

Workplace Supervisor

April 2019

Testimonials

Here are some quotes from HR Managers who recently called on Concern for a Management Consultation:

"In addition to the advice and guidance provided, I also appreciated the Clinical Manager's availability and follow-up."

"I'm so glad that I called Concern. The advice from the Clinical Manager was very helpful. Thank you so much."

"I find the Clinical Manager to be helpful and understanding. She adds true value to the company as a client of Concern. Her expertise in the subject matter clearly shows and she is very professional. She is refreshing to work with."



FAQs for Managing Employees

Q. I think I write excellent documentation and correction memos to my employees. It's my primary way of communicating with them regarding performance issues. Personal meetings are difficult to arrange and often must be rescheduled. Should I make a greater effort to meet, even if I feel that I am efficient already?

A. Effective documentation is an important skill for supervisors; however, good communication is an even more important skill to master. When you discover problems with employees, your most important goal is to resolve them. It's a common mistake among supervisors to remain at a distance from employees by sending emails and documents and calling that communication. You can illuminate problems this way, but solving them requires much more. A performance problem is a discrepancy between what you want from your employee and what you get. Typically there are many issues associated with performance discrepancies that written communication will not uncover or address. These include employee attitudes, skills, interference from others, organizational issues, and ineffective teamwork. Rolling up your sleeves and processing—talking about—issues to improve productivity is what is really needed. Resisting the temptation to communicate primarily within a digital world is your challenge.

Q. How can I use the Concern Clinical Managers as consultants? I refer employees to Concern, but I am a little unsure about what they can do for me regarding supervisor tips, process, problem solving, etc.

A. When employees and managers think of Concern, they usually think of solving employees' personal problems; however, Concern offers much more. The Clinical Managers have unique relational advantages in organizations based upon their trustworthiness, patience, approachability, and listening skills. They gain these strengths through training and experience. Concern can consult with you on dozens of topics and issues associated with behavior in the workplace. A few of these include: steps you can take to improve communication with your employees; simple coaching tips to help employees resolve conflicts; managing your stress; how to attain goals; techniques for developing teams; effective and positive constructive confrontation techniques; motivating and inspiring your employees; guidance on intervening to deal with nonproductive behaviors you may witness with employees; and facilitating positive work cultures.

Q. I admit to micromanaging my employees, but is it always a bad thing? What if the project is really important? I admit to not being able to control this problem, but I can't let go of important things that I delegate to employees. How do I find a balance?

A. Oftentimes, as a manager your desire for excellence and your own high standards can interfere with the opportunities to allow your employees to shine and exhibit their own style, organizational skills and project management abilities.

One of the key challenges as a manager is to trust your employee to do the work. If needed, you can offer assistance, mentor, add resources, provide education and acknowledge existing processes in order to promote excellence. Your task is to step back, identify your pattern of over-managing, and experiment with pulling back to develop more balance in your approach.

The down side to micromanaging is it usually generates resentment and low morale. Micromanaging details subconsciously instills fear in some employees. They fear that they will make a mistake which leads to a self-generating cycle of more self-doubt.

The other downside, is that the more you micromanage, the less you are available to manage all of the other employees. So essentially, it draws you away from your overall role of effective, collaborative, communicative managing. It creates an imbalance in your management style. It might feel awkward at first for you to not micromanage but think of it as a step-by-step process. Your employees might know more about the process than you realize.

Action Items: 1) Have short weekly stand-up meetings with cookies or pizza available to discuss projects or highlights and get feedback from the group. 2) Have bi-weekly meetings with an employee and practice

making it a dialogue by “checking in” with them as to what the strategy is, what is their progress or project status and their area of focus. So rather than direct the conversation, at least at the beginning set the stage for wanting to “check in” and get their feedback on thoughts, challenges, and wins. In this way, you are cultivating a strong employee and still overseeing the progress of the task or project. The more you allow your employees to have a “voice,” the more empowered and positive the experience will be for each of them and everyone involved. We all learn from each other regardless of our job title.

Q. What are the most common bullying behaviors in the workplace? I would like to know what they are so I am more likely to spot them or believe employees when they come to me with complaints.

A. According to one study, the most common bullying behaviors in the workplace include falsely accusing someone of errors; staring at, glaring at, and non-verbally intimidating the person; discounting the person's thoughts or feelings, such as saying, “Oh, I can tell you are new here,” saying “Duh,” or “Everyone knows that;” giving a coworker or subordinate the silent treatment; and making up rules on the fly. Other common bullying tactics include backstabbing, assigning undesirable work, and socially isolating the victim from coworkers. You can learn more about bullying behaviors from Concern, but a comprehensive list is also available from the Workplace Bullying Institute. Educating employees about bullying has a major impact on preventing it. As you can see, some of these behaviors are difficult to measure, but you're right, knowing what they are will help you hear complaints with a more open mind and be less likely to minimize their significance.

Source: *Workplace Bullying Institute*

Concern teams with Human Resources to provide another resource for managers and supervisors to consult about how to manage issues with individuals, within and between work groups, and across departments. When you call Concern, ask for a Management Consultant or request to speak to a Clinical Manager.

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