Supervisor’s Survival Kit

Eleventh Edition

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About This Book

The managerial responsibilities of today’s supervisor continue to evolve as companies compete in today’s fast-moving business environment. To be successful, front-line managers must possess a diverse set of technical, human relations, and conceptual skills. They need to develop a repertoire of skilled behaviors in each of these areas to deal with the challenges presented in the workplace. Challenges include dealing with an increasingly diverse work force, empowering employees, encouraging teamwork, hiring and firing, training and enhancing employee performance, ensuring health and safety, and improving productivity and quality. These are just some of the important tasks supervisors are asked to manage.

It is often the case that an employer will promote an outstanding employee to the position of supervisor. Unfortunately, the skills recognized and rewarded by a promotion to supervisor are not always the same ones needed to be an effective supervisor. New supervisors must be developed and trained by their employer in order to survive and thrive in their new managerial role. This book was written for the purpose of developing the skills of these new or prospective supervisors.

Supervisor’s Survival Kit has enjoyed a great deal of success. Since the original edition, nearly a million readers have benefited from this brief, to-the-point, practical book. One of its strengths is that this book works effectively in a variety of training and development situations. It is sufficiently comprehensive and substantive to be used as a text for a formal college course, yet organized tightly enough to meet the constraints of an in-service seminar delivered by training professionals within their organization. Using this book will help develop a sound fundamental foundation on which an employee can build a rewarding career as a supervisor and leader. Feedback from long-time users of this book testifies to the fact that students enjoy learning from the cases and participating in the role-playing activities.

Putting theory into practice is the strongest feature of this new edition. The text focuses on the learner as an active participant and partner in the learning process. There are a variety of experiential exercises including case studies, role-playing activities, short vignettes, self-assessments, and personal growth exercises that help make the principles in the text come alive for students. These experientially designed exercises actively engage students in authentic learning experiences that connect theory with practice and help develop their critical thinking skills.

The book has been revised to be even more learner friendly and comprehensive. One significant change that long-time users will notice is that materials formerly included in the Participant’s Guide are now incorporated into the text, thereby dispensing with the need to purchase a separate Participant’s Guide. The Instructor’s Manual continues to provide excellent information on how to use the text for teaching a course. It is also an excellent resource to the independent learner who wants to improve his or her supervisory skills without taking a formal course or workshop.

Another change for the eleventh edition is the addition of a co-author, Daniel B. Griffith, who has joined Cliff Goodwin to prepare this text. The authors wish to thank long-time users of this text for their suggestions on how it could be improved. At their request, much of the pertinent information and style of presentation from the previous edition have been kept to preserve the integrity of the text. This new
edition, while improved, maintains the overall effectiveness and comprehensiveness of previous editions. Among the most significant changes from the prior edition are:

- The **Role Profiles for Cases** at the end of the book has been revised and updated. New profiles have been added while a few familiar profiles are no longer included in the hypothetical organization. We hope previous users will not miss these familiar characters for long as they become acquainted with new characters. The main purpose for this update is to create a story line that focuses more on team-based approaches to management rather than hierarchical management structures.

- An additional discussion on **competencies** has been added to Chapter 1 (Should You Be a Supervisor?) to broaden the understanding of what supervisors must know and apply in today’s modern organization as they develop technical, human relations, and conceptual competence.

- A model for **analyzing performance gaps** and **identifying performance barriers and solutions** has been added to Chapter 4 (Achieving Productivity Through People).

- The information from the former chapter concerning “Five Irreplaceable Foundations” has been incorporated into Chapter 5 (The Supervisor-Employee Relationship).

- New information has been added to Chapter 7 (Quality Control and Continuous Improvement) regarding various **quality methodologies** and tools a supervisor can use to initiate **quick, simple process improvement measures** with her team.

- An expanded discussion on **diverse work teams** and how to work with new employees who join the team is included in Chapter 8 (The Effective Work Team).

- New information concerning **behavioral interviewing**, steps for conducting **reference and background checks** prior to job offer, and an **overview of the laws and regulations** affecting the employment relationship has been added to Chapter 11 (Staffing).

- Chapter 14 has been retitled from “The Formal Appraisal” to “Managing Performance,” and new information has been added to reflect the broader **scope and purpose of the performance management process** than simply conducting the formal evaluation.

