



## **SUPERVISOR TRAINING**

---

### **How to Effectively Manage Performance Conversations**

**September 2019**

# Objectives

- Differentiate between performance and behavioral issues (is there a difference?)
- Acknowledge the difficulties we face; different types of employee behavior
- Share ideas on preparing for and conducting difficult conversations about behavior
- Identify the keys to maintaining after the conversation occurs
- Share a few tools to help keep you on track

“Action may not always bring happiness,  
but there is no happiness without action”

—Benjamin Disraeli

# Why It's So Hard

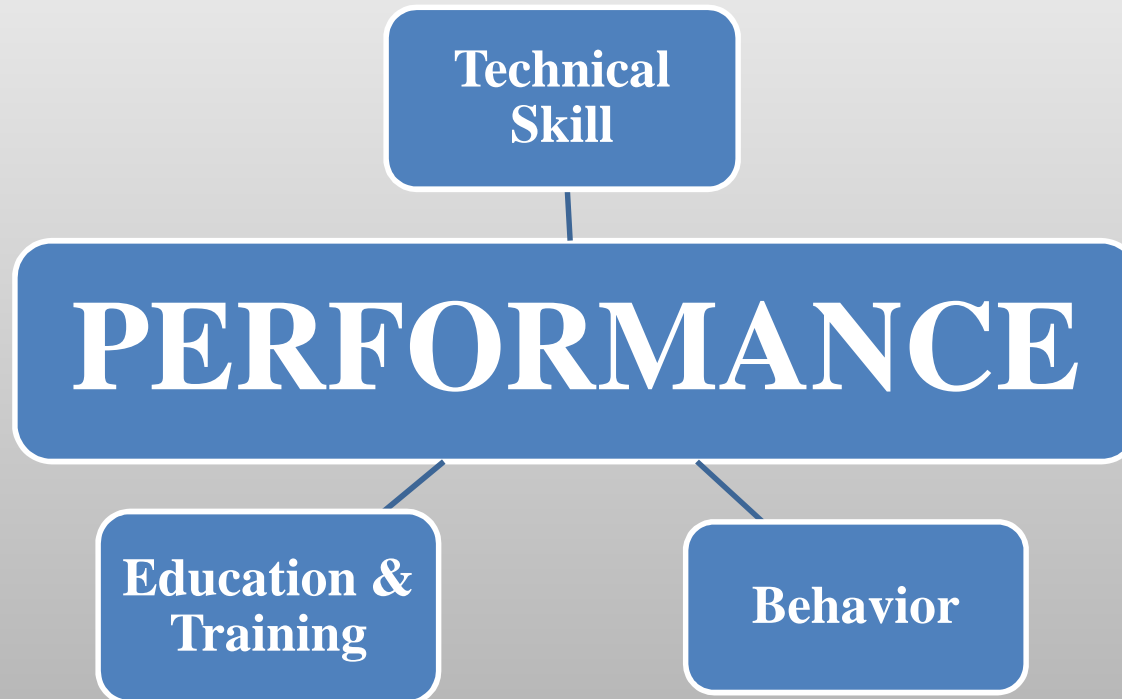
- Feels personal
- Nice person, bad habits
- Bullying is real
- Fear of being the bad guy or girl
- What if it backfires?
- Should have done it sooner

# What's the Problem?

PERFORMANCE...

...or BEHAVIOR?

How about **BOTH?**



# Addressing Technical Performance

## GOOD NEWS:

If addressed early on, tackling TECHNICAL performance issues can be painless if you have:

- Early intervention
- Clear expectations (e.g. process 25 applications per day)
- Measurement criteria (e.g. reports of number of applications processed) – THINK ASSESSMENT!
- Ways to offer more training (e.g. application processing tutorials; time with head processor)
- A method for following up (e.g. progress reports)
- Clearly stated implications if expectations are not met (e.g. discipline)

# SMART Goal Setting

## Be *S.M.A.R.T!*

Supervisors should have expectations set for their areas that:

- Align with the mission and core values of the College  
What does it mean to behave ethically and with integrity? (Specific & Relevant)
- Define what excellent service looks like  
Who is the “customer”? How do we know they are well-served?  
(Measurable & Attainable)

**NOTE: THIS PIECE ON SERVICE EXPECTATIONS IS CRITICAL!**

- Promote productivity and quality work  
How does employee behavior shape the work and keep the team productive? (Timely)

# The Reality

Technical issues are usually much easier to address than behavioral.

How a person BEHAVES in the workplace is a part of how they PERFORM.

Any kind of behavior, work productivity, or other job performance that does not meet your clearly defined expectations warrants a conversation!

# But What About BEHAVIOR?

## Behavior vs. Personality

NEWS FLASH.....

