Management Executive, 9*(1), 7-14.

Abstract

Numerous examples exist of reward systems that are fouled up in that the types of behavior rewarded are those that the rewarder is trying to discourage, while the behavior desired is not being rewarded at all. A discussion of such systems in politics, war, medicine, universities, consulting, sports, government, and business is presented. The causes for such systems include: 1. fascination with an "objective" criterion, 2. overemphasis on visible behaviors, 3. hypocrisy, and 4. emphasis on morality or equity rather than efficiency. A first step in altering the reward system is to explore what types of behavior are currently being rewarded. An informal poll of the Executive Advisory panel on the progress that corporate America has made in this area in the past 20 years is presented.

Chapter Seven: Supervising the Back End

Understanding Staff, Goal Setting, Monitoring/Reviewing/Assessing/Appraising

Major Concepts

Understanding staff

    Splendid Seven or Exciting Eight

Goals matter

    Goal architecture

A system of review steps

    KSS

    Assessment

    Appraisal

Understanding Staff: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences (The Splendid Seven or Exciting Eight)

As supervisors seek to understand what workers "bring to the table," it helps to have a bit broader view of our talents and skills than might typically be the case. A good way to illustrate this is to look at the pioneering work of Howard Gardner (1983). Gardner proposes seven (or eight, depending on how you count), not two, types of intelligence. Previously math/music and verbal were the two categories of intelligence that were popularly used and considered. Other kinds of mental skills were conventionally recognized (street smarts, for example) but had no real "status." This whole area of intelligence is a controversial one. The so called "IQ" has been called into question as "intelligence is what intelligence tests measure:. Issues of cultural bias in tests is a very serious problem.

Gardner takes an expanded view of intelligence. He starts by viewing mathematical and musical intelligence as different. He sees music as a kind of aural intelligence—people with sensitivity to sound especially. And then he adds more areas of intelligence. The last—the personal intelligences which consist of interpersonal and intrapersonal—anticipate Goleman's work on emotional intelligence, which we discussed in the previous chapter. However, Gardner introduces, but does not develop, the concept. Gardner's work suggests that the total range of types of intelligence includes the following:

     1) Linguistic
     2) Logic/Math
     3) Music
     4) Spatial Location
     5) Visual Artistic
     6) Kinesthetic
     7) Personal

          Interpersonal
          Intrapersonal

These different types of intelligence will be defined briefly:

Linguistic intelligence is the capacity to articulate effectively and precisely.

Musical intelligence entails good auditory capacity, the ability to listen and respond, the capacity to hear sounds, beats, and rhythms. People with good musical intelligence comprehend better by from listening, interaction, and verbal communication than by reading words on a page. They learn more from listening to a lecture than reading an article.

Logical and mathematical intelligence involves skill at logical operations and analogical thinking (i.e., Napoleon is to brandy as Caesar is to salad).

Those with *spatial/location intelligence* can visualize space and are accomplished at finding their way around, even in unknown surroundings. They also may be those who have a sense of proportion in spatial terms. They make good interior designers and set designers.

Another type of this intelligence involves visual artistic ability. A person with artistic intelligence has good sense of proportion, color, wholes and parts, light and flow.

Bodily/kinesthetic intelligence is the ability to control one's body. For example, dancers and athletes have kinesthetic intelligence. Such people appear to be in good physical shape and possess coordination and grace.

Those with *interpersonal intelligence* have an awareness of their impact on others, as well as an awareness of others' moods, temperaments, intentions, and motivations. They also have the ability to move among different groups of people with comfort. Those with intrapersonal intelligence have a good grasp on emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and knowledge of their own motives and desires.

The point of defining these different types of intelligence is to help supervisors consider the range of capacities workers may have. If a worker lacks a particular type of intelligence, he or she may possess or excel in another. For example, one worker may learn from going to a workshop on permanency planning, but another may learn more from reading a book or even the agency manual on permanency planning. One of the reasons that training often involves handouts, PowerPoint slides, and an oral presentation is to tap a spectrum of intelligences.

Also, if the supervisor understands the type of intelligence a worker has, information and new knowledge can be communicated in a form compatible with the worker's learning style. Further, this expansion of performance competencies helps supervisors think about different ways of to package assignments, to the extent possible within an agency that is governed by written policies and practices. Good supervisors help workers discover themselves and find strengths they did not know they had. This strategy is often called "building staff performance." Performance focuses on goal achievement in an effective and efficient manner.

Building Staff Performance

In building staff's personal performance, supervisors should start with ideal growth outcomes in mind. These outcomes are developed first by the worker and then honed and tweaked in meetings with the supervisor. While the content of competencies, for example writing coherent reports or conducting thorough home studies, will always depend upon the situation, their architecture is always rather similar. As the supervisor and the worker work together to articulate worker goals, the character and properties of the goals matters a lot. Good goals have certain elements. Consider the following device as a structural suggestion to help you do good goal setting.

One type of goal structure is contained in the acronym SMART GOALS.

SMART GOALS have the following properties: Specific, Manageable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time bound. When goals contain these factors, it is helps

accomplishment a lot. Supervisors need to adjust and articulate the goals for those workers who tend to set vague, open-ended, unmanageable, and unrealistic goals. For example, take the situation of a CPS worker who has two pending cases, two court reports due, and has been out sick for three days. In supervision, the worker declares everything will be caught up by the end of the day. Given the nature of CPS work, this assertion is wishful thinking. The supervisor needs to assist the worker in setting priorities and realistic deadlines. Perhaps one of the pending cases will need to be assigned to another worker.

Structuring the Supervisory Architecture

Supervisors need a system to follow through with workers. The first step is, as just mentioned, setting goals for worker competencies. The second set of steps then involves monitoring performance. The set of second steps is as follows:

Monitor

Oversee

Assess

Appraise

After Action Report

Lessons Learned

The frequency of monitoring varies, as some workers need more and others less. But one works *toward* only occasional checking. The second step is monitoring. Usually this involves agreed upon milestones. A milestone is a significant subgoal, necessary to achieving a result or more final goal.[2]outcome. Assessment is usually done in thirds or quarters—over however long the time period for the project is. If there is a 90-day project, then every month might work. This occurs so that there can be "mid course corrections" if need be. Finally, at the end of the project there is an appraisal. This is followed by what the military calls the "after action report" which deals with what happened in each case. From the after action report, or really at the conclusion of that

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[2] It is probably worth saying that all goals are interlinked in a *means/ends chain*.

report, there is a "lessons learned" section. These lessons become part of the harvesting process through which organizational learning occurs.

Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal examines the total performance of the worker for a year or other defined unit of time. This process is distinct from, but related to, the project assessment discussed above. The project appraisals become a part of the overall performance appraisal. It is important to give periodic and frequent feedback as to project performance. This process is called the *performance audit*. In the case of child welfare workers, these might be batches of cases.

A useful structure supervisors can employ is the performance appraisal grid found in Figure 7.1. The structure invites supervisors to consider both tasks/cases that have been done well and those not done well. We suggest a three-level categorization: 1) few, 2) some, and 3) many. Although work environments vary greatly, and the child welfare work environment may well be unlike other work environments, we have suggested the percentage of employees that might fall into each cell on the grid. There is an ironic observation made in the business community, which is that the shooting star workers may be the most problematic. They are problematic because although they mostly do very good work, their small amount of bad work may be overlooked until it becomes really bad. The workers, themselves, are often likely to overlook their own problems as well, focusing on the good things they also do.

Figure 7.1 Performance Appraisal

Things Gone Wrong	Things Gone Right		
	Few	Some	Many
Few	So-So Worker 10%	Satisfactory Worker 10%	Excellent Worker 20%
Some	Problem Worker 10%	Satisfactory Worker 10%	Good Worker 20%
Many	Problem Worker 10%	Problem Worker 5%	Shooting Star Worker 10%

Illustrative of a Shooting Star is a highly skilled protective services worker, who was articulate, represented his agency with aplomb in the community, developed excellent alliances with clients, and had the trust of the judge. His supervisor appreciated of what he offered to the agency, but knew he was a little behind on his paperwork. After two years, he left the agency to pursue a graduate degree. When his supervisor went to reassign his caseload, she discovered that several cases had so little documentation she could not tell what he had done on them. Too late, she realized that she should have been more exacting about his paperwork, rather than solely focusing on his outstanding qualities.

Upward Appraisal: Use KSS

In the appraisal process, supervisors should also ask for feedback from workers in their unit. The supervisor needs evaluation, too. The supervisor can get excellent information from workers, using the following procedure represented by the acronym, KSS, if the approach is one that workers can use. KSS is one method of obtaining worker feedback. It stands for Keep, Stop, Start. The supervisor asks the supervisee the following questions: "What about my work with you is helpful and should be kept? What is not helpful and should be phased out? What am I not now doing that I should start?" KSS is non-threatening and will provide useful feedback to supervisors It gives supervisors feedback from supervisees that they can use to improve their own helpfulness to those supervisees.

As a supervisor, you have a worker whose performance worries you. This worker was an adoption worker who was transferred to your protective services unit when her job was eliminated because your agency decided to contract with a voluntary agency for most of its adoption services. She loved her job in adoptions but is somewhat intimidated by CPS clients. When she conducts investigations, she avoids asking hard questions, sometimes does not ask to see the children, and often does not substantiate cases you think should be substantiated. On the other hand, when she does open a case, she is very diligent in finding appropriate services, making consistent home visits, and advocating for families in the school system. You have tried several methods to help her improve her investigative skills. You have given her verbal feedback, written feedback, and have had her shadow a more accomplished worker.

Exercise

Using the grid in Figure 7.1, where would you place this worker? What strategy or strategies would you implement to try to improve her performance?

Things Gone Wrong	Things Gone Right		
	Few	Some	Many
Few	So-So Worker 10%	Satisfactory Worker 10%	Excellent Worker 20%
Some	Problem Worker 10%	Satisfactory Worker 10%	Good Worker 20%
Many	Problem Worker 10%	Problem Worker 5%	Shooting Star Worker 10%

RESOURCES

Electronic
http://www.unep.org/restrict/pas/paspa.htm

This link contains the following the article "Make performance appraisal relevant" by Winston Oberg who is a professor of management at the Graduate School of Business Administration, Michigan State University

The author's position is that performance appraisal programs can be made considerably more effective if management will fit practice to purpose when setting goals and selecting appraisal techniques to achieve them. He presents a catalog of the strengths and weaknesses of nine of these techniques; then he shows how they can be used singly and in combination with different performance appraisal objectives. He maintains that if management will undertake this matching effort, many familiar pitfalls of appraisal programs can be avoided.

http://iso9k1.home.att.net/pa/performance_appraisal.html
A helpful site for information about performance appraisals

Print

Books
Coens, T. & Jenkins, M. (2002). *Abolishing Performance Appraisals: Why They Backfire and What to Do Instead.* San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
Regardless of from which side of the desk one has experienced the rite known as the performance appraisal, there are many who will welcome the authors' provocative proposal. Coens is an attorney and organizational trainer; Jenkins is a former human resources director at a division of General Motors. They acknowledge the countless books about performance appraisals and note that most suggest ways to make appraisal systems work better. Coens and Jenkins argue instead that appraisals do not accomplish what they are supposed to and that, in fact, they are counterproductive. They offer compelling evidence to demonstrate that appraisals backfire as they examine the five functions (coaching, feedback, setting pay, determining promotions, and documentation) for which appraisals are designed. Then they lay down sequential steps for phasing out appraisals and for designing and implementing separately the alternatives they propose for each function. The authors rate an "excellent" for demonstrating the ability to think creatively and for generally exceeding expectations for books in this category. *David Rouse Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the [Hardcover] edition.*

Whetten, D. and Cameron, K. (2001). *Developing Management Skills, 5th ed.* New York:
    Prentice Hall.
With Whetten and Cameron's unique five-step model, learn the skills that turn good ideas
into accepted practice - and good management! Skills-based, interactive, and cross-
cultural, David Whetten and Kim Cameron's newest edition of Developing Management
Skills will help you bridge the gap between learning management skills and applying
those skills to the managing job at hand. Filled with experiential exercises, examples,
and the latest in technology, this book clearly focuses on the skills aspect of management.
The authors present a five-step process in each chapter for assessing, learning, analyzing,
practicing, and applying your own abilities to build the foundation for effective
management practice. Building on your personal, interpersonal, and group skills,
Developing Management Skills is an interactive tool based on the authors extensive and
updated research on effective managers in private and public companies. Adapted from
book jacket found on amazon.com

Article
Rotarius, T. and Liberman, A. (2000) Objective employee assessments—establishing a
    balance among supervisory evaluations. *The Health Care Manager, 18*(4), 1-6.
Abstract
Objectivity, predictability, and consistency in a supervisor represent character traits that
are recognized and appreciated by employees. When evaluating employees, these
attributes assume added significance. The Quartile Rating Index, a methodology for
objectively addressing disparities in the rating habits of various supervisors when
evaluating the work of employees under their supervision is outlined.