- Chapter 20 (Converting Change into Opportunity) has been revised to provide **updated information regarding business, society, and economic changes affecting the workplace** and additional information on assisting **employees to deal with change**.

- As noted, material formerly in the Participant’s Manual such as **true-false questions, application exercises, self assessments, and personal growth exercises** has been added to the text. In addition, new features have been added such as **performance checklists** and a **“to learn more” section** that provides additional resources readers can consult.
About the Authors

Professor Goodwin has been on the faculty of the Purdue School of Engineering and Technology for the past twenty-five years. His primary teaching emphasis is in the area of supervisory skill development. He has conducted research, authored articles, and presented seminars on a wide variety of supervision- and management-related topics. In addition to his university work, Professor Goodwin has acted as a consultant to numerous businesses throughout Indiana. Prior to his university appointment, he was in management in the automotive manufacturing industry. Professor Goodwin holds degrees from Purdue University and Ball State University in management and industrial training areas. He completed his Doctorate of Adult Education at Indiana University.

Mr. Griffith is an adjunct faculty member of the Purdue School of Engineering and Technology at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), where he teaches courses in leadership and conflict management. He is also Manager of Training and Organization Development at IUPUI. His primary responsibilities include providing training and development in the areas of supervisory, employee, and leadership skills development; legal compliance; conflict management; diversity; and communications. He also has a background in mediation and is a mediator in the Indiana legal system. Prior to his present work and teaching roles, he worked for the state of Indiana as an attorney for the state’s civil rights agency and as an attorney and administrative law judge for the state's transportation department. Mr. Griffith holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from DePauw University and a Doctorate of Jurisprudence from Indiana University School of Law–Indianapolis.

Professor Goodwin and Mr. Griffith are also co-authors of The Conflict Survival Kit: Tools for Resolving Conflict at Work, also published by Pearson Education, Inc.
Introduction

Someday, if it hasn’t happened already, you may become a supervisor and be responsible for the productivity of others. Should it happen, your life will change.

Will you be ready for your new responsibilities? Will you earn the respect of those who work for you? Will those who promoted you be pleased with your work? The answers lie in how you go about motivating, supporting, guiding, and building relationships with those you supervise; the kind of working climate you create; the quality of the decisions you make; the skill you demonstrate in handling a wide variety of human problems; the way you manage your time and set priorities; your ability to mold employees from different cultures into a team; and the amount of leadership you put into your supervisory style.

Common sense will help you somewhat in becoming a good supervisor, but to make a really successful transition you need the kind of help this book provides. It is both a classroom text and an on-the-job guide for the “instant” supervisor who has not had the advantage of formal preparation. It can help make your move into management graceful, rewarding, and permanent, as well as help you provide the foundation for moving into even more challenging management roles in the future.

At the end of each chapter, you will find either a case study or a role play designed to involve you in a realistic management problem. The case studies can be used for discussion, written assignments, or self-instruction. Suggested answers are provided in the back of the book. The role-plays are intended primarily for use in the classroom or seminar. A role-play can be played in fifty minutes or less; specific instructions are provided for each game. Role-plays can also be used as traditional case studies.

Cases are built around nine different roles that are profiled in detail in the back of the book. Please become acquainted with each character before reading any of the cases or playing any of the role plays.

In addition to case studies and role-plays, the following content is also at the end of each chapter: (1) self-assessment and application exercises that help you react to authentic situations and provide a limited substitute in the event you miss class time in which the chapter is discussed; (2) self-test true–false questions that enable you to check your comprehension and retention and measure your learning progress without instructor assistance; and (3) personal growth exercises that help you integrate what you have learned from the text to your personal life.

The authors recommend that you make a contract with yourself to complete these exercises and to analyze the cases on your own if you do not have the opportunity to discuss them or engage in role plays in a course or seminar. Why? The answer is simple—what you learn from the text will be reinforced, which means that you will retain what you learn longer. You are also more apt to apply what you learn to a job, either now or in the future. Finally, if you are already a supervisor, you immediately become more professional by demonstrating immediate positive behavior change as the result of applying what you’ve learned to real-world situations. This will enhance your career progress.

We wish you well as you study this text and put theory into practice and increase your confidence and effectiveness as a supervisor. Enjoy the journey.