



The Supervisor's Toolbox™

SkillGroups and SkillTopics

SkillGroup 1 Managing the Learning Curve

There are at least fifty different ways to mismanage the selection, orientation, training and development of employees. But it really doesn't have to be so daunting a task if you focus on mastering a few core supervisory skills. This section of *The Supervisor's Toolbox* helps you achieve your employee staffing, training and development results in a professional and effective manner. This *Skill Group* provides you with five essential *Skill Topics*, or courses, that explain and clearly show you how to select quality personnel and then carefully mold them into highly productive team contributors.

Selecting Employees - Each new team member you hire represents a significant economic investment in the future productivity of your department. And as any seasoned supervisor will tell you, the impact of your hiring efforts will be felt for a long time afterwards. This Toolbox topic reveals a simple and effective method to help you organize and prepare for selection interviews, provides an efficient and straightforward interviewing process, and offers an innovative decision-making guide to help you evaluate candidates and make the final hiring decision.

Establishing Objectives - When employees are unclear about what acceptable performance looks like, they tend to 'fill in the blanks' with their own perceived standards. Failure to carefully establish these standards in the beginning will often result in confusion, lost production, and a drift away from the desired business results. This Toolbox topic presents a method to organize and specify expected performance results, and provides the skill steps for clearly communicating them.

Teaching Job Skills - Each job reporting to you generally consists of three types of tasks, and each task consists of specific steps that can be written down, and then taught. This Toolbox topic shows the supervisor how to prepare to train, how to conduct effective job instruction, and how to create a plan to see that the new tasks are being performed correctly.

Conducting Reviews - The best way to make sure the performance of a recently trained employee doesn't deteriorate over time is to set up a series of brief progress reviews while they're still learning. The methods taught in this Toolbox topic show how to observe the employee actually doing the task and provide you with techniques and skills to polish and shape performance.

Providing Recognition - Think of recognition as gas for your car. If you don't fill your tank regularly, then sooner or later you're going to run out of gas. Just as your car won't run without gas, your employees will not perform at their best, without recognition. This is especially critical when learning something new. This Toolbox topic describes the basic dynamics of human motivation and provides an easily followed process to properly recognize job performance and behavior.

SkillGroup II Managing the Performance Curve

Performance and job behavior are dynamic and constantly changing events. This second section of the series, called *Managing The Performance Curve* is a fascinating group of SkillTopics designed to help the supervisor 'maintain' the optimum long-term performance and behavior of each individual team member. The topics in this SkillGroup provide the skills, tools, and counseling techniques to handle any performance or behavior problem in accordance with your company policies, up to and including the termination process.

Performance Coaching - Effective management of employee performance starts with an examination of your own beliefs about employee motivation and responsibility. When performance falters, and it will from time to time, this Toolbox topic shows supervisors how to work with their employees to analyze the causes of the slippage and eliminate them.

Behavioral Coaching - Many supervisors have difficulty distinguishing between job performance and employee job behavior. While the techniques for correcting a performance deficiency may work to correct a productivity or quality issue, they don't necessarily apply equally to behavioral problems such as excessive absenteeism, tardiness etc. This Toolbox topic clearly explains the dynamics of counter productive job behavior and provides proven techniques to shape new job behaviors that achieve the desired business results.

Follow-Up Coaching - Supervisors sometimes assume that because they've discussed the solutions to a performance or behavior problem with an employee that they will be flawlessly implemented. But sometimes solving the underlying problems takes more time than originally estimated. This Toolbox topic teaches positive techniques for effective supervisory follow-up that increases the probability that people actually do what they have committed to do.

Corrective Discipline - Some employees you encounter in your career will have greater personal difficulty controlling their performance and/or their job behavior and as such will require a much more structured approach to help them overcome obstacles to their success. This Toolbox topic provides the supervisor with structured techniques and methods to help the reluctant employee gain greater control and achieve ultimate success.

Employee Termination - Every supervisor will eventually encounter an employee who has chosen not to meet his commitments to improve performance or to correct a severe job behavior. In these cases, since there is no longer a basis for a work relationship, you must be prepared to terminate the employment arrangement in order to retain your business standards. This Toolbox topic provides an effective process to end the employment relationship in a humane and legally defensible manner.