Chapter Eight – The Management of Self

The Department of the Deeply Clueless

Major Concepts

Stress and stress reduction

Mental/physical health

Personal style or temperament

Introduction

In the last chapter, we address an area often overlooked in the training of child welfare workers, supervisors, and managers: the management of self. Because child welfare work is highly stressful—involving repeated decisions that have life-altering consequences for our clients, sometimes operating in context of insufficient information, and frequently working with too few resources and little time to do the job—taking care of ourselves is especially challenging and important. The major concepts covered in this chapter are stress and strain, strategies for stress reduction, methods of assessing and managing mental and physical, and ways of measuring personal temperament or style.

Stress and Stress Reduction

Although as people and professionals, we may dislike stress, having a totally stress-free life is not really good for us. We all need some stress (recall the need for "challenge" mentioned in chapter 2). Stress, in appropriate amounts, develops us; strain injures us. Obviously, then, the key is to prevent stress from becoming strain. A good start is to understand the different kinds of stressors that exist. The following list is a start:

Kinds of Stressors

Anticipatory**:** worry about what is to come;

Encounter: specific difficult people we must deal with;

Time: never enough time to do the work required of us;

Situational: specific situations (e.g., public speaking, testifying in court) that upset us.

With this list in mind—and we can add detail ourselves—some of the techniques suggested below will certainly help:

Strategies for Managing Stressors

There are general strategies for dealing with stress. We mention only a few by way of illustration. There are many books and websites for stress management you can explore.

1) Maintain physical and mental health.

A healthy person has the energy to deal with stress, whatever the kind. As one loses energy, one runs out of capacity to cope. We will give some detail about this below.

2) Develop Resiliency

Resiliency is bounce-back capacity. It has both physical components and emotional components. It is part of what is called "optimism" in the emotional intelligence framework (ability to "press on" in spite of setbacks). Resiliency is fostered by a sense of perspective (e.g., comparing the stressful situation to the stress of others, for example our clients), an understanding that "this too shall pass." Resiliency also has a spiritual aspect. The importance of spirituality is discussed below. The sense of connection to a force larger than ourselves and can be vital.

3) Learn Temporary Coping Mechanisms

We all need some "quick coping mechanisms" that help us manage immediate stressful situations.. Some people say a small prayer. Others count to ten, listen to music, or meditate. Re-gathering one's strength is of key importance, and "quick copers" help us to avoid making situations worse, as well as re-energize us.

5) Address specific stressors.

Types of stressors and strategies for coping with them are as follows:

Anticipatory: worry about what is to come. Find ways (emotional intelligence) to soothe your anxiety, avoid negative self-talk, and employ positive reflections.

Encounter: specific difficult people with whom we must deal. Plan ahead with scenarios and language so that you do not have to think on the spot. Practice talking with them alone—in the car or on a walk. This exercise helps to desensitize the encounter.

Time: There is never enough time to do the work required of us; do time planning. Use a planner or a PDA. It really matters less what you use than that you use something.

Situational: specific situations. Situations are like encounter stresses, except it is the whole situation, rather than specific people that presents the problem. A popular example is public speaking, a situation which stresses many people. Performance appraisal

interviews are another. Very much like the encounter stresses, planning, preparation, and practice helps a lot to reduce the pain.

Mental Health

It may seem odd that supervisors in social welfare should be reminded about mental health, and its importance. But then there is a bit of the barefoot shoemaker's child here: we are most likely to ignore those things we are good at when it comes to ourselves. We may be so busy tending to the well-being of others that we ignore our own.

At the Menninger Clinic (now in Houston, TX), they have a Professionals in Crisis (PIC) program. Based upon their work with professionals who have experienced and are managing crises, here are their suggestions for positive mental health.

Tips from the Menninger Clinic (Abrams, 1990)

These 16 points are well worth keeping in mind. We have added some explanatory text to flesh out the concepts. Many on this list overlap others. They are not intended to be mutually exclusive, but rather a way to provide advice from a number of vantage points.

Figure 8.1

TIP	EXPLANATORY THUMBNAIL
1. DON'T HIDE FROM YOURSELF	BE AS HONEST WITH YOURSELF AS POSSIBLE ABOUT WHAT IS GOING ON WITH YOU.

2. BE TRUTHFUL ABOUT ASSETS, LIABILITIES, NEEDS	BE STRAIGHTFORWARD ABOUT YOUR MOTIVES AND YOUR DESIRES, AS WELL AS YOUR DEFICIENCIES AND AREAS WHERE YOU NEED HELP.
3. TAKE TIME TO REFLECT	EVERY DAY, SPEND A LITTLE TIME THINKING AND REFLECTING ABOUT THE DAY AND WHAT HAPPENED AND YOUR REACTIONS TO IT.
4. KNOW YOUR FEELINGS	TRY TO RECOGNIZE AND ARTICULATE TO YOURSELF AT LEAST WHAT YOU ARE FEELING AND SENSING. YOU MAY OR MAY NOT SHARE THESE WITH OTHERS AS APPROPRIATE
5. KNOW WHAT CAN YOU TAKE, JOBWISE	ARTICULATE TO YOURSELF WHAT YOU CAN, AND CANNOT, TOLERATE ON THE JOB, IN TERMS OF JOB CONDITIONS, TREATMENT OF YOURSELF, ETC. REVISE THESE AS APPROPRIATE.
6. DON'T NARCOTIZE	AVOID EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE AS A WAY OF HANDLING THE SITUATION
7. MAKE FRIENDS WITH CHANGE	ACCEPT THE FACT THAT CHANGE COMES WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT.

