

# Supervisor Responsibilities Safety Talk



## WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Whether you're considering a supervisor position or are simply curious about your manager's responsibilities in relation to your role, it is important to understand the function of supervisors in the workplace. A supervisor is anyone who oversees and manages a team or individual to ensure that they are performing effectively and satisfied in their role. The term "supervisor" usually refers to lower-level managerial positions, and these professionals often communicate information from their direct reports to senior management personnel.

While being a supervisor has its challenges, it's also a rewarding position where you can help individuals achieve personal career goals.

## WHAT'S THE DANGER?

### SUPERVISOR ATTRIBUTES

In many cases, companies promote individuals from non-managerial roles after they have proven themselves capable to lead others well. When deciding who to advance to a supervisor role, companies often look for employees who demonstrate the following:

- Excellent communication skills
- Expertise in team or department
- Ability to remain calm under pressure
- Firm grasp of company policies
- Strong work ethic
- Punctuality and time management skills
- Professionalism and a positive attitude
- Organizational abilities
- Interest in leadership opportunities

To increase your likelihood of promotion to a supervisor role, it's important to focus on growing the necessary skills and expertise. Consider attending relevant seminars, conferences, workshops and online classes or pursuing an advanced degree or certification.

Most importantly, be professional and set an example for others by taking the

initiative on difficult tasks.

Working as a supervisor allows you to contribute to your workplace while helping employees advance in their careers. Whether you're considering applying for a supervisor position or interested in pursuing other leadership roles in the future, you need to develop the skills to earn the respect of your employer and your team.

## **HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF**

### **BACKGROUND OF APPLICANTS**

#### **Education, Training & Certification**

Being supervisor doesn't require any particular education, but certainly needs training.

- **Education:** A high school diploma—or its equivalent—is usually required. Some college or an associate degree can be helpful in setting candidates apart from others who desire the position.
- **Experience:** A supervisor must have an excellent grasp of the work the team's doing, as well as an understanding of the tasks and activities of a manager. Supervisors are often drawn from the working team because management appreciates their work ethic, company attitude, and commitment to quality.
- **Training:** Organizations often require that individuals promoted to supervisory roles attend first-line or front-line management training where they learn important communication and management skills.

### **Supervisor Skills & Competencies**

You should have several essential qualities to succeed at becoming a supervisor in any field.

- **Leadership**
- Conflict resolution
- Interpersonal skills
- Time management skills
- Problem-solving abilities

### **SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUPERVISORS**

The primary responsibilities supervisors have is the occupational safety and health for all employees under their supervision.

#### **Conduct Orientation and Training of Employees:**

Train and instruct employees so they can perform their work safely. Know what personal protective equipment is needed for each task and how this equipment must be properly used, stored and maintained. When there are mandated safety training courses, ensure that your employees take them and that they are appropriately documented.

#### **Enforce Safe Work Practices:**

It's the supervisor's responsibility to enforce safe work practices and procedures; failure to do so is an invitation for accidents to occur. Workers must be encouraged to identify unsafe or unhealthful workplace conditions or hazards and absolutely not be disciplined for doing so!

### **Correct Unsafe Conditions:**

Supervisors' must take immediate steps to correct unsafe or unhealthful workplace conditions or hazards within their authority and ability to do so. When an unsafe or unhealthful workplace condition or hazard cannot be immediately corrected, the supervisor must take temporary precautionary measures. Supervisors must follow-up to ensure that corrective measures are completed in a timely manner to address the hazard.

### **Prevent Lingering Unsafe or Unhealthful Workplace Conditions or Hazards:**

Many near miss incidents are caused by unsafe or unhealthful workplace conditions or hazards. It's the supervisor's responsibility to train and periodically remind employees of what to look for and how to correct or report unsafe conditions or hazards. If a hazard is identified, the supervisor must act.

### **Investigate Workplace Accidents:**

Supervisors are responsible for conducting accident investigations and for ensuring that all occupationally injured employees report to the Occupational Medical Service (OMS) immediately.

### **Promote Quick Return to Work:**

Employees must be encouraged to return to work as soon as possible. The longer an employee is away from work, the less likely he or she will actually return. When possible, light or limited duties should be identified and considered, to assist in returning the employee to work.

## **WHAT A SUPERVISOR DOES**

A supervisor oversees the day-to-day performance of employees. Depending on the company, a supervisor may manage a team, a shift or an entire department.

Successful supervisors have excellent organizational and communication skills. These skills help them transfer information from upper management to employees and communicate their teams' performance or needs to high-level managers. In most cases, supervisors are experts in their field and can efficiently manage daily operations as a result.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES/SUPERVISORS**

A supervisor's responsibilities include:

- Set goals for performance and deadlines in ways that comply with company's plans and vision and communicate them to subordinates
- Organize workflow and ensure that employees understand their duties or delegated tasks
- Monitor employee productivity and provide constructive feedback and coaching

- Receive complaints and resolve problems
- Maintain timekeeping and personnel records
- Pass on information from upper management to employees and vice versa
- Prepare and submit performance reports
- Decide on reward and promotion based on performance
- Ensure adherence to legal and company policies and procedures and undertake disciplinary actions if the need arises
- Schedule work hours and shifts
- Coordinate job rotation and cross-training
- Share company updates, financial results, and new objectives with team members
- Assist in resolving emergencies, such as a quality or customer problem that might be escalated to the team supervisor for handling
- Identify and resolving workplace problems, including tardiness or absenteeism
- Provide reports and activity updates to management
- Assist in hiring and firing activities, a supervisor often requires the managerial approval of all new hires or terminations.

## **FINAL WORD**

Supervisors are not born to be supervisors, but became supervisors through rigorous training protocol by experts in the field and nurtured by the trials and tribulations of experience in the field.