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Training for first-level supervisors in public social service organizations

Remine, Daniel Calven, D.S.W.

City University of New York, 1994

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TRAINING FOR FIRST-LEVEL SUPERVISORS
IN PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

by

DANIEL REMINE

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Social Welfare in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Social Welfare, The City University of New York.

1994

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Abstract

TRAINING FOR FIRST-LEVEL SUPERVISORS
IN PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

by

Daniel Remine

Adviser: Michael Smith

In public social service agencies first-level supervisors are key in converting policy objectives to actual services. Their positions stress administration and production rather than education and consultation roles emphasized in social work literature.

First-level supervisors in a large public social service agency were surveyed as to their knowledge of various aspects of supervision and the importance of these aspects. A smaller group was questioned as to their activities during a normal work week. The results of these surveys and a broad review of supervisory literature inside and outside of social work were incorporated into the development of a training program for first-level supervisors. This program consists of modules on leadership, planning, conflict management/procedures, communication/motivation, environment, and training. It is adaptable to first-level supervisors in any public social service agency.

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Daniel Remine, Dec. 1993

Table of Contents

Title Page	i
Copyright Page	ii
Approval Page	iii
Abstract	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
Chapter 1: Problem Formulation and Review Of Related Literature	1
Chapter 2: Unmet Need	39
Chapter 3: Methodology, Program Design, and Politics	67
Chapter 4: Training Needs Assessment (TNA) for First Level Supervisors	74
Chapter 5: Implications and Recommendations	146
Appendix A: First Level Supervisors Training Needs Assessment	183
Appendix B: Supervisory Activity During a Thirty-Five Hour Week	189
Appendix C: Leadership Module	192
Appendix D: Conflict Management/Procedural Module	237
Appendix E: Communication/Motivation Module	314
Appendix F: Environmental Module	375
Appendix G: Planning Module	413
Appendix H: Training Module	460
Bibliography:	478

CHAPTER 1: PROBLEM FORMULATION AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction: The Problem

Public social service agencies are the major provider of social and support services in the United States. These are hierarchal organizations with services provided by line staff under first-level supervisors. These supervisors are crucial in translating policy into action, in assuring that services are provided in an appropriate manner. First-level supervisors in public social service agencies differ in a variety of ways from supervisors in voluntary agencies. These differences have to do with:

- their own background (generally without training in supervision or social work)
- the staff they supervise (generally minimally trained with high turnover but in a civil service system that restricts flexibility)
- the kind of work they supervise (with emphasis on production within set procedures)
- the kind of organization in which they work (on a formal level hierarchical and rule driven but informally circumventing much of its hierarchy, many of its rules)

- their position in the hierarchy (relating to both formal and informal structures and processes)

Traditional social work supervisory training is only partially applicable to first-level supervisors in public social service agencies. An assessment of the circumstances and training needs of these supervisors and the development of training modules generically relevant to this type of supervision will contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of public social service agencies.

First-level Supervisors in Public Social Service Agencies

First-level supervisors in public social service agencies can be described as supervising small groups of line staff (no more than ten) who directly or indirectly provide social services to clients or maintain accountability to the community. They work within large government organizations providing mandated social and support services.

In defining first-level supervisors in public social service agencies it is important to define:

- where they stand in the organization
- what they do
- whom they supervise
- where they came from

White¹ describes supervisors as separated from consumers only by direct service workers. Christensen et al.² note that first-level supervisors are responsible for supervising their staff to see that they meet goals set by upper level management. They go on to describe how the job of first-level supervisors is defined by the goals and culture of the organization. Stephen White³ notes the middleman role of supervisors - linking upper-level management and line staff. Hoshino⁴ adds that supervisors use discretion in implementing organizational directives. They are the individuals most immediately responsible for translating the broad values and immediate directives of the organization into guidance and supervision for direct service staff. Like most good translators, they are not literal.

-
1. Robert W. White, "Motivation Reconsidered: The Concept of Competence," The Psychological Review, 66 (September 1959), pp. 86-95.
 2. Christina Christensen, Thomas W. Johnson, John E. Stinson, Supervising (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1982), pp.494-495.
 3. Stephen White. Managing Health and Human Service Programs: A Guide for Managers (New York: The Free Press, 1981), p. 28.
 4. George Hoshino, "Social Services: The Problem of Accountability," in Social Administration, Simon Slavin, (Ed.), (New York: Hawthorne Press, CSWE, 1978), pp. 299-310.

Are supervisors managers? Yes, and something more. Morgan⁵ defines administrative management and supervisory management as differing primarily in degree. Bunker and Wijnberg⁶ put first-level supervisors on the bottom rung of the management ladder. Christensen et al.⁷ list management functions on a continuum and note various ways that supervisors are involved in them all. Williamson⁸ notes that supervision, while an integral part of administration, is essentially a matter of the relationship of people. She believes that supervision aims for more effective effort on the part of workers to provide services and come closer to the goals of the organization.