8. LEARN TO TOLERATE FRUSTRATION	FIND WAYS TO TOLERATE THE INEVITABLE FRUSTRATIONS JOBS BRING WITHOUT OVERINVOLVING YOUR COLLEAGUES AND FAMILY
9. WATCH OUT FOR YOUR DESTRUCTIVENESS-THE DARKER SIDE OF YOUR NATURE	EACH OF USA A DESTRUCTIVE, REVENGE SEEKING SIDE. EACH OF US ALSO HAS THE PROPENSITY TO MISUSE POWER FOR PERSONAL REASONS. BE ALERT TO THESE (SEE ALSO #1,#4)
10. BE SURE TO SET REALISTIC GOALS	GOALS THAT ARE TOO MODEST OR TOO EXALTED WILL NOT HELP YOU GROW.
11. DON'T COMPARE YOURSELF	DO BENCHMARK – BUT AGAINST BEST PRACTICES AND AGAINST YOUR PREVIOUS SELF. COMPARISONS TEND TO BE SELF-DENEGRATING.
12. CHOOSE ROLE MODELS CAREFULLY	AS YOU LOOK AROUND FOR MODELS SOME PEOPLE LOOK REALLY GOOD; REMEMBER THAT WHAT YOUO SEE IS NOT ALL YOU MAY GET.
13. PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE LONELINESS	AS YOU MOVE UP PEOPLE IN YOUR WORKPLACE TEND TO MOVE AWAY; ACCEPT THIS.

14. BE PHILOSOPHICAL	REMEMBER THAT THERE IS A LARGR WORLD OUT THERE.
15. ATTEND TO THE SPIRITUAL SIDE OF LIFE	WE ALREADY MENTIONED THE INPORTANCE OF SPIRITUALITY EARLIER. WHATEVER THAT SPIRITUALITY IS FOR YOU, DO NOT LOSE CONNECTION WITH IT.
16. PAY ATTENTION TO EXTERNAL FORCES	LOOK OUT AS WELL AS IN AND DOWN. CHANGE OFTEN COMES FROM THE OUTSIDE.
17. DEVELOP PERSPECTIVE	VERY SIMILAR TO #14, BE ABLE TO TAKE THE IMMEDIATE AND THE LONGER VIEW.
18. LEARN TO TRUST OTHERS	TRUSTING OTHERS IS VITAL; OTHERWISE WLL YOUR TIME WILL BE SPENT CHECKING. SOME WILL NOT DESERVE YOUR TRUST, AND YOU WILL HAVE TO TAKE HEAT FOR THEIR ERRORS. MOVE ON; DO NOT TRUST MORE THAN ONCE (THIS IS NOT BASEBALL; ONE STRIKE IS ENOUGH.)
19. KEEP GROWING	WE CAN ALL LEARN ALL THE TIME. THE THING TO KEEP IN MIND IS THAT WE NEED TO LEARN FROM SUCCESS AND FAILURES.

Physical Health

As noted above, physical health is also important to the management of self. It is overlooked by many if not most supervisors. Physical health is the physical source of energy and resiliency, as well as balance.

But saying *physical health is vital* does not make it so. Listed below is a physical health assay from *The one-minute manager gets fit* (Blanchard & Eddington, XXXX). It has 12 questions that have been shown empirically to be highly important to physical health. Take it, and if your score is lower than you like, think of ways to improve your physical health.

Figure 8.2: PHYSICAL HEALTH ASSAY
(N0=0; AGREE /YES = 1)

1] I LOVE MY JOB (MOST OF THE TIME): _____

2] I USE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS (E.G.: SEAT BELTS): _____

3] I AM WITHIN 5 LB. OF MY IDEAL WEIGHT: _____

4] I KNOW 3 METHODS TO REDUCE STRESS THAT DO NOT INVOLVE DRUGS OR ALCOHOL: _____

5] I DO NOT SMOKE: _____

6] I SLEEP 6-8 HR. EACH NIGHT AND WAKE UP REFRESHED: _____

7] I ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL EXERTION AT LEAST 3 TIMES A WEEK - (SUSTAINED PHYSICAL EXERTION OF 20-30 MINUTES - PLUS STRENGTH AND FLEXIBILITY) ACTIVITIES: _____

8] I HAVE 7 OR FEWER ALCOHOLIC DRINKS PER WEEK: _____

9] I KNOW MY BLOOD PRESSURE: _____

10] I FOLLOW SENSIBLE EATING HABITS (E.G. EAT BREAKFAST EACH DAY; LIMIT SALT, SUGAR FATS; EAT ENOUGH FIBER, FEW SNACKS): _____

11] I HAVE A GOOD SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM: _____

12] I MAINTAIN A POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDE: _____

TOTAL_____

SCORE:

11-12 -- AN EXCELLENT HEALTHSTYLE

9-10 -- A GOOD HEALTHSTYLE

8 & under -- CONSIDER REVISITING YOUR HEALTHSTYLE

Temperament

We each have our styles and ways of doing things. There are many ways to assess one's temperament. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is among the best known, but there are also the Enneagram, and DiSC, which focus on communication styles. We do not recommend any one in particular; they all have strengths and weaknesses. What we do suggest is that you take time to find one temperament assay which you like, and familiarize yourself with it and think about it. The process of reflection and review is perhaps as valuable as any specific method. Keep in mind that, whatever you call it, each of us has a "default" style of interacting (recall above, in the discussion of stress). When someone answers the question "What is Pat Smith *like*?**"** the answer will reflect Pat's default style, for the most part. It is Pat's core. Assays may not get at the entire core, but they do shed light on it, and that is important for each of us. Let us share a snapshot of the Myers Briggs perspective. The MBTI approach has four key dimensions:

FIGURE 8.3 MYERS-BRIGGS DIMENSIONS

Dimension	Name/Letters	Description
SOURCE OF ENERGY (Where does energy for you come from?)	EXTROVERSION V INTROVERSION (E/I)	E= gets energy from others; I= gets energy from being alone and reconstituting for a bit
GATHERING INFORMATION (Are you a forest or a tree thinker?)	SENSING V. INTUITION(S/N)	S= fact based, 5 senses person; I=gut based 6th sense person
MAKING DECISIONS (Are you rule based or people based?)	THINKING V.FEELING (T/F)	T= rules based decision making(fair play); F= feelings based decision making (fair share)

LIFESTYLE ORIENTATION (Do you prefer openness or closure?)	PERCEIVING V JUDGING(P/J)(Perceiving refers to preference for openness; judging refers to preference for closure.)	P=seeks openness (lets check out another store); J= lets wrap things up and move on (this store is fine)

According to MBTI thinking, each of us has one dominant set of initials which defines our "type." However, some of us are really strong on one or more dimensions. It is the strong ones that require most attention, because they are the ones other notice most and the ones that tend to be "our personality" to others. We have listed some of the characteristics of each of the letters below. There are many websites on the Internet where one can take a MBTI. The point is to understand that our approach to daily life is structured, rather than random, has patterning and themes, rather than arbitrariness. They help others relate to us, but can also become rigid and repetitive.

