



Association Tip-of-the-Month

March 2017

What First-Time Supervisors Need to Know

What's the Number-One Thing for First-Time Supervisors to Keep in Mind?

While they may be eager to make changes, don't move too fast. They should pretend they just started at the organization and observe and learn. Don't make any changes until about three months – no sooner.

How should new supervisors initially go about building relationships with the people who report to them?

Set up individual meetings with each team member. Talk to them about their jobs, what they hope to do in their careers, and what they think needs to be changed within the department.

How Can Supervisors Continue to Nurture These Relationships?

Make sure they're accessible to their team members. Let staff know they have an open-door policy. Walk around the department and see what folks are up to, but do so in a friendly way, not an "I'm keeping an eye on you because I don't trust you" way. Ask what can be done to help them perform their jobs to the best of their abilities.

What Should Supervisors Do to Become Good Leaders?

Keep asking questions. They won't be able to find the answers unless they find out what needs to be improved, what challenges staff face, and so forth. Also, they need to be the type of employee they want their staff to be. No more complaining. No more showing up late. No more coming up with creative excuses as to why something can't be done. If they want their staff to be upbeat, they must be upbeat. In other words, a supervisor can't ask staff to be something they're not willing to be as well.

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