What are the basic objectives of first-level supervision in public social service agencies? They are:

- to get the work done through staff
- to keep staff relatively happy

-
5. James Morgan, Principles of Administrative and Supervisory Management (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1973), pp. 10-11.
 6. Donald V. Bunker, Marion Wijnberg, Supervision and Performance: Managing Professional Work in Human Service Organizations. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1988), pp.79-116.
 7. Christina Christensen, op. cit., 1982, pp. 6-3.
 8. Mary Williamson. Supervision: Principles and Methods (New York: Women's Press, 1950), p. 23.

This combination of production and support/satisfaction objectives is noted by Stephen White⁹, Christensen et al.¹⁰, and Thompson¹¹. As will be noted these objectives tie into those public social service agencies. Those bureaucracies aim to provide uniform services to a large number of people. They do so through a system which emphasizes adherence to rules and a relatively passive staff.

Books on supervision naturally enumerate supervisory functions. The following working list is most relevant to first-level supervisors in public social service agencies.

- communicate with superiors, staff, etc.
- interpret and implement administrative directives
- organize and assign work to be done by staff within the framework set by superiors
- monitor work regarding problems, completion, timeliness, quantity, quality
- lead staff, influence their activities towards goal achievement
- develop staff, orient, train, evaluate

9. Stephen White, op. cit., 1982, p.23.

10. Christina Christensen, op. cit., 1981, pp. 20-35.

11. J. Thompson, "Pittsburgh Committee Report on Common and Uncommon Elements in Administration," in Common Elements in Administration, E. Reed (Ed.), (Columbus, Ohio: NCSW Welfare, 1965), pp. 58-73.

- negotiate with staff, superiors, consumers
- motivate staff regarding production and cooperation
- implement the organization's personnel policies
- discipline, correct staff behavior through set administrative formats
- handle complaints, deal with staff problems affecting work.

Whom do first-level supervisors in public social service agencies supervise? They supervise line staff who passed civil service tests or (more likely) had sufficient educational and experiential qualifications to qualify for their jobs. For the most part line staff are hired based on education and experience rather than from civil service lists which are more common for promotion to higher level positions. Very few line staff positions in public social service agencies require either education or experience in social work.

Peter Pecura and Michael Austin¹² have documented the declassification of public social service jobs, a policy that reduces education and work experience requirements. This downgrading results in a staff with differing degrees

12. Peter Pecura, Michael Austin, "Declassification of Social Service Jobs: Issues and Strategies," Social Work, 28 (November-December 1983) pp. 421-426.

of background in, and commitment to, social work.

Kadushin¹³ notes two types of staff supervised. The first are individuals who have chosen a career in social work, been educated in that area, and who have some commitment to social work values. The other, much larger, group is concentrated in public social service agencies. They may have social work titles and perform social work tests but they have taken their positions out of necessity, have no education in social work, and have no commitment to social work values. Add to this second group individuals in support and accountability positions and you have described line staff in public social service agencies.

For many individuals line positions are first-step employment. They are coming out of high school/college, off of welfare, back into the job market. Their careers in public social service agencies may be short as they move on to other jobs, back to school, etc. The length of their careers is affected by both push and pull factors. Many public social service jobs are stressful and engender high turnover rates. For example, about one third of Casemanagers at the Division of Aids Services left in nineteen ninty-one¹⁴.

13. Alfred Kadushin, Supervision in Social Work, Second Edition. (New York, Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 39.

14. Internal Report, Division of Aids Services, Human Resources Administration, City of New York, 1992.

Individuals also leave public agencies if opportunities are better elsewhere. With the ongoing recession the relative security of line positions in public social service agencies makes them more attractive.

Some individuals go into line positions in public social service agencies and stay there. While the pay is relatively low, these jobs generally are secure. They are structured and do not demand a great amount of individual initiative. Many line positions are nine-to-five jobs which do not make great demands on the individuals who hold them. As one long time Office Aide described her job, "It don't pay much but it's steady. It gives me time for the rest of my life."

Where do first-level supervisors in public social service agencies come from? Few are hired directly into supervisory positions. Almost exclusively they have come up from line positions. They may have been promoted provisionally based on their work. Sooner or later they all must pass civil service tests based on experience and knowledge. They may be supervising in the same department where they were line workers, sometimes in the same unit. However, considering the generic nature of supervisory titles, they have an excellent chance of being placed in another department. For example, forty six individuals were recently promoted to Supervisor I, Welfare and assigned to the Division of Aids

Services. Eighteen of these new supervisors had no previous experience in serving people with Aids¹⁵.

Scarfield¹⁶ notes that many degreed social workers are reluctant to leave clinical work for supervision. This pattern is not replicated among new supervisors in public social service agencies.

First, most first-level supervisors in public social service agencies do not have degrees and are not acculturated in social work.

Second, direct service in public social service agencies stresses uniformity, production, and tight schedules. It does not hold the attraction of direct service (especially clinical services) in voluntary agencies, more loosely scheduled with greater emphasis on worker autonomy. Many new supervisors express relief in leaving direct services. One noted, "Better the same old thing with five crazy workers than thirty-six crazy clients."