There are two kinds of errors one can make in using temperament assays. One is to ignore them completely. If one takes that path, then the ability to learn from the process of reflection is lost, and any specific information, which might have some, if not *complete* accuracy, is also lost. The other error to become too involved with any specific "self-portrait." Assays "reflect" you, rather than "define" you. Therefore "use it, don't refuse it or abuse it."

Case Example (answer on pages 123-124)

Imagine you are a new supervisor of a foster care unit. You were a foster care worker for five years, and during that time you completed a MSW taking evening classes. You believe your stress will be greatly reduced because you aren't trying to do frontline work, go to school, and be a good wife. But you are also nervous about your new position and your ability to supervise. You have had responsibility over clients but never over staff. You have been a co-worker with three of the people whom you are now supervising, you have three workers who are new to the agency within the last six months, you have a transfer in from the adjacent county, and a worker who was moved from a prevention program to foster care against her wishes.

During the time you were a frontline worker and going to school, you and you husband would meet after work and go to the bar every Friday. Sometimes you would end up drinking your dinner or eating junk food on Friday night and have a hangover Saturday morning. You also put on about 15 pounds because you stopped running in the evenings because you had to go to class. You have put off going to the dentist and the eye doctor because you were too busy.

Exercise

Using the physical health assay in this chapter, rate your physical health as a new supervisor.

PHYSICAL HEALTH ASSAY

(N0=0; AGREE /YES = 1)

1] I LOVE MY JOB (MOST OF THE TIME): _____

2] I USE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS (E.G.: SEAT BELTS): _____

3] I AM WITHIN 5 LB. OF MY IDEAL WEIGHT: _____

4] I KNOW 3 METHODS TO REDUCE STRESS THAT DO NOT INVOLVE DRUGS OR ALCOHOL: _____

5] I DO NOT SMOKE: _____

6] I SLEEP 6-8 HR. EACH NIGHT AND WAKE UP REFRESHED: _____

7] I ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL EXERTION AT LEAST 3 TIMES A WEEK -
(SUSTAINED PHYSICAL EXERTION OF 20-30 MINUTES - PLUS STRENGTH
AND FLEXIBILITY) ACTIVITIES: _____

8] I HAVE 7 OR FEWER ALCOHOLIC DRINKS PER WEEK: _____

9] I KNOW MY BLOOD PRESSURE: _____

10] I FOLLOW SENSIBLE EATING HABITS (E.G. EAT BREAKFAST EACH DAY;
LIMIT SALT, SUGAR FATS; EAT ENOUGH FIBER, FEW SNACKS): _____

11] I HAVE A GOOD SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM: _____

12] I MAINTAIN A POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDE: _____

TOTAL_____

SCORE:

11-12 -- AN EXCELLENT HEALTHSTYLE

9-10 -- A GOOD HEALTHSTYLE

8 & under -- CONSIDER REVISITING YOUR HEALTHSTYLE

Now look at the list of mental health tips from the Menninger Clinic and decide which
ones you as a new supervisor should employ.

TIP	EXPLANATORY THUMBNAIL
1. DON'T HIDE FROM YOURSELF	BE AS HONEST WITH YOURSELF AS POSSIBLE ABOUT WHAT IS GOING ON WITH YOU.
2. BE TRUTHFUL ABOUT ASSETS, LIABILITIES, NEEDS	BE STRAIGHTFORWARD ABOUT YOUR MOTIVES AND YOUR DESIRES, AS WELL AS YOUR DEFICIENCIES AND AREAS WHERE YOU NEED HELP.

3. TAKE TIME TO REFLECT	EVERY DAY, SPEND A LITTLE TIME THINKING AND REFLECTING ABOUT THE DAY AND WHAT HAPPENED AND YOUR REACTIONS TO IT.
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5. KNOW WHAT CAN YOU TAKE, JOBWISE	ARTICULATE TO YOURSELF WHAT YOU CAN, AND CANNOT, TOLERATE ON THE JOB, IN TERMS OF JOB CONDITIONS, TREATMENT OF YOURSELF, ETC. REVISE THESE AS APPROPRIATE.
6. DON'T NARCOTIZE	AVOID EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE AS A WAY OF HANDLING THE SITUATION
7. MAKE FRIENDS WITH CHANGE	ACCEPT THE FACT THAT CHANGE COMES WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT.
8. LEARN TO TOLERATE FRUSTRATION	FIND WAYS TO TOLERATE THE INEVITABLE FRUSTRATIONS JOBS BRING WITHOUT OVERINVOLVING YOUR COLLEAGUES AND FAMILY

9. WATCH OUT FOR YOUR DESTRUCTIVENESS-THE DARKER SIDE OF YOUR NATURE	EACH OF USA A DESTRUCTIVE, REVENGE SEEKING SIDE. EACH OF US ALSO HAS THE PROPENSITY TO MISUSE POWER FOR PERSONAL REASONS. BE ALERT TO THESE (SEE ALSO #1,#4)
10. BE SURE TO SET REALISTIC GOALS	GOALS THAT ARE TOO MODEST OR TOO EXALTED WILL NOT HELP YOU GROW.
11. DON'T COMPARE YOURSELF	DO BENCHMARK – BUT AGAINST BEST PRACTICES AND AGAINST YOUR PREVIOUS SELF. COMPARISONS TEND TO BE SELF-DENEGRATING.
12. CHOOSE ROLE MODELS CAREFULLY	AS YOU LOOK AROUND FOR MODELS SOME PEOPLE LOOK REALLY GOOD; REMEMBER THAT WHAT YOUO SEE IS NOT ALL YOU MAY GET.
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19. KEEP GROWING	WE CAN ALL LEARN ALL THE TIME. THE THING TO KEEP IN MIND IS THAT WE NEED TO LEARN FROM SUCCESS AND FAILURES.

RESOURCES

Electronic

www.yahoo.com/health

Fifty health subheadings ranging from exercise, nutrition, mental health, alternative medicine. This site gives a wealth of information on both general well being and specific health conditions.

www.psychwww.com

Psych web has resources for psychology professionals and students but it also has a self help index. This section has an enormous amount of information on mental health and stress related issues. It includes ways to understand the ways in which stress impacts your life and what to do about it.

www.talkaboutstress.com

This is an internet company that provides businesses and organizations with tools to help their employees understand stress and decrease the effects of it on them. The company can provide electronic training modules including self tests, relaxation exercises and instruction on topics of interpersonal communication skills, nutrition, time management and others. Talk about stress can also hold seminars in which this information is covered.

http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learn/program/hndouts/slfman.html
a Self management checklist.

