



# Supervisor Performance Improvement

NWI Consulting, LLC

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## Effective Supervisor Performance...

### A Key to Corporate Success

First Line Supervisor (FLS) and middle management performance plays a key role inside any industry, company, plant or organization. Improvement within the



realm of supervisor performance can either lead to substantial growth or significant performance problems. Supervisors play an important role in establishing and reinforcing the principles or “fundamental beliefs” of

an organization. Because supervisors oftentimes act as the mediator between upper level management and the general workforce, their role becomes crucial in the achievement and maintenance of company goals. Supervisors must be exceptionally efficient communicators to uphold the relationship between senior management and the workforce. An FLS who does not convincingly reinforce these corporate beliefs (mainly because he/she doesn’t buy into these beliefs) can act as a “timed-release poison” that can affect the entire department and will ultimately create havoc throughout

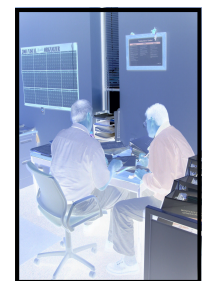
the organization. Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of supervisors can help to ensure their effectiveness within a company (see page 3). By providing clear expectations along with appropriate training, tools and consistent mentoring, a supervisor can achieve their maximum potential and align/support the organization’s fundamentals. *The We-Be’s*: On several turn-around situations, we have seen that many workers await the next program or “flavor of the month” initiative from management that ultimately results in a “wait and see” attitude. In other words, “We be here (cont. on pg 4)

#### Inside this issue:

<i>NWI Helps Ensure Supervisor Performance</i>	1
<i>Supervisor Selection</i>	1-2
<i>Key Roles of Supervisors</i>	2
<i>Conflict Management</i>	2
<i>Business Communications</i>	3
<i>Supervisor Alignment</i>	3
<i>Thank You Clients...</i>	4

#### Special points of interest:

- *Effective Supervisor Performance*
- *Key Roles of a Supervisor*
- *Supervisor Selection*



Next Issue Coming Summer 2005  
“Training & Accreditation”

## Supervisor Selection—How important is it really?

The selection process for a supervising position is just as important as defining the roles of a supervisor. Traditionally, industries tend to promote based on tenure or skill. However, this method has not proven to be the most successful. Oftentimes supervisors that attained

a position based on specialized skill or capability demonstrate the preference to be involved in the hands on work and have problems actually supervising. The selection process needs to include a specialized skill, but just as significant as skill is the

ability to communicate as a leader. The desire and capacity to pool resources and work in teams should also play a role in supervisor selection. Knowledge of training to improve performance and the dedication thereof will (cont. on pg 2)

# “Training Plays a Vital Role to a Supervisor”

Industry specific training of a supervisor is a necessity to empower the supervisor with the tools needed to reach their highest potential. An even mixture of practice sessions, in-field training, and classroom training will help a supervisor to gain a broad spectrum of ideals to impart upon the general workforce. Instructions and training on expectations, requirements, principles of the company, and on their supervisor specific area will

allow the supervisor to feel adequately prepared for everyday tasks as well as any challenge that may present itself.

Training does not stop with the initial hire, it continues so that the supervisor can build upon their knowledge and refresh their methods of supervising. Reinforcing what is initially learned in training will help prevent complacency within a supervising role. Typically, each industry has specific

training guides and qualifications that can be further developed to maximize a supervisors' competence and confidence within the job description.



## ***Training Helps Prevent Knowledge & Skill Based Errors !***

### “Possible Pitfalls Identified for Supervisors”



1. Failure to confront and correct inappropriate work behaviors.
2. Insufficient involvement with the workforce.
3. Lack of field presence.
4. Unreasonable work loads.
5. Inappropriate expectations from managers
6. Insufficient management support.
7. Ineffective oversight.
8. Conflicting Priorities
9. Unclear roles and responsibilities.

Addressing these pitfalls “upfront” and personal can help internalize the behavioral changes needed ! Honest and

*Acknowledge the pitfalls for supervisors so that they can be corrected quickly and effectively.*

open feedback is the “breakfast of champions !” Consistent, specific, and repetitive feedback by upper and middle management will go a long way toward reinforcing good behaviors and effectively teaching implementation methods.

### “CONFLICT MANAGEMENT”

In all organizations conflicts occur. Because good people can disagree, conflicts are inevitable and effective leaders must know how to manage conflict. You cannot establish effective work teams without effective conflict resolution. Conflict Management is a source of stress that works against teamwork. It has the potential to destroy morale. The

workforce tends to focus their time and energy on the conflict at hand as opposed to productivity and cooperation. It is important for the leader to quickly aid in finding a resolution.

It is vital to a successful leader to tackle conflicts “head-on” in order to prevent the work environment from soiling. Although conflict resolution is not always easy, it is necessary to turn differences into opportunities. One way to guide a team in turning

differences into opportunities is by getting the team to agree on the facts first, then understanding each point of view involved, and ultimately, agreeing on a solution. It is imperative for a leader to learn how to successfully decipher personality disagreements from work structure problems in order to accurately develop a resolution to the conflict. The key element is to be a negotiator, not a referee.

### “The Supervisor Selection—How Important is it really?”

also need to be a prerequisite of the supervisor screening. Training plays an important role within the supervising job description. Monitoring and participating in workers' training allows the supervisor to

have a hands-on approach while maintaining their role as a coach. Providing prompt, critical, and specific feedback is a key attribute that must be in the “fabric” of the FLS.

