

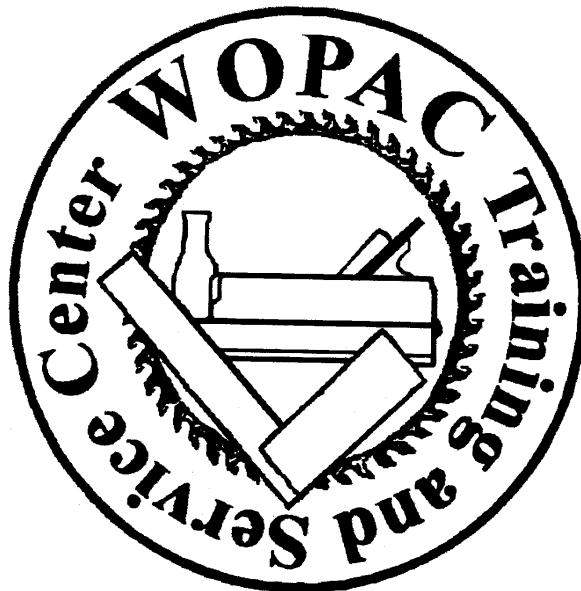


WOOD PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION OF CEBU

**WOPAC Training and Service Center (WTSC)  
Cebu, Philippines**

**Training Manual  
on**

**SUPERVISORY SKILLS**



**These Handouts are part of the training manuals for a  
Two Year Training Course on Furniture and Cabinet Making**

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## **BASIC SUPERVISORY SKILLS**

This course was used for trainees from the furniture industry but can be adapted to any other industry.

The reason to give a small insight into the Supervisory Skills for vocational trainees was the fact that quite a few of the graduates were promoted into supervisory level soon after starting their contracts in the company and that they did not have any knowledge about it.

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**1. 0. 0. INTRODUCTION**

Just imagine: Until a few weeks ago you were a normal worker in the production line and you received your orders from your boss or a supervisor. They gave you instructions of what to do and how to do it and you were doing it. Two weeks ago the production manager of your company talked to you and offered you a job to be a supervisor yourself. You happily agreed because it means 30 Peso more every day and you do not have to do all the dirty work yourself anymore. Last Monday you started your new assignment and you suddenly realize that this new job is not so easy after all. Before you had to deal only with the work itself but now you have to tell other people what they have to do!

**Just think about some of the problems you suddenly have to deal with:**

- Machines are not adjusted properly
  - Wrong tools are used for the job
  - Accidents are happening
  - The quality of the product is not good
  - Your former buddies in the production line don't want to have a beer with you after work!!!!!!
- Dimensions of the product are not accurate
  - Wrong materials have been used
  - Products are not finished in time
  - Jobs take too long to be finished

You wonder what is going wrong because you actually thought that you were a skilled wood worker.

Actually there is a big difference between the two jobs and you have to learn some new skills before you are really able to do your new job properly.

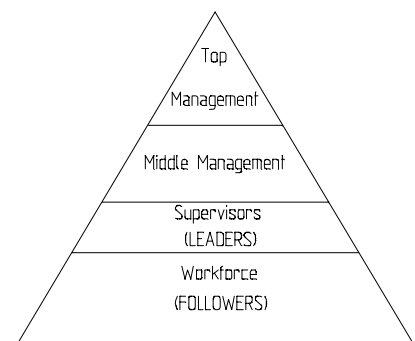
**Exercise 1:**

Make a list of a supervisor's duties and responsibilities individually, discuss them in the class, make a poster on the wall, keep it as a reminder as long as the course runs.

**2. 0. 0. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE / SUPERVISORS RESPONSIBILITIES**

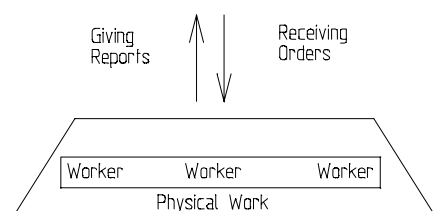
Let us have a look at the organizational structure of your company to get an idea of what changed in your work life. In the picture on the right side you can see a rough layout of a company's structure. Now, you moved up from the workforce into your new position as a supervisor and that means that you moved up from being a **"Follower"** to being a **"Leader"**.