In addition you can also search for "Time Management" "Stress" "Self –Management" on the web. There are thousands of sites to explore.

Print

Books
Allen, D. (2001). *Getting Things Done*. New York: Viking.
In today's world, yesterday's methods just don't work. Veteran coach and management consultant David Allen recognizes that time management is useless the minute your schedule is interrupted; setting priorities isn't relevant when your e-mail is down; procrastination solutions won't help if your goals aren't clear. Instead, Allen shares with readers the proven methods he has already introduced in seminars and at top organizations across the country. The key to *Getting Things Done?* Relaxation.

Allen's premise is simple: our ability to be productive is directly proportional to our ability to relax. Only when our minds are clear and our thoughts are organized can we achieve stress-free productivity. His seamless system teaches us how to identify, track, and-most important-choose the next action on all our tasks, commitments, and projects and thus master all the demands on our time while unleashing our creative potential. The

book's stylish, dynamic design makes it easy to follow Allen's tips, examples, and inspiration to achieve what we all seek-energy, focus, and relaxed control.

Glickman, R. (2002). *Optimal Thinking.* New York: Wiley.
 Maximize your talents, resources, and time. Make the most of every opportunity and achieve optimal personal and professional satisfaction. The successor to positive thinking, Optimal Thinking is the mental tool you need to achieve your ultimate life. This revolutionary, life-optimizing book shows you just how simple it is to sweep past the ordinary and even the extraordinary into the world of the highest and best. You will never settle for second best again!

You'll learn how to:

- Ask the best questions and find the best solutions
- Make the most constructive decisions in every situation
- Maximize your enjoyment of everyday activities
- Eliminate self-sabotage and experience the full power of your mind
- Master disturbing emotions and stop unwanted behaviors
- Function at your peak in business and personal relationships
- Bring out the best in others, and much more!

Whetten, D. & K. Cameron, (2001). *Developing Management Skills, 5t.* New York:
        Prentice Hall.
With Whetten and Cameron's unique five-step model, learn the skills that turn good ideas into accepted practice - and good management! Skills-based, interactive, and cross-cultural, David Whetten and Kim Cameron's newest edition of Developing Management Skills will help you bridge the gap between learning management skills and applying those skills to the managing job at hand. Filled with experiential exercises, examples, and the latest in technology, this book clearly focuses on the skills aspect of management. The authors present a five-step process in each chapter for assessing, learning, analyzing, practicing, and applying your own abilities to build the foundation for effective management practice. Building on your personal, interpersonal, and group skills, Developing Management Skills is an interactive tool based on the authors extensive and updated research on effective managers in private and public companies. Adapted from book jacket found on amazon.com

Articles

Burnham, L. (2001). Stress: Your worst enemy. *Hargerstown*, 17(2) 10-14.
Abstract
Burnham outlines effective physical, emotional and spiritual methods of managing stress. A comprehensive approach to stress management should make one happier, healthier, and more active physically and socially.

McGhee, P. (2000). The key to stress management, retention, & profitability? More
workplace fun. *HR Focus, 77*(9), 5-6.

Abstract

The lack of humor in many workplaces is a real shame, according to experts in corporate culture. Employees, who laugh together, so the theory goes, have fun and contribute to a workplace where people tend to stick around. There is a dollar-and-cents punch line too: Studies have shown that happy workers are productive workers, which enhances profitability. Suggestions to get you started using humor to cope are discussed.

Parachin, V. M. (1999) Seven secrets for self-motivation. *Supervision, 60*(1), 3-5.

Abstract

It is self-motivation, which transforms impossible dreams into realities. Likewise, it is self-motivation, which empowers people to act while others hesitate, flounder and fail. Regardless of one's background, education and training, when a person is self-motivated, obstacles are overcome, challenges are creatively faced and discouragement is derailed. The 7 "secrets" for generating and maintaining self-motivation are discussed, including: 1. Every obstacle contains an opportunity. 2. Be your own best friend. 3. Follow your dreams. 4. Live your life by the 3 Ps: persistence, patience, and perseverance. 5. Visualize yourself as successful. 6. Be like President Lincoln: When you slip, get back up. 7. Forgive yourself.

Ramsey, R. D. (2000). How to live your priorities. *Supervision, 61*(8), 10-12.

Abstract

Experts are always advising supervisors and other leaders to set priorities and stick to them. The best supervisors and managers not only establish priorities, they live them everyday. Some supervisors, however, just say they have priorities; but do nothing about them, just as many of us make New Year's resolutions with no intent of keeping them. This is not prioritizing. It is wishful thinking. Unfortunately, success is seldom built on wishful thinking.

Ramsey, R. D. (2000). 15 time wasters for supervisors. *Burlington, 61*(6), 10-12,

Abstract

Time is every supervisor's most precious resource. That is why the best supervisors and mangers are also the best time-users in the organization. They know how to conserve, stretch and manage time in order to squeeze every ounce of productivity out of every hour of the workday. If you want to use time like the heroes of the business do, learn to skirt the enemies of effective time consumption. Fifteen of the worst time-wasters for supervisors in all fields include: 1. Working without a plan, 2. Perfectionism, 3. Correcting mistakes, and 4. Paperwork.

Conclusion

As noted in the introductory section, the topics covered in the manual were initially generated through focus groups with public child welfare supervisors, workers, and managers. We were also assisted by State and National Advisory Committees in materials development. Training, based upon these materials, was delivered to four different groups of child welfare supervisors, from both public and voluntary agencies. Delivery of the training afforded additional opportunities to refine the materials.

Your jobs as child welfare supervisors are challenging, difficult, and fateful. The very lives of children are in your hands. Children may depend more completely upon than they do on their caretakers, so doing your job as effectively and efficiently as you can makes an extraordinary difference in the well-being of children.

We hope that this manual provides some useful strategies to use in your managerial supervisory roles. As we all know, as we all have experienced, there is nothing worse than a bad boss. People generally leave bosses, not jobs. Each of us hopes not to become that boss we always hated. These materials should assist you in avoiding that fate. The rest is up to you.

Answers to Case Examples

Chapter One – Supervising: The Front End (Case Example on page 27)

Sam can use the Urgent Important Grid with Pat so they can reach consensus on which parts of Pat's job are urgent and which are not, as well as which parts of his job are important and not important. A problem may arise if too many parts of Pat's job are urgent and important. Pat may need further training or more experience before he can do his job satisfactorily.

