

FRONT-LINE SUPERVISORS

- Communication
- Staff Development
- Motivate
- Problem Solving
- Adaptability/Flexibility

COMMUNICATION

Clearly conveys and receives information and ideas to individuals or groups. Invites and constructively responds to feedback. Keeps others informed as appropriate. Demonstrates effective written, oral and listening skills. Maintains a positive attitude consistently, despite difficult or challenging circumstances, and communicates positively when working with others.

Organizations thrive when the flow of information and ideas is timely and accurate. When quality of communication is a consistent high priority. Good communication results in mutual understanding, harmony, and action. Poor communication wastes time and resources, hinders goal accomplishment, and sours relationships. Leaders communicate to inform, persuade, coach, and inspire. People at all levels share ideas, learn from each other, and keep each other informed about problems, opportunities, progress, and solutions. Effective communicators provide a clear message that is understood by everyone in the audience. They are attentive listeners who are open to others' ideas. They deliver a message that is consistent but fine-tuned for a particular audience. It has just the right tone. The perfect pacing. The best possible wording. The audience finds the message to be crisp. Relevant. Impactful. Effective communication, whether written or verbal, enables you to convey your vision, to point the way forward, and to energize others to work together and pull in the same direction.

➤ Exceptional

Delivers messages in a clear, compelling, and concise manner.

Actively listens and checks for understanding.

Articulates messages in a way that is broadly understandable.

Adjusts communication content and style to meet the needs of diverse stakeholders.

Models and encourages the expression of diverse ideas and opinions.

➤ Consistent

Is effective in a variety of communication settings: one-on-one, small and large groups, or among diverse styles and position levels

Attentively listens to others.

Adjusts to fit the audience and the message.

Provides timely and helpful information to others across the organization.

Encourages the open expression of diverse ideas and opinions.

➤ **Inconsistent**

Has difficulty communicating clear written and verbal messages.

Tends to always communicate the same way without adjusting to diverse audiences.

Doesn't take the time to listen or understand others' viewpoints.

Doesn't consistently share information others need to do their jobs.

Resources:

Adams, S. (2013, November 19). How to communicate effectively at work. Forbes.

Charan, R. (2012, June 21). The discipline of listening. Harvard Business Review Blog Network.

Cherry, K. (n.d.). Types of nonverbal communication: 8 Major nonverbal behaviors. About.com Psychology

Cohan, P. (2012, December 4). 5 Ways to communicate more clearly. Inc.

Nierenberg, A. (2005, February 17). Adapting to different communication styles. Small Business Advocate.

Bailey, E. P., Jr. (2007). Writing and speaking at work (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bough, B., & Condrill, J. (2005). 101 Ways to improve your communication skills instantly (4th ed.). San Antonio, TX: GoalMinds, Inc.

Garcia, H. F. (2012). The power of communication: Skills to build trust, inspire loyalty, and lead effectively, Upper Saddle River, NJ: FT Press

Hamilton, C. (2013). Communicating for results: A guide for business and the professions. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Weeks H. (2008). Failure to communicate: How conversations go wrong and what you can do to right them. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Skilled at formal training or informal coaching and instructing. Promotes and conducts developmental discussions. Demonstrates support for developmental goals and needs of organization and team members. Provides challenging and stretch assignments for staff. Supports development system within the organization. Provides constructive, specific feedback to others to help in their development.

Most people want to grow and develop. To be as effective as possible and able to take on bigger, more significant challenges. Organizations need people to develop as the nature of their role, and the organization, changes. Talent development is about creating pools of people ready and willing to take on new challenges and step up when needed. It's a continuous process of building skill and capability at an individual and organizational level. It works best as a three-part harmony. First, the person needs to be ambitious and willing to do what's required to grow and progress. People won't grow if they don't want to. Second, the organization has to have a process in place to help those who want to grow. People won't grow if the organization shows no interest and offers no support. And third, those with responsibility for developing others have to be prepared to play an active part. People won't grow if you don't make it a priority to their full potential. People need support. Get it right and you'll develop a more effective, efficient, productive, and motivated workforce.

➤ **Exceptional**

Views talent development as an organizational imperative.

Consistently uses multiple methods to develop others.

Stays alert for developmental assignments both inside and outside own workgroup.

Readily articulates the value and benefit of stretch assignments to others.

➤ **Consistent**

Places a high priority on developing others.

Develops others through coaching, feedback, exposure, and stretch assignments.

Aligns employee career development goals with organizational objectives.

Encourages people to accept developmental moves.


➤ **Inconsistent**

Doesn't take time to work on development of others.

Is a check-the-box developer; goes with the easiest option to fulfill talent development obligations.

Doesn't make sure of available organization resources and systems to develop others.

Has difficulty identifying developmental moves or assignments.

 **Some possible causes of lower skill**

Causes help explain *why* a person may have trouble with Develops talent. When seeking to increase skill, it's helpful to consider how these might play out in certain situations. And remember that all of these can be addressed if you are motivated to do so.

- Doesn't believe people really want to develop.
- Thinks development is someone else's responsibility.
- Doesn't have the time for it.
- Doesn't know how to develop people.
- Reluctant to share the spotlight.
- Shies away from giving developmental feedback.
- Lacks patience.
- Has a one-dimensional view of how people develop.

MOTIVATE

Able to assess each person's motive and use it to get the best out of him/her. Creates a climate in which people want to do their best. Pushes others to try new things and stretch themselves to become better. Makes each individual feel his/her work is important. Is someone people like working for and with.