Here in this course we want to give you a first idea of what it means to be a leader instead of a follower.



As a follower you received your orders from the supervisor or the middle management and you were following these orders. Sometimes they would ask you for a statement about some problems and you had to report to them.

Your main task was to function as a worker and to do what you were told. The skills you had to provide were mainly technical, on how to run a machine and to use tools. Most of your labor was physical, like planing a piece of wood, the dimensions of the final product were given to you and you had to do it according to the order.

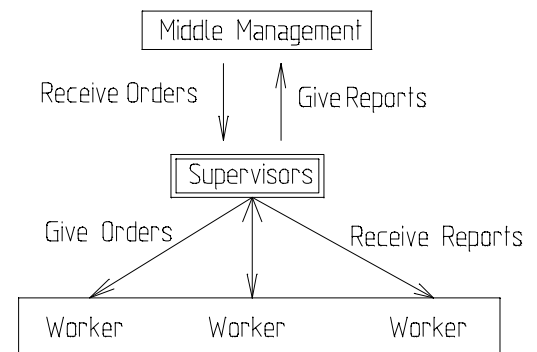


In your new position as a supervisor you will find a completely different situation to handle:

- You have to receive orders from the management and give reports to them **And**
- You have to give orders to the workers and receive reports from them.

Now it should be easy to understand that most of your work as a supervisor will be more mental and not so much physical.

You need a better theoretical understanding of woodworking, that's what we provide you with in the other lectures like Technical Drawing, Mathematics...



### **Exercise 2:**

Split into groups of 3 – 4 people, go to the workshop and pick a machine like the circular saw, each one of the group should explain a certain function of the machine or a setup for a certain job to the others in about 5 minutes, discuss the results in 10 minutes.

If we have a closer look at the organizational structure we can see that you have even more responsibilities in your new work life:

#### **2. 1. 0. Responsibility to the Middle and Top Management**

The management is expecting from you to do a lot of things in your department or section. They want to be able to rely on you when it comes to the planning of the work in your section and the coordination of work with other sections (Example: You are the supervisor in the assembly, so you have to report problems to the management regarding the supply of parts from the machining section). You have to be able to train and select employees for specific jobs. It is very important that you are able to communicate with the workers so that they do understand their work assignments. To maintain work discipline and morale in your section you need to have a natural authority which has to be based on knowledge and skills. To make your section an efficient one you have to make production decisions (Which job has priority? When do we start with the next order? Which worker will be assigned at which machine? Will the spindle molder work more efficient if you assign two workers?). At the same time the management expects from you that you will maintain a proper cost control (Material waste, proper production flow, unproductive workers). In order to improve the productivity of your section the management expects written comments and suggestions about the situation.

#### **2. 2. 0. Responsibility to the Workers of your Department**

The workers in your section are the ones who will do the actual jobs like machining, assembly and so on. To achieve a high quality and In Time production you have to rely on your workers. A good working morale is a very important factor, get to know the special skills of your workers in order to assign them to the right jobs and explain all the matters connected to this assignments (special jigs, deadline, tools to use). If necessary you have to instruct and train workers for special jobs. Try to create a trusting working climate where the workers will be able to talk openly about problems in meetings. Treat all workers equally, do not favor your old buddies from the production line because this will make others jealous. Handle workers problems correctly, have a good relationship with the personnel / staff department because they can help you in all sorts of explanations and problems like workers payment and benefits. Sometimes you might have to take over the role of a counselor but be careful that you do not get involved personally into the problems, it is very important that you stay objective in all department matters. Your workers will be efficient if you provide them with a predictable and stable work load.

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**2. 3. 0. Responsibility to Other Supervisors**

It is very important that you get to know all the other supervisors very well in order to establish good working relationships with them. (Improve the work flow between the departments, exchange of information like deadlines for parts and products, quality and tolerance problems, create a supervisor team that can communicate and coordinate properly with the management)

**2. 4. 0. Responsibilities to the Staff / Personnel Department**

The staff department will approach you first regarding information about workers. You have to be able to judge requests for information from staff managers, try to be a middle man in these situations. Coordinate standardized reporting forms and instruments with the staff managers in order to judge the employees performance. Consult with appropriate staff managers to utilize their special expertise on staff problems (work attitude, late, drinking, fighting...)