	Low Level Urgency	High Level Urgency
Low Level Importance	About 20% of tasks. → Developing rapport with fellow workers	About 30% of tasks.
High Level Importance	About 30% of tasks. → Working on a client support group	About 20% of tasks. → Court reports & investigations

Chapter Two – Training/Coaching/Teaching/Educating/Mentoring (Case Example on page 39)

Jane has worked in child protection prior to her employment and she has formal education and new worker training, so she is not a novice, but in foster care she is probably in the beginning stage. She may be a journeyperson in terms of her general knowledge of social work values and child welfare practice. She has familiarity with procedures and policy through new worker training in your state, but has not developed a working knowledge of them. Primary supervision strategies will be a combination of coaching and teaching.

Her supervisor can help her develop practical knowledge of her new job as a foster care worker by clarifying the policy/practice manual and advising her on how to carry out policy in her caseload. Jane should not be given a full case load at this time and the types of cases should be hand picked to insure they will not overwhelm her time and energy. This would also be done to prevent drains on the supervisors time because a beginning stage worker needs to have 70% of their work overseen. At this time a beginning worker can benefit a great deal from shadowing other workers on complex and routine cases. Seasoned workers can help the supervisor to give this new, but not totally inexperienced employee obtain a working knowledge of foster care practice.

Chapter Three – Supportive Communication (Case Example on page 49)

Leslie's supervisor is fortunate that Leslie can considerable skills as a forensic interviewer and can be seen as a leader in that she videotapes. So the supervisor's interpersonal communication with Leslie can begin with honest praise, but should also include problem focused, specific criticism. This criticism can focus on the instances in which the absence of her timely reports have been communicated to the supervisor. In giving Leslie feedback, her supervisor will be determining whether she has a skill problem—that is she does not know how to write reports (and requires coaching) or an attitude problem, that is she puts writing reports as low priority, in which case she requires counseling. Report writing must become a priority for Leslie, even though she is an excellent forensic interviewer. Without a report the child cannot be protected.

Chapter Four – Working with Workers (and others) with Strong Opinions (Case Example on page 61)

Joe is deceitful/underhanded because he is friendly but engages in inappropriate advice-giving to other workers in his unit, which is contradictory of the supervision you are providing. He also is shrewd/manipulative in that he is using others to play out his anger at being passed over for the position. He likely is deliberately encourage other members of the unit to use his advice rather than yours. The rest of the team is playing into this and are coming across as rigid/obstinate in that they will not switch to the new supervisors way of doing things. The two employees who went to the director are tight-lipped/taciturn by not expressing themselves in supervision and going to someone else to complain.

As a supervisor, you cannot avoid this situation. At the same time, you do not want to alienate all the workers in your unit, even though they are being difficult. A unit meeting in which you acknowledge the difficulty of the transition but also make clear what the expectations are for supervision may be helpful.

Chapter Five – Meetings (Case Example on page 71)

1. As supervisor, you may choose to organize the meeting based on attention and effort available from staff. Thus, the meeting would start with announcements, the director is resigning, how well contract agencies are doing and new rules for administrative leave;

then decision items, assigning new cases; and end with brainstorming about the Christmas party.

2. The majority of time spent during the meeting will be during the middle phases. The first and last parts should take 20-25 minutes each at the most. In the middle phases at least one is required depending upon the number of items to be decided upon and discussed.

3. In order to keep staff on track supervisors can state clearly the structure of the meeting, the time to be allocated to each agenda item, and then redirect employees who may sidetrack.

Chapter Six – Decision Making/Problem Solving (Case Example on page 87)

There are many professionals who have a stake in child welfare-court relationships. It is very important, not only that child welfare workers do an effective job, but that they also receive due respect from the court.

In this case example, you, as supervisor, need to strategically involve all of the important professionals, and hopefully arrive at a decision that pleases most people—the extensiveness rule. At the same time, your workers, especially the two whose cases were dismissed by the judge, have a particular vested interest in the solution to the court problem, or the decision—the intensiveness rule. Nevertheless, since court staff and foster care workers are centrally involved in any decision to change the way the court operates, their current method of decision-making and wishes must be appreciated—the involvement rule. The expert rule applies to other professionals who advise the court with regard to how to handle cases involving risk to children. You as supervisor, may need to involve local sexual abuse and domestic violence experts as well as the typical experts in child protection cases, medical and mental health professionals. Finally, the judge is central as are agency administrators.

As a supervisor, you may begin by gathering ideas and opinions from your CPS workers, foster care workers, and others in the agency, but you will need also to consult with experts to get their support and advice. In honing a new procedure or decision, you will need to problem-solve with the judge and other administrators in your agency. This is a lot of work, but you cannot ignore the problem with the court and cannot have an impact on the court through unilateral action.

Chapter Seven – Supervising: The Back End (Case Example on page 98)

This worker would fit under the satisfactory or problem worker heading. She makes mistakes that may leave children vulnerable to abuse and neglect. But she also does some things that are right and makes a great deal of effort with her cases.

At this point the supervisor can make an effort to help the worker improve by focusing on what growth outcomes to work towards. The goals should be specific, manageable,

achievable, realistic and time bound. It appears as if this worker is having difficulty being appropriately assertive with clients by not asking for the information she needs to make a competent decision. The supervisor may need to spend time discussing the specific cases where the supervisor believes there is risk, but the worker did not think so. Role playing being assertive with the worker might also be helpful.

Things Gone Wrong	Things Gone Right		
	Few	Some	Many
Few	So-So Worker 10%	Satisfactory Worker 10%	Excellent Worker 20%
Some	Problem Worker 10% x?	Satisfactory Worker 10% x?	Good Worker 20%
Many	Problem Worker 10%	Problem Worker 5%	Shooting Star Worker 10%

Chapter Eight – Management of Self (Case Example on page 111)

Using the information given it can be assumed that this supervisor would score in the 8 or less category which means that looking over the tips in this chapter might be helpful. This worker is going through a huge change in lifestyle, finishing school and promotion. She is also holding onto the coping methods she used during the times she was in school and working. She is not taking care of her physical health through diet or exercise and is using alcohol to numb the effects of stress.

