Chapter Eight

Steps to Improve Performance: Communicate
Objectives

- Understand the importance of the Supervisor-Employee Relationship
- Develop an understanding of your supervisory weaknesses
- Learn how to become a better communicator
- Understand the relationship between effective communication and motivation.

Notes:
The Supervisor-Employee Relationship

Notes:
SUPERVISOR-EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP QUESTIONS

1. What is expected of me—by my supervisor, by the organization? Unless I know, I can’t do what I’m expected to do.

2. Do I understand my duties? I can do my best work only if I understand what I am supposed to do, and when, where, and how I am supposed to do it.

3. How much am I expected to do? If I don’t know, my performance will suffer because I’ll not have goals to work toward.

4. Have I received proper training? If I’m poorly trained, I’ll likely become frustrated and lose my motivation to do good work.

5. Do I have room to grow in my job? A boring, repetitive job with few challenges will soon make me miserable.

6. Can I exercise my own judgment on the job? When my organization allows me to use my brains to solve problems, I can develop independence and self-esteem.

7. Have I been trained in jobs other than my own? Cross-training gives me a greater sense of accomplishment and a better understanding of the whole work process.

8. Do I have a future with this organization? A smart supervisor explains how I can get better pay and advance.

9. Are my working conditions safe and comfortable? Nobody can work happily or healthily in a workplace that is hazardous, dirty, poorly ventilated, poorly lit, or broken down.

10. Is my supervisor reasonable? If my supervisor gives me unreasonable assignments, or is inconsistent or unfair to me or to other employees, I will likely respond with resentment and poor performance.

11. What will happen to me as a result of my performance? My motivation is strongly influenced by the rewards that I expect to receive because of my performance.

12. Does my supervisor tell me when I’ve done a good job? A good supervisor is as free with praise as with criticism.

13. How can I improve my performance? Unless I know what to improve and how to improve, I cannot get better.

14. Do I understand my pay and benefits? When I understand how my compensation works, I’m more likely to feel properly paid for my work.
15. Do I know what is going on in my organization? Knowing what’s happening in the organization helps me to feel a part of it and keeps me informed about what’s coming up.

16. Do I have chances to suggest how to improve things? When I’m given such opportunities, I feel good about myself and the organization.

17. If I have questions about how my work assignments or schedules are developed, do I get answers? A good supervisor answers these questions as part of treating me fairly.
Exercise

Supervisor Self-Assessment

Notes:
Exercise: Supervisor Self-Assessment

Indicate how often you do each of the behaviors listed. Place the appropriate number in the space provided. Add up your answers and put the total in the blank at the end.

**How Often**
1 - Never
2 - Sometimes
3 - Often
4 - Always

1. I explain each person's duties when I give assignments.
2. I discuss the behavior and performance I expect from each person in my group.
3. I let workers use their judgment on the job.
4. I tell workers when they do a good job.
5. I make sure people understand their pay and benefits.
6. I make sure people have the knowledge, skill, and ability to perform a job before I assign them to it.
7. I make sure people are aware of training and upgrading opportunities.
8. I make sure people know how they can advance in the organization.
9. I give people job assignments that allow them to develop and use their skills.
10. I rotate job assignments so that people don't get stuck doing the same job unless they want to.
11. I tell people how well they are doing while they are doing a job.
12. Where possible, I make sure people are trained in jobs other than their own.
13. I give people challenging but reasonable assignments.
15. I work with my people to help them understand what they have to do to improve their job performance.
16. I keep my people informed as to what is going on in the organization and what will be happening in the future.

17. I give my people the chance to help make decisions on issues that affect them.

18. If workers come to me with a problem, I discuss it with them and help them find a solution.

TOTAL

The closer your total is to 72, the better the job you are doing in dealing with your workers. You need to improve the behaviors for which you entered a 2 or less. A score below 50 means your negative performance is probably affecting the performance of the crew. A score above 60 probably improves crew performance.
Communication

The biggest problem with communication is the illusion that it has been accomplished.