**2. 5. 0. Responsibility in Labor Matters (if company is unionized)**

You have to know the basics of the CBA (Collective Bargaining Agreement) to keep a professional relationship with the union. You have to respect the terms of the agreement as a representative of the employer, even though you may personally disagree with it. Treat all workers equally, union members or not.

**Exercise 3:**

Split into groups of 3 – 4, in each group act as supervisors from: Machine Section, Assembly Section, Finishing Section. Discuss common problems between the three different departments like quality control, production flow between departments.

**3. 0. 0. SUPERVISORY SKILLS**

Now that you have an idea of all the responsibilities (quite a lot, don't you think???) we should try to think about skills you might need to fulfill all these responsibilities and do a good supervisor job. You realized already that your technical skills and knowledge are only a part of the skills needed to be a good supervisor.

**3. 1. 0. Communication with Others**

**3. 1. 1. Giving Instructions and Orders**

As a result of Exercise 2 we found that it is easy to follow the instructions of one student, but very hard to follow another one. Obviously one has the gift of being able to communicate very well, the other one not.

Which factors are important to instruct another person in the workshop?

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| • Knowledge of the technical facts and details        | Ability to demonstrate |
| • Theoretical knowledge to support the demonstrations | Self confidence        |
| • Authority   | Planning               |

It is very important that you know the technical details of the process you want to explain to somebody else, so, if you come from the production line yourself, you should be capable of doing so. All the processes of woodworking should be easy for you to explain, or are you using “This thing there” for words like “saw blade” and “fence” ?? If you do so, you have to familiarize more with the machine and the process before you start explaining things to somebody else.

You have to be able to demonstrate the work process, this will support your explanations very much. Think about safety aspects before you make a demonstration because you have to consider that the worker will copy your action later on.

Theoretical background knowledge is quite an important factor as well because it enables you to answer questions of the worker, especially when you are asked “Why is this like that” ??

You can only be self confident and have some authority if you learn and practice the above mentioned factors. The workers will only accept you as a supervisor if you have authority based on knowledge.

If you only scream and shout at them in order to be an authority, they will laugh about you at your back and not follow your explanations.

In order to give good instructions you have to plan them, especially when you are new in the job of supervisor. Before you give instructions, take a piece of paper and write down keywords for the processes you want to explain.

**Exercise 4:**

Write down the keywords on how to change a saw blade in a circular saw. Discuss the results in the class, come up with a final solution for this machine setup.

**3. 1. 2. Receiving Instructions and Orders**

When you were a worker you received your orders from a supervisor and now you receive them from somebody from the middle management. What is the difference between the two?

- As a worker you normally received an instruction for one job and when that was finished you got the next one. The communication was pretty easy because you and the supervisor spoke the same “technical language” and he could even help you with some complicated setups or jigs.
- Now you have to communicate with somebody from the middle management and you might have problems understanding him. What is wrong? The fact is that you and him are not speaking the same “language” anymore because you are a “technician” and he is a “manager”. You have to learn to follow his instructions even so his technical knowledge might be limited. Apart from that you will not only receive one single instruction, but most probably orders for the whole day. You have to translate these instructions into technical language and distribute the different jobs to your workers. It is very important to write down the instructions you receive because there might be many of them and you might forget some details. With the help of these written notes you can make a plan for the day and you will be able to give proper instructions to your workers.

**Exercise 5:**

Your manager will give you instructions for today's workload of your department. Make written notes of these instructions. Ask questions about details you might not understand. Put the instructions you received from the manager into orders for your workers.

**3. 1. 3. Importance of Staff Meetings**

Hopefully there are regular staff meetings in your company because they are very important in order to improve the communication problems. It is necessary to create an open working atmosphere on these meetings, telling the truth and not using permanent excuses is very important. Only if facts are stated on these meetings you can start planing and changing problems in the production. Meetings have to be prepared, the main purpose of a meeting is discussing problems and not having a snack! Make an agenda of the topics you want to discuss and make notes while the meeting goes on! If you want to discuss production problems, do not say: “Our production is not working!” The result will be frustration because the problem you state is too big and as such unsolvable.

