

## A Skillful Supervisor...

Understands the importance of supervision

Knows the responsibilities of being a supervisor

Is invested in the development of supervisees

Determines the developmental learning needs of supervisees

Initiates regularly scheduled supervision meetings

Communicates effectively

Is personally and professionally mature

Is accessible, available, reliable and credible

Is respectful

Models ethical behavior and maintains appropriate boundaries

Creates an open, relaxed learning environment

Teaches practical skills

Provides constructive feedback

Employs progressive discipline steps when needed

Is aware of and accepts own limitations and strengths

Has the courage to expose vulnerabilities, make mistakes, and take risks

Encourages exploration of new ideas

Accepts and celebrates diversity

Has an awareness of personal authority

Works collaboratively with supervisees in planning and evaluation

Fosters supervisees' autonomy

Has a sense of humor

Practices self-care

# Supervisory Responsibilities

Supervisors assume various roles responsibilities in their work. Common supervisory responsibilities include the ability to:

**Inspire** – create conditions that instill hope and promote adherence to the mission and goals of the organization

**Teach** – impart knowledge through various methods including written materials, modeling, role-playing, and role-reversal

**Support** – provide encouragement, empathic responses, examples from personal experience; build rapport, relieve anxiety, and build supervisee’s self-awareness and insight; supportive approach especially helpful when individual makes mistakes as it fosters open learning environment and promotes risk-taking

**Model** – demonstrate how knowledge translates into practice through applying specific techniques; supervisors regularly model behaviors informally through boundary setting, handling conflict, self-care practices

**Challenge** – provide corrective feedback; point out discrepancies between supervisee’s stated goals and actions; hold accountable to performance expectations; most effective when provided in constructive manner in context of an established positive supervisory relationship

**Evaluate** – review and assess performance; key part of supervision but often problematic for many supervisors due to discomfort with hierarchy, approval, and power; evaluative role often is minimized; best to acknowledge and address evaluative role with supervisee from the very beginning

**Collaborate** – encourage supervisees’ own problem-solving skills and facilitate their professional development; used especially with supervisees who have advanced knowledge and experience; role is more collegial and consultative than evaluative

**Advocate** – “provide a voice” on behalf of supervisees regarding matters of workplace safety, input into organizational decisions, earning a “living wage” and adequate benefits, making grievances, opportunities for professional growth, and access to needed information, technology, and resources

# The CLEAR Model: Useful Questions and Responses for Each Stage

(Hawkins & Shohet, 2012)

These are examples of questions and interventions that have been found to be useful in helping others to explore a situation more deeply.

## 1. Contracting: Starting with the end in mind and agreeing how you are going to get there together

- How do you want to use your time?
- What do you most need to achieve in this session?
- How could I be most valuable/helpful to you?
- On what in particular do you want to focus?
- What challenges are you facing?

## 2. Listening: Facilitating the supervisee in generating personal insight into the situation

- What more can you say about that?
- Who else is involved whom you have not yet mentioned?
- How do other people – your boss, your colleagues, your team, your client – see the situation?
- Let us see if I can summarize the issue.

## 3a. Exploring I: Helping the supervisee to understand the personal impact of the situation

- How are you feeling right now?
- Are there any feelings that you have not expressed?
- Does this person remind you of anyone? What is it you would like to say to that person?
- What patterns might be re-occurring in this situation?

## 3b. Exploring II: Challenging the supervisee to create new possibilities for future action in resolving the situation

- What outcome do you and others want?
- What behaviors need to be different in you or your team members to achieve the outcome?
- Who might be of help to you that you have not yet consulted?
- Can you think of two or more different ways of approaching this situation?

## 4. Action: Supporting the supervisee in committing to a way ahead and creating the next step

- What are the pros and cons of each possible approach/strategy?
- What is the long-term objective/goal?
- What is the first step you need to take?

- When are you going to do that?
- Is the plan realistic? What is the percent chance of succeeding?
- Can you show me the first thing you are going to say in your next meeting/session?

**5a. Review I: Taking stock and reinforcing ground covered and commitments made. Reviewing the process and how it could be improved. Planning the future review after the action has been tried.**

- What have you decided to do next?
- What have you learned from this session?
- In what ways have you increased your own ability to handle similar situations?
- What did you find helpful about the supervision process?
- What could be better next time in the supervision process?

**5b. Review II: Debriefing at the next session the actions taken between sessions**

- How did what you planned work out?
- How do you think you did?
- What feedback did you receive?
- What did you do well and what could have been even better?
- What can you learn from what happened?