Selection of a competent candidate ensures the success of the team, and ultimately, the industry. Each of the above items must be considered to ensure the best selection for the supervisor is made.

*Select the best supervisor the 1st time!*



## “Key Roles and Responsibilities of a Nuclear Supervisor (as defined by INPO)”

- Accept responsibility and accountability for workers’ performance
- Maintain standards. Identify when worker performance does not meet expectations, and confront performance shortfalls.
- Foster good nuclear, radiological, human performance, and industrial safety behaviors.
- Seek to identify why personnel, process, and equipment performance shortfalls exist, and identify corrective actions to address shortfalls.
- Coach workers in a positive manner (as opposed to criticizing)
- Promote teamwork among crews/teams, with peers, and within the management team.
- Encourage the identification of problems, and respond to problems commensurate with their significance.
- Perform root cause investigations.
- Recognize that success is dependent on his or her influence beyond the crew or team directly supervised. Network and leverage resources with peers for the greater good of the organization.
- Manage the work from a “manager’s perspective”--- the right people in the right place to get the day-to-day work done.
- Develop and broaden the skills of workers in technical, interpersonal, and leadership areas to increase the value of individual contributors to the organization.
- Schedule, attend, and observe training.
- Support self-assessments.
- Conduct procedure reviews.
- Oversee on the job training and task performance evaluation.

*Clearly defined roles of supervisors makes all the difference!*

## “Aligning the Supervisors within the Organization and Industry”

*“It seems to be a balancing act between getting work complete and improving human performance.”*

Supervisors often have a hard time with their role. It seems to be a balancing act between getting work complete and improving human performance. Supervisors need their roles to be established and aligned with the commitment and assurance of senior managers.

Although the functions of supervisors change frequently, the responsibilities remain constant. It is the role of the managers to communicate this to the supervisors. The managers must realize that it is their responsibility to ensure that

the supervisors roles mirrors the senior management’s desires.

The misalignment of the roles between the supervisor and the managers can really take a toll on a company. The importance of adequate time spent in communication between supervisors and management must be stressed as a means to maintain alignment. The supervisors need to have the assurance that their managers will support them.

A key facet in becoming an effective leader is communication. Communication does not seem like it would be a difficulty within a business, but many organizations have problems communicating properly. Different interests, points of view, roles within an organization, and techniques of communication all play a factor in the interpretation of communication. What to say, when to say it, how to say it, and to whom to say it are all important questions that need to be addressed for proper communication. Successful management requires good communication. Because it is very easy for a misunderstanding to happen during communication, it is vital to learn how to communicate effectively. Understanding that communication is not only what is being said, but also how it is being said and how it is interpreted is part of the communication learning process. Oftentimes the manager that is communicating forgets that the employee is also looking at the non-verbal messages and thinking of the history behind the situation, and then assigning their own per-

## “Business Communications”

sonal values and meanings to the communication.

Training management to communicate effectively is not a one-time class or workshop. Since only one side of communication can be controlled, it can be a difficult to learn effective business communication. The concept of making communication effective begins with learning how to distinguish communication preferences and explaining the message in a way that is well received and gets things accomplished.

- **Research shows that adults listen at 25% of our potential.**
- **We forget, distort, ignore or misunderstand 75% of what we hear.**
- **Ideas get distorted as much as 80% as they travel the chain of command**
- **Listening is deciding what you *think* or *feel* about information.**

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### "Effective Supervisor Performance

(cont. from page 1)

when you got here...and we be here when you gone!" This lack of initial support by the workforce requires greater effort to "pull in" the first line supervisors and align them by a consistent messages and actions by upper management that is repeated again and again. The first sign of waiver or compromise of those beliefs by senior management will result in a loss of support...that may be unrecoverable by that management team. Selected surveys state that over 95% of first line supervisors want to follow effective leadership. Consistent accountability to the principles of the organization will

### BILL LINDSEY, MA, educ.



Bill Lindsey, most recently assigned as a senior evaluator at INPO completed accreditation evaluations for about one third of the US nuclear sites, provided training assistance to the industry, and conducted training for new training managers.

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Steve Pettinger is a power plant professional with 25 years of technical, supervisory and managerial experience in the areas of operations, training and computer applications.

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### FRANK S. TSAKERES, Ph.D.



Frank is a nuclear engineering and power plant professional with over 30 years of diversified technical & managerial experience in training, operations, maintenance, RP, chemistry, and EP.

+ New Team Additions +

- NWI welcomes Bill Hensley to the NWI Consulting team! Bill joins us with numerous years of experience throughout the nuclear industry in the area of PWR Operations training.
- NWI welcomes Mike Ferneau to the NWI Consulting team! Mike joins us with numerous years of experience throughout the nuclear industry in the area of computer applications and graphics design.

## Effective Leadership Facilitates

- *Sharing leadership and decision making*
- *A participative atmosphere*
- *Employees solving problems*
- *Informal channels of communication*
- *A collaborative environment*

help "internalize" these beliefs in the FLS contingent. NWI Consulting offers effective ways to evaluate/create effective supervisor performance through key fundamentals: training, personnel development, organizational effectiveness, and succession planning.

### Thank You Clients...

We wish to express special thanks to the following clients for making NWI a preferred consulting company:

- American Electric Power
- Constellation Generation Group
- Exelon
- Nuclear Management Company
- FPL Energy
- PSE&G

NWI Consulting, LLC takes pride in providing quality consulting services and adding value to the nuclear industry. To receive more information on NWI Consulting and the services we offer, please contact:

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