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Try to break down one big problem into many small ones, delegate them to different workers and collect results. You will find that suddenly it is much easier to solve a big problem.

**Exercise 6:**

One of your workers comes to you and tells you: “The Circular Saw is not working accurately!” Try to break this big problem into small ones! Make a list of things that might be wrong on the saw.

Different meeting situations are possible in your situation:

1. The manager will ask you to **give a report** in front of the top management about the situation in your department.
2. You conduct a meeting with your workers in order to **give orders** on how to improve the situation in your department.

In both situations you have to be the **active person**, so again, better be prepared for the meetings:

- In the first case you might be asked why your department is not working properly. You should be able to explain the situation clearly, state facts and numbers, so it would be good to make some written notes before the meeting because you might forget things especially when you are excited about the situation. Try to take written notes of the management’s recommendations in order to implement them later on.
- With the help of your written notes you will be able to come up with the right orders for your workers. Make a list of jobs for each worker before you conduct a meeting with them. If possible give them the instructions in writing with a deadline to finish the job. Try to split big jobs which will take weeks to do into many smaller ones, it will be easier for the worker to do these jobs. In general, be always open for discussions with your workers about how do to a job. Now, these guys are the ones who really have to do the job, so maybe they have some suggestions on how to do a job faster and better. Maybe talk with the management about rewards for good ideas in this respect.

**Exercise 7:**

Split into groups of 3 – 4, conduct staff meetings with your fellow students, discuss the situation in the lumberyard with them, give orders to them and check whether they understood them by letting them report.

**3. 2. 0. Planning Process**

**3. 2. 1. Determination of Goals**

Before we can start with the planning of the production we have to determine the goals we want to achieve. Normally you will do that first with the management, most of the time they will give you the production numbers (goals) to achieve in one day, week, month. Study the given information like Drawings, Bill of Materials carefully!

You have to consider some aspects for the determination of your goals:

- Output of the production = number of items to produce in which time (50 chairs in 1 week)
- Quality and workmanship = determine the quality of the product in relation to the time available
- Cost and Budget control = consider the costing when you produce the chair, production time and quality are relevant

Clarify these aspects before you start your production planning in order to achieve the right number of chairs before the deadline, in the right quality and within the cost frame.



### **3. 2. 2. Plan the Accomplishment of Goals**

Now that we have predetermined the goals to achieve we have to ask: “How can we achieve these goals?”

You have to think about some given facts before you can continue:

- How many skilled workers do I have to do the job?
- Which machines / tools are suitable for the job and are they available at that time?
- Which jigs are necessary and are they available or do you have to prepare them?
- Are the right materials available / prepared for the job? (Contact Lumberyard, Machining)
- In a small company you even might have to do the costing, so you need the necessary data like material prices, available dimensions and machine hour rates.

With this information and the drawing etc. you are able to start the planning of the production for the next period. Discuss it again with the manager if the production goal is too high, be specific, have facts and numbers when you go to him.

### **3. 2. 3. Development of Plans and Actions**

After you gathered all the data, you should be able to proceed with your planning to the implementing stage. You have to prepare for example **routing sheets** where all the processes for a certain work piece are described. You state as well the equipment used for each process, plus the estimated time for the process. Depending on your system you can determine the workers on the routing sheet as well. This way it is easy to utilize the manpower properly and you can inform the workers easily about their daily duties.

In a normal workshop you do not have only one order at a time but maybe three to four, so you have to make a **production plan** in order to coordinate the different orders with each other because they have different deadlines, materials, need different equipment and manpower. You are the one who has to know, at which stage each order is. This production plan can help you when you have to consider changes in your production line and the timing of deadlines. A proper production plan makes the discussion with the management much easier.

When you start making a production plan, try to incorporate your best workers into this process because they have the most practical experience and good judgement.

Try to update the production plan daily to make the most use of it. Check for “bottle necks” in your production line, machines like circular saw and spindle molders are often overloaded with work and the whole production line has to slow down because of one machine. Try to think of alternatives like: second shift for special equipment, different production processes where different equipment is used, more manpower in certain sections.