Greater things can happen when people are engaged. Think of three accomplishments you're proud of, then ask yourself what was driving your engagement when you achieved them. If you can figure out what increases the engagement level of others and focus on building that, their accomplishments will be greater. Engaged employees are more productive because their work behavior is energized, focused, and more aligned to the needs of the organization. Retention rates are higher among engaged employees because they are challenged by their work in the context of a supportive environment with a caring, encouraging, and empowering boss. They feel appreciated, listened to, and supported. Multiple studies in a variety of industries have shown that increases in employee engagement result in improvements in profitability, quality, productivity, revenue, customer satisfaction, innovation, and retention. Engaged employees care about the right things – the things that best serve the organization. They view the organization's problems as their own. They take personal responsibility for the success of the organization and go the extra mile. But people are different. What triggers their engagement and keeps it high differs considerably. Engaging everyone takes a varied approach, so adapt to individuals. Find out what makes them tick so you can engage them and keep them engaged.

➤ **Exceptional**

Creates a positive and motivating working environment.

Knows what motivates different people and aligns work accordingly.

Gives others appropriate latitude to get work done.

Invites input from others.

Makes people feel that their contributions are visible and valued.

➤ **Consistent**

Structures the work so it aligns with people's goals and motivators.

Empowers others.

Makes each person feel his/her contributions are important.

Invites input and shares ownership and visibility.

Shows a clear connection between people's motivators and the organizational goals.

➤ **Inconsistent**

Has little insight into what motivates others.

Doesn't give people enough flexibility and autonomy to do their work.

Does little to create enthusiasm.

Is unwilling to share ownership and give up control of assignments.

Resources:

Hill, J., & Lineback, K. (2011, June 28). Build your group into a true team. Bloomberg Businessweek.

Jackson, N. M. (2009, April 17). Team-building with a purpose. Entrepreneur.

David, S. (2013, July 15). Disengaged employees? Do something about it. Harvard Business Review Blog Network.

Vorhauer-Smith, S. (2013, August 14). How the best places to work are nailing employee engagement. Forbes.

Biro, M. M. (2012, October 14). Your employees are engaged.....REALLY? Forbes.

Roth, T. (2013, January 18). Engagement starts with your leaders. Training Magazine.

Anderson, A. R. (2013, April 17). Good employees make mistakes. Great leaders allow them to. Forbes.

Goldsmith, M. (2010, April 23). Empowering your employees to empower themselves. Harvard Business Review Blog Network.

Loehr, J., & Schwartz, T. (2003). The power of full engagement: Managing energy, not time, is the key to high performance and personal renewal. New York, NY: Free Press.

Thomas, K. W. (2009). Intrinsic motivation at work: What really drives employee engagement (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Sees and is able to define problems and find causes. Owns the problem until resolution. Finds workable solutions or works with other resources to resolve the issue. Proactively implements solutions and changes as needed to keep small problems from becoming big problems. Looks beyond the obvious and doesn't stop at the surface symptoms.

➤ Consistent

Always looks beyond the obvious and doesn't stop at the first answers.

Personally follows up with the customer to ensure that the problem is resolved.

Once a problem is uncovered, he/she works with internal or external resources to ensure the issue doesn't happen again.

Anticipates problems and makes recommendations of how processes or issues can proactively be resolved.

Works to find root causes and doesn't just focus on the symptoms and superficial causes.

Involves customers or stakeholders when generating new solutions or alternatives.

Hold self personally responsible for ensuring new solutions are implemented successfully.

➤ Inconsistent

Jumps to conclusions without exploring options to resolve the problem.

May be a fire-ready-aim type.

May miss the complexity of a problem and force-sit it to what he/she is most comfortable with.

Responds quickly without full follow-through or analysis to get it off of his/her desk.

May be stuck in the past to what worked before; cannot think creatively to resolve problems in different or innovative ways.

ADAPTABILITY/FLEXIBILITY

Maintains focus and positive attitude amidst change or when under pressure. Able to modify or shift behaviors in response to changing conditions, new information or customers' needs. Accepts and embraces changes in his/her job or in the organization. Maintains productivity and effectiveness in spite of changes. Is able to see the merits of perspectives different than his/her own.

Those skilled at situational adaptability recognize the need to be flexible and act differently because no two situations are exactly alike. They know that using the same approach, tone, and style in different settings may be consistent but not necessarily effective. You wouldn't behave the same way in a team brainstorming discussion as you would when managing a customer complaint or navigating a politically charged strategy session. Quickly adjusting and fine-tuning your behavior in real time allows you to be versatile in different situations and interactions with others. Situational adaptability means paying attention to circumstances and adjusting accordingly. Bringing empathy in times of stress and change, firm direction in times of uncertainty, or diplomacy in times of conflict. Continuously gauge the impact you're having and stay alert to make adjustments to your demeanor and approach. Be flexible to meet the needs of the moment. The outcome will be ease of transaction and effectiveness of interaction.

➤ **Exceptional**

Picks up on the need to change personal, interpersonal, and leadership behavior quickly.

Observes situational and group dynamics and selects best-fit approach.

Seamlessly adapts style to fit the specific needs of others.

➤ **Consistent**

Picks up on situational cues and adjusts in the moment.

Readily adapts personal, interpersonal, and leadership behavior.

Understands that different situations may call for different approaches.

Can act differently depending on the circumstances.

➤ **Inconsistent**

Uses same style and approach regardless of the situation.

Fails to notice changing situational demands.

Expects others to adjust to his/her preferred style and approach.

Things being true to self is all that matters.

Doesn't take time to understand interpersonal dynamics.