THEY'RE NOT ALL LIKE YOU.

Pay attention to behavior, not personality.

- Personality: Who a person IS (i.e. – bubbly)
- Behavior: How the personality trait manifests itself, particularly in terms of impact to others (i.e. – loud & excitable in a distracting way, overly-excited, socializes in a way that is counterproductive)

# Problem Behavior

Behavior becomes a problem when it is **disruptive** in any way to the workplace.

# Difficult Employee Behaviors: Forms Alliances

## Behaviors:

- Forms “strategic alliances” to benefit their own careers
- Plays on a supervisor’s need to be accepted
- May bring gifts, praise and compliments

Why They Get Away With It: People love to be loved!

## Disruptive because:

- Makes others feel left behind (cannot compete)
- Leads to ill-will and lack of trust among employees; perception of favoritism

# Difficult Employee Behavior: Plays a Victim

## Behaviors:

- Perceives themselves to be the victim (“martyr”) in most situations
- Takes on way too much despite having help
- Constantly talks about the hours they put in
- Sometimes shifts blame to others (manipulative)

Why They Get Away With It: Although they complain, they work hard.

## Disruptive because:

- Source of negativity to the team
- Zaps supervisor energy
- Does not allow others to learn new things; hoarding of work
- Can lead to poor decision making (out of fear for piling on the martyr)

# Difficult Employee Behavior: Excessive Socializing

## Behaviors:

- Has a hard time focusing on work
- Moves from area to area throughout the day (chatty)
- Tends to share a lot of personal information, sometimes inappropriately
- Seems to disappear at points throughout the day
- May have an “addiction” to social media

Why They Get Away With It: They usually have a cheery, positive attitude

## Disruptive because:

- Interrupts others who are trying to work (reduces personal and team productivity)
- Can lead to feeling that privacy is being invaded
- Others may feel like the person is not pulling their weight; builds resent

# Difficult Employee Behavior: Distant/Averse to Team Environment

## Behaviors:

- Appears cold and non-communicative to others
- Keeps to themselves; non-participative
- Prefers e-mail and text to in-person conversation
- Does not socialize - EVER

Why They Get Away With It: They're quiet (usually head down and productive)

## Disruptive because:

- They are sometimes vague in their responses("I don't know")
- If kind gestures are ignored, leads to hard feelings
- Makes others think they are mad at them; can inadvertently add drama to the workplace

# Difficult Employee Behavior: Excessive Delegation

## Behaviors:

- Engages in a lot of busy work, but not a lot of productivity
- Complains about workload to set the stage for passing off work
- Takes a junior person under their wing as their offloading “victim”

Why They Get Away With It: It is easier to put up with it then hear them complain or worse, sometimes it is because they are bullies!

## Disruptive because:

- It reduces morale and creates feelings of inequity (why do I have to work so hard when he/she does not?)
- Brings negative energy to the team
- The “victim” of offloading can burn out and leave
- No meaningful productivity

# Difficult Employee Behavior: “Informal Leader” of Bad Behavior

## Behaviors:

- Also known as the “Chronic Complainer”
- Is aggressive and outward about dissatisfaction with nearly everything
- Makes outward gestures of displeasure (eye rolling, huffing, etc.)
- Acts as though they represent the whole team

## Why They Get Away With It: They are bullies; the “fear factor”

## Disruptive because:

- Leads to a form of informal and negative leadership; undermines supervisor
- Negativity zaps productivity; showy antics take attention away from matters of importance
- Others often leave because of these people
- Sometimes the behavior is contagious!

# Difficult Employee Behavior: Passive Aggressive

**This is by far the most difficult type of behavior employee to manage!**

## Behaviors

Is a combination of all of the above and can also:

- Take anger out on others by using sporadic “silent treatment”
- Pretend not to understand assignments to get out of doing them
- Do as little as possible until the boss is around
- Protest assignments by not completing them intentionally, leaving it for someone else
- Act as a “yes” person to your face, but then secretly sabotages or discredits you to others

Why They Get Away With It: They have a tactic for every situation as a means of self-preservation.

Disruptive because: These employees can take up 80% of your time!

# Pair Share

## Ground Rules:

- Work in pairs
- VEGAS!
- No names, please
- Suspend judgements

Each of you take 5 minutes to:

- Provide an example of a performance issue, either technical or behavioral, that you encountered (can be from any point of view)
- How did it affect you? The team?
- Was it handled appropriately?
- What do you wish could have been done differently?
- Teammate – any advice?