### **3. 2. 4. Controlling and Review Procedures as Part of Planning**

Controlling is the work a supervisor performs to assess and regulate work in progress and to assess the results secured. In order to do so, we have to be able to establish some activities to analyze this progress:

- **Setting Performance Standards**

Before we can actually evaluate performance we have to set some standards and criterias to be able to do so. (Example: 2500 Table legs, Model # 23432 in 100 hours production time in the quality of the sample given to the customer)

- **Measuring Performance**

After setting the standards we can now record the results of the worker or production line. (After 50 hours production time, only 500 legs are finished, quality is lower than the sample)

- **Evaluating Performance**

Now that we have our actual production results, we can compare them with the standards from before and we will find out whether we reached our production goals or not. (Evaluation compares standards with results: 500 legs finished after 50 hours = lower than the standard, quality is not as good as sample = lower than standard)

- **Taking Corrective Action**

You have to take corrective action especially if you do not reach your production goals, meaning your production is too slow, the quality too low... (How can you make your production faster? Training of workers, better machines and equipment, use of jigs, bottleneck in the production, more workers necessary, another order is still blocking some machines, no materials allocated for this order)

Controlling and review procedures are essential for the implementation of plans. Without them you will never be able to tell whether you could accomplish the goals or not.

The above mentioned production plan is already one very important tool for controlling because you can follow the production process on it and you can identify bottle necks and other problems. Try to set a **quality standard** for each specific product. This is especially true if you were sending a sample to the customer. Once the customer accepted the sample, you have to keep this quality standard and you can not send him products with a lower standard! If you have a **Quality Control Department** in your company, try to work together with them, so that you know all the quality factors before you start the production of the item.

If you are involved in costing, establish a proper **post calculation process** in order to check on the accuracy of your costing.

Check on the **physical accomplishments** (number of work pieces, in specific time, in a certain quality) of the workers, it is an important thing to know about the efficiency of each single person in the production line. The easiest way is to evaluate a worker's data from his punch card and the routing sheets.

### **3.3.0. Technical Competence**

Your technical skills are very important to be a good supervisor because like mentioned before you have to be the mediator between the management and the workforce. Talking to the management, they will be expecting from you some proper explanations of work processes, especially if you want them to invest in new equipment or tools. The workers will only accept you as a supervisor if you have at least the same technical knowledge compared to them. Talk to the management about sending you not only to Supervisory courses, but as well to some technical courses in order to improve your theoretical and hands on knowledge. Before you were ordered to do things in a certain way, now you are the one who has to tell others how they should do things. Before you give instructions, think about what you say !!!!!!!

### **3.4.0. Teamwork and Sharing of Knowledge**

Once you are accepted by the workforce as a supervisor, it will be easy to incorporate the best workers into your production planning and implementing processes. Treat them as part of a team, give them some responsibilities that they can handle and which will make them feel as part of the production team. Do not give them too much responsibility because they might get frustrated. Introduce the principle of sharing of knowledge; make them aware that they learn when they share knowledge. It is very important that you are the first one to share your technical knowledge with the others to make them aware of the advantages.

#### **Exercise 8:**

Discuss the importance of proper machine setup in relation to joint accuracy in small groups.

### **3.5.0. Training and Development of Workers**

You get some new workers into your department and you want to assign them to some jobs. What should you do?

- Interview them one by one about their background and work experience (take notes which you can use as your personnel file of a specific worker)
- Find out where they worked before and why they stopped working there
- Brief them about your companies / departments working policies
- Assign them to some jobs in their field of experience and observe them one by one
- Take notes about their performance
- Sit down again one on one and discuss the working results (safety, productivity, quality, housekeeping, proper use of equipment and tools)
- Assign them to tasks which they are able to accomplish

To further enhance the quality and productivity of the workers you have to conduct some training:

You can develop these workers either in **informal training**, meaning to say you train them within the production while you assign a job to them. This training has the advantage that you can take care of each worker by himself. On the other hand communication is not so easy because of the noise in the workshop. Mostly you will only have time to show him HOW something works but not WHY. When it comes to the next assignment you might have to start from zero again.