Notes:
Video Presentation

Classic Communication

Notes:
Six Elements of a Good Communicator

- Having a strong self-concept
- Listening effectively
- Expressing clearly
- Handling anger
- Talking about yourself
- Owning problems

Notes:
Self-Concept

- A strong self-concept is necessary for good communication

- If you treat workers with respect, you will help them improve their self-concept

Notes:
Employees with a weak self-concept may have difficulty with:

- Talking to others
- Admitting they are wrong
- Showing feelings
- Accepting constructive criticism
- Speaking up

Notes:
Forming the Self-Concept

- Treat workers with respect
- Demonstrate that you value what they say
- Show concern about them as individuals

Notes:
Listening Effectively

“We have two ears and only one tongue in order that we hear more and speak less.”
Listening with the “Third Ear”

A good listener listens to the words and the meanings behind the words.
Improve Your Listening Skills by:

- Having a reason for listening
- Not judging what is said right away
- Resisting distractions
- Waiting and thinking before answering

Notes:
Improve Your Listening Skills by:

- Repeating what the speaker said in your own words
- Seeking the important themes—real meanings of words
- Reflecting on content and searching for meaning
- Being ready to respond to the speaker’s comments
Active Listening

- Respect other person’s need to communicate
- Listen to what the person says
- Respond with a restatement of what you think the message means
- Speaker then verifies or corrects the message
Benefits of Active Listening

- Communication is easier and more accurate
- Listener can understand what speakers mean and how they feel about issues
- Acceptance is communicated and trust between people is increased
- Problem solving becomes easier
Tips for Active Listening

- Be careful not to change the speaker’s intended meaning with your restatement
- Don’t merely repeat the speaker’s statement
- Don’t use it if there’s no time to deal with the situation or speaker is asking only for facts
- Know when to stop using it by being sensitive to speaker’s nonverbal messages

Notes:
Expressing Clearly

- Difficult to say what we mean and express how we feel

- Common mistake: assuming others know what we mean even when we’re unclear in our speech (“If it’s clear to me it must be clear to you.”)

- Important to make ourselves clear and to check our meaning with our listeners

- Need for our communications to show that we accept one another—avoiding responses that indicate non-acceptance

Notes:
Typical Listener Responses

1) *Ordering, Directing:* “You have to...”

2) *Warning, Threatening:* “You’d better not...”

3) *Preaching, Moralizing:* “You ought to...” or “You shouldn’t...”

4) *Advising, Giving Solutions:* “Why don’t you...”

5) *Lecturing, Informing:* “Here are the facts...”

6) *Evaluating, Blaming:* “You’re wrong...”

Notes:
Typical Listener Responses

7) **Praising, Agreeing**: “You’re right...”

8) **Name-calling, Shaming**: “You’re stupid...”

9) **Interpreting, Analyzing**: “What you need...”

10) **Sympathizing, Supporting**: “You’ll be okay...”

11) **Question, Probing**: “Why did you...” or “Why didn’t you...”

12) **Withdrawing, Avoiding**: “Let’s forget it...”

Notes:
Activity

Listening/Expressing

Story Chain

Notes:
Activity

Listening/Expressing

Picture Relay
Activity

Listening/
Expressing

Drawing by
Direction

Notes:
Handling Anger

Holding Anger in: People who do this believe that showing angry feelings will cause problems or arguments

Expressing Emotions: Learn to express angry feelings in a good way

Notes:
Expressing Emotions

- Be aware of your emotions
- Admit your emotions
- Own your emotions
- Investigate your emotions
- Express the emotions you are feeling
- Integrate your emotions with your intellect and will
Talking About Yourself

- Talking truthfully and fully about yourself is necessary for good communication

- The more we know about each other the better our communication will be

- The more supervisors learn about their workers the more they will understand what workers want from their jobs and how they want to be treated

Notes:
Talking About Yourself

- Our ability to talk about ourselves shows a healthy personality. We must be able to tell others who we are before we can truly know who we are and act according to our true selves.

- What keeps us from talking about ourselves? --Fear of not being accepted, liked, loved.

Notes:
Trust

- People are not likely to talk about themselves when they feel threatened
- The fear of opening up to others can be replaced with trust
- One person’s trust helps create trust in others
- Good communicators create an atmosphere of trust

Notes:
Owning Problems

- Problems must be recognized and ownership must be identified
- Best person to solve a problem is the one who “owns” it
- Important role of supervisors is to deal with their own problems and help workers deal with theirs

Notes:
Influencing Motivation Through Communication

- Workers who are treated with respect AND
- Are shown that they are valuable members of the organization WILL
- Respond in positive ways, and this will result in improved performance

Notes:
Exercise

Interpersonal Communication Inventory

Notes:
Exercise: Interpersonal Communication Inventory

This exercise provides an opportunity to make an objective study of your interpersonal communication skills. The results will enable you to better understand how well you communicate with others.