PHYSICAL HEALTH ASSAY

(N0=0; AGREE /YES = 1)

1] I LOVE MY JOB (MOST OF THE TIME)   _____1_____

2] I USE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS (E.G.: SEAT BELTS)_____1_____

3] I AM WITHIN 5 LB. OF MY IDEAL WEIGHT. _____0_____

4] I KNOW 3 METHODS TO REDUCE STRESS THAT DO NOT INVOLVE DRUGS

OR ALCOHOL.   _____0_____

5] I DO NOT SMOKE.   __1___

6] I SLEEP 6-8 HR. EACH NIGHT AND WAKE UP REFRESHED____0____

7] I ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL EXERTION AT LEAST 3 TIMES A WEEK -
(SUSTAINED PHYSICAL EXERTION OF 20-30 MINUTES - PLUS STRENGTH
AND FLEXIBILITY) ACTIVITIES. _____0_____

8] I HAVE 7 OR FEWER ALCOHOLIC DRINKS PER WEEK. _____0_____

9] I KNOW MY BLOOD PRESSURE____1_____

10] I FOLLOW SENSIBLE EATING HABITS -E.G. EAT BREAKFAST EACH DAY;
LIMIT SALT, SUGAR FATS; EAT ENOUGH FIBER, FEW SNACKS. _____0_____

11] I HAVE A GOOD SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM. ____1_____

12] I MAINTAIN A POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDE___1____

TOTAL____6_____

SCORE:

11-12 -- AN EXCELLENT HEALTHSTYLE

9-10 -- A GOOD HEALTHSTYLE

8 & under -- CONSIDER REVISITING YOUR HEALTHSTYLE

This supervisor should heed tips including Don't Narcotize, Make Friends with Change, and Know What You Can Take Job wise. (Refer to the Menninger Clinic Assay on pages 111-114).

Glossary

2/3's Tip: Meetings are divided up into three parts; most of the decision work should be done during the first 2/3s and the 1/3 should be used for brainstorming items for the future because this is when people begin to have difficulty focusing on the meeting topic and begin drifting away. Focusing on future items is fun and non fateful, and tends to draw people back into the meeting.

80/20 Rules: Version 1: Work can be assessed on an urgent/important grid; 20% or work is not urgent or important and should be handled by procedures; 30% or work is important but not urgent; 30 % is urgent but not important, and 20 % is urgent and important. Supervisors should focus on the top 20% of tasks, which are both urgent and important. Next Supervisors should attend to the important but not urgent work. Version 2

Abilene Paradox: The mismanagement of agreement, in which a "suggestion" becomes – or drifts into - a "decision;" everyone goes along with the suggestion because they think that everyone else agrees with it.

Agenda Bell: Refers to structuring a meeting on a bell curve of effort, with the easy decision making items at the beginning, then the harder decision making items, the most difficult decision items in the middle, and finally brainstorming at the end. The items are structured on the curve due to the amount of energy they each require.

Creative Complaining: A solution-development process that should be taught to employees by supervisors. When they are having difficulty in their work and they go to their supervisor about it, they should bring a solution or possible solutions for review and discussion.

Cues: Information that stands out in day-to-day work that gets a worker's attention and usually shifts their course of action.

Decompression: This is the final 1/3 of the 2/3s Tip in which meeting participants begin to drift away and need a new task to refocus, usually brainstorming.

Expert Rule: When deciding what takes precedence in decision making, the team defers to what the experts (e.g., lawyers, researchers, scientists, the most experienced) in the field think is best.

Extensiveness Rule: When deciding what takes precedence in decision making, the team defers to what most of the stakeholders group wants (voting is one example).

Feedback: Information given about a person's performance in the workplace that leads to discussions about improvements.

Flow: When workers are being challenged appropriately to their skill level to avoid being overwhelmed or bored they are in a state of *flow*.

Folly: This is when individuals or organizations make decisions and plans around working toward one goal but in practice actually work toward another one.

Gantt chart: A visual tool which can be used by supervisors to specify sub-tasks of an overall task from beginning to end, and within that time frame, see when each task starts and when it is completed.

Goal Rigidity: When a person or organization is firm or too firm about what is expected at the end result of a project.

Get go: This is the first third of the 2/3s Tip, in which announcements are made and minor decisions items are made.

Group Think: When decisions are being made, people will not go against either the group or a person in power; fear of breaking the peace or offending the powerful are usually involved.

Guttmann Scale: Named after Louis Guttmann, the Guttmann Scale refers to a logical process for taking items in a meeting or in a project, such that in an array of items, A through I, A impacts B through I, B impacts C through I, and so on. If possible, it is good to start with A because that item has the most downstream impact.

Harvesting: When supervisors see an employee excelling in a particular area and attempt to codify and distribute that knowledge to the rest of their team.

Index of Difference: A tool that supervisors and supervisees can use to understand their time use and assess actual as opposed to optimal time allocation.

Intrapersonal Communication: Communication with ourselves, including thoughts, feelings, observations, and assumptions we make about the outside world.

Interpersonal Communication: Communication with others, verbal and non-verbal.

Intensiveness Rule: When deciding what takes precedence in decision making, the team defers to the person who feels strongest about a course of action.

Involvement Rule: When deciding what takes precedence in decision making, the team defers to what the person who has to carry out the decision wants.

Keep, Start, Stop (KSS): A way in which supervisors can seek feedback from their employees by asking them what they are doing that should be kept (K), what is missing and should be started (S), and what they are doing that should stop (S).

Means Flexibility: When workers are allowed to meet goals in ways that suit their individual habits and styles.

Orchestra Metaphor: Meetings should be "conducted" like orchestras in which each member plays a part, there is plan for the performance, and the meeting is the final product of much behind-the-scenes work.

Power Rule: When deciding what takes precedence in the decision making, the team defers to what the people in power want.

Professional Unit System (PUS): A way for supervisors to calculate how much worker time they have within their team to assign to a project.

Purpose/Three Characteristics of meetings: There are only three things that you do in meetings (announce, decide, and brainstorm), and they should be done in that order.

Resiliency: The ability that people can develop to resist the negative effects (both emotionally and physically) of stress so that it does not become strain.

Rule Fade: When workers become confident in their knowledge of the regulations and do not need to consult a manual or other reference material to complete their job.

SMART Goals: An acronym for Specific, Manageable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time bound to denote the necessary components of goals that are workable and well planned.

Stress: The reaction that people have to their daily living environment and the multiple responsibilities it requires.

Theory of Multiple Intelligence: Developed by Howard Gardner, this theory states that people are intelligent in seven ways as opposed to the traditional idea of two types of intelligence (math and verbal). The eight new types of intelligence that he proposes are linguistic, logic/math, music, spatial location, visual artistic, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

Temperament: Each individual's style, personality, and ways of coping.

Urgent / Important Grid: A visual diagram that shows who is responsible for what task and how the level of urgency and/or importance effects this.

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