On the long run your staff development will be more efficient if you try to introduce some **formal training** to your department / company:

- Before you can actually start with a formal training, you should evaluate the workers strength's and weakness' in order to know WHAT you should teach them
- Try to classify them into maybe three different skills levels (Beginner, Advanced, Experienced) and make training plans according to these results
- Talk to the HRD department and the management about time and a room to conduct some of this formal training for the three different levels on a Saturday or as evening classes
- Do not put all workers into one class because the experienced ones will be bored and the beginners will be overcharged and can not follow your explanations
- Give them some basic theoretical background knowledge about woodworking so that they can follow your instructions later on much easier because they will understand WHY you need this saw blade or another (Make photocopies of some of the WTSC Training handouts)
- Accompany the theoretical lectures with some hands on practices in a quiet workshop
- Try to convince the HRD department to introduce a company internal grading and certification system. At the end of a "Circular Saw Training Module" the worker should undergo a hands on exam and if he passes should receive a certificate as a "Circular Saw Operator". This system should be accompanied as well by some financial incentives, workers who undergo these training and take them seriously should be paid a little bit higher than workers without the certificate. Try to convince somebody from the management to hand out the certificates to stress the importance of the program
- Make a Manpower Development Plan with HRD to send some workers to Skills Training Centers like WTSC, especially if you do not have time and facilities to conduct training in your own workshops
- Be serious about the training and explain it to your workers according to that. While courses are conducted, discipline, attendance and active participation should be valued very high

### **3. 6. 0. Maintain Workers Discipline and Productivity**

After you trained your workers in the technical skills you will still encounter problems. Here the workers attitude towards his work is an important factor. Even if he is a very skilled craftsman, a worker can show a very bad overall performance because of his attitude towards work, being punctual, finishing work at the given deadline and so on.

### **3. 6. 1. Provisions by the Company to Strengthen Discipline and Productivity**

But before we think about how to improve the workers attitude and discipline we should not forget about what the company should provide to create a proper working environment:

- A safe working space is important, in the machining section use fences and guides, build proper jigs, in the finishing section provide masks to keep the workers from inhaling fumes and dust.
- Proper lighting has to be provided, how can you expect a worker to work accurate if he can not see what he is doing?
- Is the workshop floor out of concrete and are you able to use trolleys for the workshop internal transport? (If you have to carry all the work pieces by hand, how much time will be wasted by doing so and how many pieces will be dropped and the machined edges spoiled?)
- How much is the company paying the workers and do they take care of SSS? Is the payment realistic and according to the workers capabilities? Do **not** tell your workers about commitment by the heart, they can **not** feed their children on it!!
- Is the workshop cleaned daily, as dust free as possible and are the machines maintained regularly by a mechanic?
- Are the tools organized in a tool room and are they kept sharp all the time?
- Does the company provide good quality raw materials or is it the cheapest Gemilina with lots of knots, pith, cracks...? Maybe more expensive material will turn out cheaper because you have less waste and less work in planing it?
- Does the company have rules and regulations for disciplinary action? Get to know them! Talk with the staff department about the problems of disciplinary action. If you have to apply them, treat all the workers the same, do not privilege old buddies!!!!
- Observe the workers on the machines and equipment while they are working on it. Think about jigs and fixtures to improve the quality and speed of their work! Sometimes small things can help speeding up the work very much! Involve the workers in the process of improving the for example the setup of the machine!
- Is there an existing production administration system implemented? Do you use Routing Sheets, Cutting Lists, Drawings, and Samples to speed up the production?

Check this list, partly you will find that it is your own responsibility to change and improve the situation, other aspects have to be discussed with the management before you can act on them. You are like a mediator between workers and management; you have to have good relationships with both parties!

### **Exercise 9:**

Write down a list of improvements for your company.

### **3. 6. 2. Department Organization and Motivation of Workers**

If you can implement all the things mentioned in the list above you will find that you have created a good basic environment of job motivation: the worker receives a good salary and his work situation allows him to work productive. Looking back to the beginning of the course we said that there are "Leaders" and "Followers" in every production line. Your manager identified you as a leader, now you have to do the same thing in your department! Try to figure out in individual talks WHY people work in your company. A lot of them are just working because they need some money to survive,

but they do not have any ambitions in their “career”. It will be very hard for you to motivate them to take over more responsibility. If you are new in your position, identify the possible leaders who have some ambitions and start working with them firstly.