# How Do I Deal?

## Rules of the Supervisory Road

### Rule #1:

*Remember:*

*Most people do not wake up in the morning wanting to be the bad seed of the workplace.*

There are three main triggers to workplace performance (including behavioral) problems, aside from medical issues:

- 1) Personal struggles
- 2) Ambiguity – lack of clear expectations
- 3) FEAR
  - of failure
  - of being disrespected
  - of losing control
  - of losing a job
  - of confrontation
  - of being disappointed
  - ....along with lack of confidence.

# How Do I Deal?

## Rules of the Supervisory Road

### Rule #2:

*Know where you can make an impact.*

It is not your job to fix an employee's personal problems

It IS your job to let them know how they can help themselves at work.

How?

- ✓ Set clear expectations right up front and continually
- ✓ Clear job descriptions
- ✓ Constant feedback and correction if needed
- ✓ Rewards and recognition for a job well done

Encourage employees with personal problems to take stock in all the good they can do at work...it can be an esteem builder (and do not forget – we have an Employee Assistance Program).

# How Do I Deal?

## Rules of the Supervisory Road

### **Rule #3:**

*Don't Delay!*

Have a performance conversation as soon as you identify unacceptable behavior.

Why?

- They deserve it.
- Your team deserves it.
- You deserve it.
- Your success as a manager, and the success of your department, **DEPENDS** on it...as does the institution.

# Remember the Performance Management Cycle



# Time to Talk: Preparing for the Conversation

Ask yourself these questions:

1. What is the problem? Could there be a direct CAUSE?
2. Why is it disruptive?
3. Have I been clear about the expectation?
4. What is my planned approach? What assumptions have I made?
5. How will I follow up?
6. What is my plan if this conversation is not successful?

This homework will better prepare you for a potentially difficult conversation.

# Time to Talk: Preparing for the Conversation

## Performance Conversation Preparation Worksheet – SAMPLE

Meeting with: Lisa  
Scheduled Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Problem: Lisa continually projects a negative attitude during meetings by making rude gestures such as rolling her eyes, talking over others, and huffing and sighing so others can hear.

Why it is disruptive: Her gestures are disruptive to the entire team because it draws focus from the topic at hand and lends to a negative environment. Some of her teammates have also mentioned that it makes them uncomfortable but they will not say anything to her for fear that she will retaliate in some way.

# Time to Talk: Preparing for the Conversation

In preparation, remember:

- This is not about you.
- The goal is to correct: do not minimize the issue (or vice versa).
- Make sure you have concrete examples.
- Esteem building is appropriate for any type of conversation.

# Time to Talk: During the Conversation

- Make sure you are in a comfortable and private environment
- State the specific problem right away. No beating around the bush.
- Use your examples, but do not pile on without asking if it is needed.
- Allow them time to speak, and just LISTEN while watching body language.
- Be careful not to ignore the employee's reaction to the feedback, but do not spend too much time acknowledging.
- Be aware of your own energy; come back to center often, especially when you are off track.

# Time to Talk: During the Conversation

- Remind them of expectations.
- Make them the problem-solver (how will you close the gap?)
- Agree on solutions
- Make time to offer positive words.
- Go back to agreements one more time and promise feedback.

OFFER THANKS!

# Video

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s76bX5ujl\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s76bX5ujl_4)

# After the Conversation

Document

Document

Document!

Continual follow up until you are comfortable the issue is resolved.

# Available Tools: Work Improvement Plan

**Employee Name:**

**Supervisor:**

**Department/Unit:**

**Length of Development Plan:**

**30    60    90 Days**

**Job Title/Position:**

Issue	Goal	Action Step	Follow Up

# Closing Words

Having to give an employee less than perfect feedback is never easy.....  
.....but it is your job.

Knowing what you can and cannot impact is key, as is setting clear expectations.

Spending time on thoughtful and well-planned performance conversations can mean ALL the difference between success and failure in your department.

You can always call HR for help. Please make sure to do so, especially if other issues arise (e.g., a reference to a medical issue) during the conversation.

# QUESTIONS?

Please call the Office of Human Resources at ANY time for guidance and assistance – extension 3276



# RESOURCES

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdp4sPviV74>

<http://hbr.org/web/management-tip/tips-on-having-difficult-conversations>

<http://blogs.payscale.com/compensation/2010/05/confronting-difficult-employees.html>

<http://www.judyringer.com/resources/articles/we-have-to-talk-a-stepbystep-checklist-for-difficult-conversations.php>

[http://www.gotopai.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2010/10/Dealing\\_With\\_Specific\\_Types\\_of\\_Difficult\\_People.pdf](http://www.gotopai.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2010/10/Dealing_With_Specific_Types_of_Difficult_People.pdf)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s76bX5ujl\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s76bX5ujl_4)

Utica College's Employee Assistance Program:

<https://www.utica.edu/hr/media/eni%20NexGen%20Memo.pdf>