The 6 Secrets Every Supervisor Needs to Know
TOPICS FOR TODAY

**Six Supervisory Secrets (plus one)**

- Power changes everything.
- Management is not the same as leadership.
- Every leader has strengths & weaknesses.
- Communication is your top priority.
- Different folks require different strokes.
- A supervisor is a coach, not a critic.
- Seven “trouble traits” that can kill your career.
Secret #1

Power changes everything.
Dear Office Coach:

I’m not sure how to handle my new supervisory position. I was friends with my former coworkers, so I find it difficult to tell them what to do. I love being a supervisor, but it’s hard to be as tough as my superiors want me to be.

In a perfect world, I would like to be both a boss and a friend. However, I’m beginning to realize that to get things done, I need to be less of a friend and more of a boss.

I know I have to demonstrate leadership, but I’m afraid this will turn me into an unlikeable person. After all, does anyone really like their boss?

*Nice Guy*
You can’t be both a buddy & a boss.
Dear Office Coach:
A supervisor who reports to me spends too much time talking with employees about their personal problems. Many of her staff members are young people with a lot of “issues”.

I understand that separating personal from professional can be difficult, and I don’t want to seem unsympathetic. However, we don’t need our supervisors to be seen as counselors.

How can I tell this supervisor that she needs to focus on her management responsibilities?

Not Dear Abby
It’s all about RESPECT.
How power effects communication
Get comfortable with the power of your position
Dear Office Coach:

I recently became a manager, but one of my employees shows me very little respect. “Sharon” never shares information with me, and she picks and chooses the things she prefers to do. For example, Sharon enjoys attending meetings, but avoids completing reports. I would like to ask her to help with some projects, but I know she won’t want to.

I feel that when Sharon has down time, she should come and ask me what needs to be done. On several occasions, I have found her reading a novel or playing cards on her computer. How should I handle this situation?

Irritated Manager
Dear Office Coach:

A very young and inexperienced coworker was recently made our supervisor. “Crystal” is demeaning and condescending to everyone. She also has a habit of talking to one employee about another.

Crystal wants to know every little detail of our work, yet when we ask questions, she gets mad and says “I can’t believe you bothered me with that.”

Crystal and I used to be friends, but I’m not sure I can continue working for a supervisor whom I neither trust nor respect. What would you advise?

K.C.
Being comfortable with your authority and using it wisely.
Secret #2

*Management is not the same as leadership.*
A Leader is someone that people choose to follow.
Dear Office Coach:
My boss has a hard time keeping his feelings to himself. For example, he frequently tells us that he may not be here long and that senior management has doubts about the value of our department.

Because of his negative comments, the staff is feeling resentful, and morale is declining rapidly. Personally, I’m very happy with both the company and my job, but my manager’s pessimistic attitude is dragging me down. What can I do?

*Bummed Out*
# LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

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<th>MANAGEMENT is focused on . . .</th>
<th>LEADERSHIP is focused on . . .</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Tasks</td>
<td>- Motivation</td>
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<td>- Budgets</td>
<td>- Influence</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Schedules</td>
<td>- Communication</td>
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<td>- Resources</td>
<td>- Empowerment</td>
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<td>- Vision</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Controls</td>
<td>- Teamwork</td>
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The power of “leadership messages”
"Our manager speaks only to certain people. He comes into our office and says hello to two of my coworkers, but says nothing to the rest of us, even though we’re sitting right there. Since we all do the same job, we don’t know why he ignores us."

"My supervisor has created a “good old girls” network in our office. Her favored employees are allowed to take long breaks and run errands during office hours. She gossips about the rest of us to people in her “in-group”.

"My boss works a lot less than anyone else in our department. She arrives half an hour late every day and usually leaves early. On top of that, she schedules all her personal appointments on company time, including haircuts and oil changes."
To be a role model . . .

. . . you have to WALK THE TALK.

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Secret #3

*Every leader has strengths & weaknesses.*
LEADERSHIP STYLE

Visionary

Sees the big picture. Recognizes future trends. Has many new ideas. Tries to inspire people to work towards visionary goals.
Analyzer

LEADERSHIP STYLE

Socializer

Enjoys getting to know people. Emphasizes teamwork & cooperation. Provides opportunities for group interaction. Promotes friendly relationships.
LEADERSHIP STYLE

Communicates clear expectations. Insures that tasks are completed and schedules are met. Outlines implementation steps. Gives specific instructions.
LEADERSHIP STYLE

Delegator

Establishes general direction & leaves implementation decisions to others. Is comfortable giving up authority. Focuses on “big-picture” tasks.
What’s Your “Leadership Label”?

- Visionary
- Analyzer
- Socializer
- Director
- Delegator
Effective leaders choose the best approach for the situation.
Secret #4

Communication is your top priority.
Dear Office Coach:

Although “Bonnie” is my supervisor, she doesn’t communicate with me. She works in another location, so I seldom see her.

If I email questions, Bonnie either fails to respond or sends back one-word answers. When I talk to her by phone, she is very short and abrupt.

After four months in this job, I’m not as far along as I should be, because I'm constantly struggling to figure things out on my own. What can I do about this?

Abandoned
Every supervisor needs to be a “linking pin”.

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What is a “linking pin”?
What is a “linking pin”? 

COMMUNICATION
What is a “linking pin”?
What is a “linking pin”? 

COMMUNICATION 

Executives 
Managers 
Supervisors 
Employees 

INFORMATION 

Linking Pin 

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What is a “linking pin”? 

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Communication Priorities with EMPLOYEES

- Business Updates
- Goals & Expectations
- Ideas & Suggestions
- Concerns & Questions
- Appreciation & Recognition
- Performance Feedback

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Responding to employee concerns
Responding to Concerns

- Give the employee your full attention. Listen without interrupting.
- If the problem isn’t clear, ask how you can help.
- Ask questions to fully understand the situation.
- Show understanding and empathy. (But maybe not agreement)
- Remain neutral until you have heard all sides.
- Get permission to talk with others.
- Explain what you will do next. Then do it.
- Set a time for the employee to get back with you.
- Keep information confidential.
- Bring the issue to closure. Resolve or explain why not.
Building a strong partnership with your boss

"MANAGING UP"
Dear Office Coach:

A few months after I became a supervisor, my manager “wrote me up” because of conflicts with my employees. Since then, I have bumped heads with her over several other issues. She says that I can’t take feedback, which is probably true.

Before my promotion, I was regarded as an outstanding performer. I still have the same strong work ethic, but I’m afraid that my boss now doubts my abilities. I would like to be considered for future opportunities, so how can I recover from these recent setbacks?

Former Superstar
What do bosses want?

- Respectful communication
- Progress updates
- Relevant business information
- Proposed solutions
- Appreciation
What do bosses hate?

- Surprises
- Whining, complaining, & drama
- Missed deadlines & goals
- Looking bad in front of others
- Performance discussions
You need more than one tool in your “communication toolbox”.

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Quick Quiz: Are you a **DIRECT** or **INDIRECT** communicator?

1. I tend to say what I mean and mean what I say.
2. I try to clearly explain my point of view in discussions.
3. I am willing to state the facts even if others may be offended.
4. If I have an idea, I try to offer as many “selling points” as possible.
5. I try to convince others with compelling logical arguments.
6. I often express my point of view by asking a question.
7. I try to ask for others’ opinions before expressing my own.
8. If I have an idea, I ask others what they think of it.
9. I try to persuade others by first understanding their point of view.
10. I tend to withhold my comments if I believe others might be offended.

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Secret #5

Different folks require different strokes.
MOTIVATION

10% Self-Starters

80% Everybody Else

10% Non-Starters
CAREER MOTIVATORS

What turns you on at work?
Six Motivators

- Achievement
- Interaction
- Service
- Problem-solving
- Creativity
- Leadership
ACHIEVEMENT

- Challenging goals
- Completion of tasks
- Recognition for quality work
- Wants manager to provide resources
INTERACTION

- Frequent communication
- Positive relationships
- Personal recognition
- Wants manager to be friendly & available
SERVICE

- Being helpful to people
- Sense of purpose in work
- Recognition for helping others
- Wants manager to be mission-driven

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MOTIVATION

PROBLEM-SOLVING

- Complex, analytical tasks
- Finding the best solution
- Recognition for ingenuity
- Wants manager to be hands-off
**CREATIVITY**

- Opportunities to innovate
- Varied and interesting tasks
- Recognition for ideas
- Wants manager to be open to change
LEADERSHIP

- Leadership opportunities
- Decision-making authority
- Recognition by upper management
- Wants manager to delegate

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What “turns on” your employees?

- Achievement
- Interaction
- Service
- Problem-solving
- Creativity
- Leadership
Secret #6

A manager should be a coach, not a critic.
Dear Office Coach:

During my annual performance review, my manager told me that I am disrespectful and unresponsive. When I didn’t react to these comments, he went on a tirade for about thirty minutes.

He said he will not tolerate my lack of respect any longer and that if I don’t change my attitude, I will probably be laid off when we merge with another team. I asked for some examples, but he didn’t provide any.

Now I’m really scared, because I can’t afford to lose my job. I feel sick to my stomach and can’t sleep. What should I do?

Fearful
The Performance Management Cycle

1. Clarify Expectations
2. Monitor Progress
3. Provide Coaching
4. Document Performance
5. Give Feedback
6. Evaluate Results

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COACHING

Make your expectations clear!
Dear Office Coach:

Our team recently had a lot of problems while one employee was on vacation. No one had been given responsibility for “Beth’s” duties, so her calls were transferred to anyone who was available. Unfortunately, some calls were not handled well.

Our supervisor is blaming the team, even though she never gave us any direction on how to handle the calls. When we explained that we’ve never been trained on Beth’s responsibilities, she just said that we need to be better team players. Now what do we do?

Not Our Fault
MANAGER

Creates an environment that enables results to be produced

EMPLOYEE

Responsible for producing results
Critical Feedback Points

- Recognition & Appreciation
- Supportive Coaching
- Corrective Action
Recognition should be . . .

- Immediate
- Specific & detailed
- Sincere
Addressing Performance Problems

- Supportive Coaching
- Corrective Action
1. Defining Questions

- What specific behaviors are causing the problem?
- What have you personally observed?
Define your “Fuzzies”

“Improve communications”        “Show more initiative”

“Develop good relationships”     “Have a better attitude”
2. **Self-assessment Questions**

- Are you contributing to the problem behavior?
- *Do you need to make any changes yourself?*
Dear Office Coach:

After asking my boss for additional help, I was thrilled when he let me hire a young man in his early twenties. My excitement was short-lived, however, because “Jeff” is both inexperienced and lazy.

Jeff arrives late, does sloppy work, texts his friends constantly, and occasionally falls asleep. When I gave him a project he didn’t want to do, he called in sick.

I got tired of nagging and correcting his errors, so now I’m doing most of Jeff’s work myself. Other employees have begun to complain, so what should I do now?

Sick of Jeff
3. **Clarifying Questions**

- *Could they do it correctly if their life depended on it?*
- *Do they do it correctly in some situations?*
- *Have they ever done it correctly in the past?*
Coaching discussions should be . . .

- Helpful, not critical
- A two-way conversation
- Focused on problem-solving
Ten Steps to an Exceptional Coaching Discussion

1. Determine your goal.
2. Describe factual observations.
3. Discuss behaviors, not personality.
4. Appreciate strengths.
5. Explain why change is important.
6. Ask questions to engage the employee.
7. Get input on possible solutions.
8. Agree on action steps and feedback plan.
9. End with optimism.
10. Follow up!

Your Perspective

Two-way Discussion

Action Planning

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“Sorry about the two scars. We had your X-ray upside down for a while.”
Corrective Action should be . . .

- *Firm, direct, and adult-to-adult*
- *Focused on consequences*
- *Discussed privately*
Corrective Action Discussions

- Specifically describe the problem behavior.
- Specifically describe the desired behavior.
- Help them understand the effects of their behavior.
  - On the business
  - On customers
  - On co-workers
  - On their career
  - On you
  - Or on anything else
- Describe the decision they have to make.
- Tell them what will happen if nothing changes.
- Offer to help.

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Negative Reactions

- Arguing
- Anger
- Verbal Attack
- Tears
- Threat of legal action
- Threat of harm
The Importance of Following Up

- If performance improves, express appreciation.
- If coaching does not help, take appropriate next steps.
- If corrective action does not work, impose consequences.
The Final Secret

“Trouble traits” that can kill your career.
“Trouble Traits” for Supervisors

- Emotional Deafness
- Oppositional Personality
- Wimpy Behavior
- Drill Sergeant Mentality
- Poor Impulse Control
- Violating Boundaries
- Aggressive Self-Promotion
Road Map for Successful Supervision

- Become comfortable with your management role.
- Focus on both leadership & management.
- Send appropriate “leadership messages”.
- Learn to “flex” your leadership style.
- Invest time in 360° communication.
- Recognize the “motivational levers” for your employees.
- Continually clarify expectations.
- Express appreciation for positive performance.
- Address performance problems as they arise.
- Avoid the seven “trouble traits”!
Question & Answer Session

• Have a question for the speaker? Press “Star” and then “1” on your phone to enter the queue.

• If, during the Q&A, your question has been answered, or you wish to remove yourself from the queue, press “Star” and then “1”.

• The moderator will open your line when it is your turn to speak.


• We’d love your feedback regarding the conference and other topics you’d like to hear about! Contact: jstrohecker@businessmanagementdaily.com.

Thank you for attending!
Marie G. McIntyre, Ph.D

Your Office Coach

» Free coaching tips: www.yourofficecoach.com

» Personal coaching: mmcintyre@yourofficecoach.com

» LinkedIn & Twitter: @officecoach

» Book: “Secrets to Winning at Office Politics”