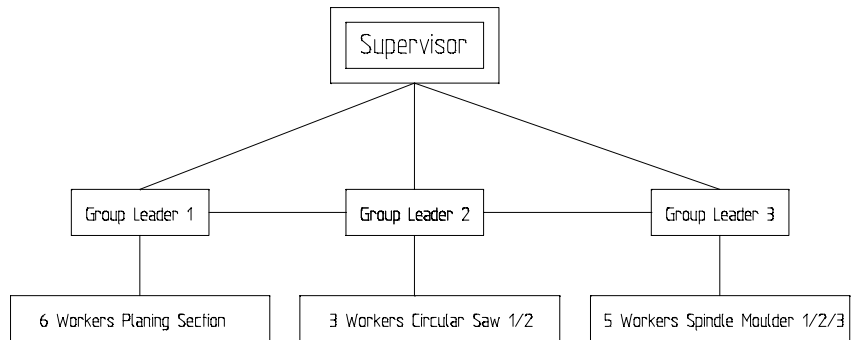
Create a production team and involve them actively in the planning and decision making. Give them some responsibilities in the production and you can concentrate more on the management of the production. It is a little bit like having your “own company”, now you are in the higher management and you have your own “group leaders” as supervisors supporting you in the day to day activities.

Try to convince the management to accept your new department structure and some salary increases for the motivated group leaders.

You have to be careful not to overburden your group leaders, in the end it is still you who has

the final responsibility for the department. If you overburden them, they will get frustrated easily, so set realistic and attainable goals for the group leaders and the workers.

By creating such an internal department structure you can solve some of the problems related to motivation: By delegating work and responsibilities to your group leaders they feel treated as individuals and they can implement some of their ideas, in the end they feel that their work is meaningful.



- Try to work down with this system to the workers who do not have a lot of self motivation
- Try to get them involved in the system in small steps
- Make notes of their performance, set regular individual meetings to discuss their improvement or the lack of it
- You might have to give some of the guys a deadline, if they do not improve, talk to the staff department about laying-off some workers in order to replace them with more motivated ones
- If you see potential in a worker but he lacks certain skills, give him some individual attendance or send him to some training courses outside

### **3. 6. 3. Rules and Regulations and their Implementation**

The "Rules and Regulations" of your company is a very important tool to keep up work discipline. Most probably the rules and regulations are existing but like with so many other things, are they really implemented?

When you start your job as a supervisor, get a copy of the rules and regulations and read them carefully! Go to the staff department and discuss the contents and the routines with the responsible managers. Sit down and “translate” them into terms the workers can easily understand. Conduct a meeting with the workers and explain the rules and the consequences of possible misbehavior.

Give them examples: How much money does it cost the company if 50 workers come 30 minutes late 20 days a month at an average salary of 150 Peso/day?

8 hours x 60 minutes = 480 minutes a day                      150 Peso / 480 minutes = 0.3 Peso / minute

0.3 Peso / minute x 30 minutes late x 20 days / month x 50 workers = **9000 Pesos / month**

Apart from that the productivity is lower because they are only 450 minutes on their work place instead of 480, only 94 % instead of 100 %.

Clarify with the workers that once they sign the working contract with the company, both parties agree to certain terms, which should be binding for both parties.

Clearly state in front of the workers that you will make no exceptions when it comes to disciplinary action, you have to treat all the workers equal, whether you like one personally or not.

### **3. 6. 4. Implementing Disciplinary Action**

Check with the staff department on implementation guidelines and forms for disciplinary action. Keep written proof of misbehavior! Ask the worker for a one on one discussion and:

- Describe the performance problems and review past discussions and reminders
- Ask for reasons for the situation and listen openly to the employee's response (do not get involved too deeply into personal problems because you will lose your objective position and your judgement will be spoiled!)
- Indicate what kind of disciplinary action you must take, and explain why
- Discuss and agree on ways to improve the workers performance and set a follow - up date
- Ask the employee to summarize the discussion in order to find out whether he takes the situation seriously and whether he understood the problems
- Indicate your confidence in the employee's ability to improve and give hints on how to do so!

Like mentioned before your role as a supervisor is to be a mediator between the workforce and the management! You have to try to stay objective. Leave personal emotions out of a meeting like that! You have to learn to live with the problem that suddenly some of the workers are **not** your friends anymore!