Answer each question as quickly as you can according to the way you feel at the moment (not the way you usually feel or felt last week). The questions refer to your interaction with coworkers.

Circle the most appropriate response. The Yes column is used when the question can be answered as happening most of the time or usually. The No column is used when the question can be answered as seldom or never. The Sometimes column should be marked when you definitely cannot answer Yes or No. Use this column as little as possible. If you cannot give the exact answer to a question, answer the best you can, but be sure to answer each one. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. Do your words come out the way you like them to in conversation? Yes  No  Sometimes

2. When you are asked a question that is not clear, do you ask the person to explain what is meant? Yes  No  Sometimes

3. When you are trying to explain something, do other persons have a tendency to put words in your mouth? Yes  No  Sometimes

4. Do you merely assume the other person knows what you are trying to say without your explaining what you really mean? Yes  No  Sometimes

5. Do you ever ask the other person to tell you how he or she feels about the point you may be trying to make? Yes  No  Sometimes

6. Is it difficult for you to talk with other people? Yes  No  Sometimes

7. In conversation, do you talk about things that are of interest to both you and the other person? Yes  No  Sometimes

8. Do you find it difficult to express your ideas when they differ from those around you? Yes  No  Sometimes

9. In conversation, do you try to put yourself in the other person's shoes? Yes  No  Sometimes

10. In conversation, do you have a tendency to do more talking than the other person? Yes  No  Sometimes
11. Are you aware of how your tone of voice may affect others?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

12. Do you refrain from saying something that you know will only hurt others or make matters worse?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

13. Is it difficult to accept constructive criticism from others?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

14. When someone has hurt your feelings, do you discuss this with him/her?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

15. Do you later apologize to someone whose feelings you may have hurt?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

16. Does it upset you a great deal when someone disagrees with you?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

17. Do you find it difficult to think clearly when you are angry with someone?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

18. Do you fail to disagree with others because you are afraid they will get angry?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

19. When a problem arises between you and another person, can you discuss it without getting angry?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

20. Are you satisfied with the way you settle your differences with others?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

21. Do you pout and sulk for a long time when someone upsets you?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

22. Do you become very uneasy when someone pays you a compliment?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

23. Generally, are you able to trust other individuals  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

24. Do you find it difficult to compliment and praise others?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

25. Do you deliberately try to conceal your faults from others?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

26. Do you help others to understand you by saying what you think, feel, and believe?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes

27. Is it difficult for you to confide in people?  
   Yes  No  Sometimes
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<td>28. Do you have a tendency to change the subject when your feelings enter into a discussion?</td>
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<td>29. In conversation, do you let the other person finish talking before reacting to what he or she says?</td>
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<td>30. Do you find yourself not paying attention while in conversation with others?</td>
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<td>31. Do you ever try to listen for meaning when someone is talking?</td>
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<td>32. Do others seem to be listening when you are talking?</td>
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<td>33. In a discussion, is it difficult for you to see things from the other person’s point of view?</td>
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<td>34. Do you pretend you are listening to others when you actually are not?</td>
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<td>35. In conversation, can you tell the difference between what a person is saying and what he or she may be feeling?</td>
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<td>36. While speaking, are you aware of how others are reacting to what you are saying?</td>
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<td>37. Do you feel that other people wish you were a different kind of person?</td>
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<td>38. Do other people understand your feelings?</td>
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<td>39. Do others remark that you always seem to think you are right?</td>
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<td>40. Do you admit that you are wrong when you know that you are wrong about something?</td>
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*Total Score (see Inventory Scoring Key)*
Look at how you responded to each question. In front if each question, write the appropriate score using the table below. For example, if you answered “Yes” to item 1, you would find below that you get three points; write the number 3 in front of question 1. When you have finished scoring each of the 40 items, add up your total score.

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The average score for adults is 86. Higher scores mean better communication skills. If your score is much below 86, you need to work on your communication skills.
Key Points

- Strive for good supervisor-employee relationships; they generally result in good worker performance
- Understand and develop strong self-concepts—yours and your workers’
- Practice effective listening
- Practice giving clear instructions
- Learn to express anger in positive ways

Notes:
Key Points

- Talk about yourself and encourage workers to talk about themselves
- Recognize problems and identify ownership; deal with your problems and help workers deal with theirs

Notes:
What You Have Learned

- What you need to work on to be a more effective supervisor
- Six ways to become a better communicator
- Areas where you may need to improve your communication skills
- How to help create a motivating work environment through effective communication

Notes: