

SUPERVISOR TRAINING

Whether we call them supervisors or team leaders, the role of the leadership level closest to front-line workers is crucial for achieving optimum health and safety performance in all workers. To front-line workers, these individuals are the closest demonstration and role model for the goals and intentions of the organization, not only in terms of production but also in health and safety.

Supervisor skills and abilities can make the difference between worker cynicism about health and safety policies and procedures and active worker support. Supervisors become supervisors due to their job-related skills. Typically, workers are promoted to the supervisory level because of their technical skills, not their people-management skills. In spite of the important role that supervisors play, many organizations are still looking for resources that will help to ensure that this level of leadership has the skills to succeed in their health and safety responsibility.

Organizations that are developing supervisors and team leaders for their pivotal role are making sure that middle and lower level supervisors not only have occupational health and safety knowledge and skill but also can improve their supervisory effectiveness through the following:

- Basic performance management
- Coaching
- Modeling
- Establishing expectations & monitoring performance
- Managing resistance
- Dealing with individual performance issues
- Problem solving

To be successful, supervisors and leaders need more than just textbook knowledge of these topics. They need to learn and practice the important skills behind these concepts.

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