#### **Exercise 10:**

Discuss the following situation: You caught some workers drinking Tanduay in the lunch break and the rules and regulations of your company state clearly: No alcohol on the job!!

What do you do?

What do you think happens if one of the workers will cut his hand off on the circular saw because he was drunk and you did not report him?

### **3. 7. 0. Department Administration**

If you read these handouts carefully you will realize that you are not only a leader now, but a "pencil pusher" as well. Before all your work was physical but now you have to take written notes all the time; conduct meetings where you have to give written reports and suggestions!

All this writing helps you to administer your department, you can not memorize all the information any more which is given to you and which you want to give to others! We mentioned already the paperwork, which you have to do to administer your department well. Do you have a desk and a shelf where you can store all the information? If not, go to the management and ask them for a quiet spot or even a small office space close to your production area where you can put these administration tools! As a worker you can **not** work without a saw, so as a supervisor you can **not** work without a desk!

### **4. 0. SUMMARY**

To sum up all the responsibilities and abilities a supervisor has in his day to day work we can say that he has to "manage resources". These resources can be of very different nature:

- Machines and equipment
- Energy and utilities
- Materials and supplies
- Human Resources
- Information
- Money

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The most important resource the supervisor has to deal with is the human resource. Every human being is different in character, attitude, experience in private and work life, so you have to treat them all as individuals.

On the other hand you are a representative of the management as well, so you have to be very careful in taking sides in any discussions with the workers. You can see that it is not an easy job to be on one hand considerate with all the individual characters and on the other hand you are supposed to treat them all the same!

**You have to learn to think before you talk and act because you are a:**

**MEDIATOR / ORGANIZER / INTERPRETER**

**BETWEEN**

**WORKFORCE                      AND                      MANAGEMENT**

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### **5. 0. 0. Daily Sequence of Work Activities for a Production Supervisor**

#### **5. 1. 0. Before Start of Shift (15 – 30 minutes)**

- Check production schedule and/or work orders for the day
- Check equipment to be used
- Check supply of materials for the day
- Check tools needed for the day
- Line up equipment, materials, and tools for the day
- Line up firm work schedule for the day

#### **5. 2. 0. Beginning of the Shift (15 – 30 minutes)**

- Check attendance and assign employees to work stations, get support from your “group leaders”
- If necessary (because of absences), balance the work force by changing assignments or by securing additional help from other departments (discuss with management)
- Assign production and/or work orders
- Stress critical qualities to watch
- Specify when the work should be completed

#### **5. 3. 0. During the Shift (6 – 7 hours)**

- Check workmanship with each employees, approve, correct, instruct or train as needed
- Check work progress with each employee. Add help, allow more time, or assign additional work
- Check housekeeping, this is a continuous process! Good work cannot be done in an untidy place!
- Check back when production or quality appears unsatisfactory, especially with new employees
- Stay on the shop floor supervising and/or available for questions, assistance, and instructions most of the time
- Be on the floor immediately before and after breaks and for 15 minutes before quitting time
- Inspect critical quality areas as work progresses. Correct problems as soon as they are detected
- Perform final inspection of parts, subassemblies, and so on, before they move to next department (if possible, get group leaders involved)
- Check/Report/Conduct a study on recurring quality problems
- Check periodically to see that materials and supplies are on hand
- Check periodically to see that tools and equipment are in proper operating condition
- Report material shortages or recurring defects
- Report and/or request maintenance, repair, or replacement of defective tools or equipment

#### **5. 4. 0. Once a Day**

- Observe one employee or work station continuously for 15 minutes
- Look for time wasted, dull or improper tools, need for work positioning jigs and fixtures, interference, delays and bottlenecks, and expenditure of excessive time to get parts and materials. Do find ways to cut costs or make improvements in any of these

#### **5. 5. 0. End of Shift (15 minutes)**

- Make a list of unsolved problems that came up during the day. Consider ways to handle them
- Think about jobs that have to be done the following day / shift like checking production and/or work orders, materials and tools
- Complete all paperwork. Avoid holding any paperwork for the following day.
- Make a list of jobs that must be done the next day. Take it home with you and complete it before coming to work. Use this form to make your own daily plan!