Third, supervisors in public social service agencies have made a choice and have taken actions to get where they are.

15. Internal Report, op. cit., 1992.

16. Raymond M. Scarfield, "Clinician to Administrator: Difficult Role Transition," Social Work 26 (November-December 1981), pp. 495-501.

They have impressed superiors, and have applied for, studied for, and taken civil service tests. They may reflect sentimentally about their days as line staff but they have little desire to return.

Finally, most new supervisors already have been "in the system" for several years. They have become at least somewhat acculturated to the way public social services operate. They have worked long enough to be vested in pension plans. If they have not become complete bureaucrats, they are on the way.

Public Social Service Agencies

Since the nineteen thirties the vast majority of social and support services in the United States have been provided by public social service agencies. Public assistance, medical assistance, and Food Stamps are provided exclusively by these organizations as are almost all child and adult protective services, child support enforcement, and probationary services. A substantial percentage of day care, foster care, and mental health services come from public social service agencies, especially in the south and west.

Over the last fifteen years society has identified a number of new social problems - notably homelessness. Societal awareness of and response to other problems - child ne-

glect/abuse and child support for examples - has heightened. While voluntary agencies have been involved in dealing with these problems it is public agencies who have ended up with the most problematic of the homeless and which are mandated to enforce child abuse and child support laws.

Probably the best way to describe public social service agencies is to compare them to their major counterpart in the field: voluntary social service agencies. Public agencies:

- are bigger
- employ more staff for a greater variety of jobs
- have larger budgets
- cover larger geographic service areas
- serve more clients
- offer a greater variety of services

The services of public agencies depend on legislative mandate. Both the focus of services and eligibility requirements for them can change rapidly. A good example of such dramatic change would be the recent move in New Jersey to limit public assistance payments to women who have more than two children. Voluntary agencies may change programs and eligibility standards but this change generally is more evolutionary.

Public agencies do not have the immediate governing oversight that boards provide for voluntary agencies. Once legislative mandates are set public agency administrators interpret and implement them without much ongoing oversight from executive or legislative branches of government. On the other hand the boards of voluntary agencies provide continuous monitoring through program implementation and operation.

Public agencies have a much broader potential client population. Anyone in society who meets eligibility requirements and asks for (or is legally mandated for) services must be served. Public agencies may (and do) make it hard to find and maintain eligibility for services. Nevertheless they cannot develop waiting lists or close intake. As Lewis¹⁷ notes, voluntary agencies also have broad mandates and through selected inefficiency they limit their clientele. However their mandates are more limited to begin with as their mission statements generally restrict clients to particular groups (Catholics, the blind, etc.) or people with particular problems (victims of incest, people with Aids, alcoholics, etc.).

17. Harold Lewis, "Management in the Non-Profit Social Service Organization, In Social Administration. Simon Slavin (Ed.), New York: Hawthorne Press, CSWE, 1978. pp. 8-14.

Individual public agencies generally offer a greater variety of services than individual voluntary agencies. Almost no voluntary agencies provide supportive services including:

- public assistance
- Food Stamps
- medical assistance insurance

In addition public agencies (depending on the locality) provide some to all of other support services including:

- foster care
- day care
- adoption
- preventive services
- mental health services

Public agencies provide most or all of corrective services including:

- probation
- child support enforcement
- protective services for adults
- protective services for children

Services provided by public agencies generally are more quantitatively measured than those provided by voluntary agencies. The services lend themselves to quantification (number of public assistance applications, time before initial investigation of child abuse cases) more than the counseling and training services which voluntary agencies are more likely to provide.

Public agencies generally have lower educational and experiential requirements for staff. A survey of annual reports from thirty eight states by the author found that no state requires more than a high school diploma for eligibility workers in public assistance, medical assistance, or Food Stamps¹⁸. The Human Resources Administration, City of New York,¹⁹ requires no more than a college diploma for caseworkers handling extremely sensitive child neglect/abuse cases or counseling and developing service plans for people with Aids. It may be argued that many services offered by public agencies require clerical, investigative, and monitoring rather than social work skills. It also may be argued that public agency staff perform more rote tasks detailed in

18. Review by Daniel Remine of annual reports from thirty eight state departments of social services, HRA Library, May 1993.

19. Announcement for Civil Service Application for Caseworkers, #2593, Human Resources Administration, June 25, 1993.

procedures, have less discretion, and make fewer decisions. Finally it may be argued that voluntary agencies are hiring less social work experienced and educated staff than they once did. However they still hire more than public agencies and are more likely to use them in sensitive, direct service positions.

Public agencies are more likely to offer their greater variety of services under a balkinized administrative structure. Some states and localities (the City of New York, for example) have an umbrella public social service agency with most if not all services under it. Others (the State of Tennessee,²⁰ for example) have separate public social service agencies for support (public assistance, medical assistance, Food Stamps) and services (to adults and children). Whatever the division, public agencies generally still are large organizations offering a variety of services through different departments in different localities. These departments and localities may be under the same directives and rules (especially with regard to personnel). However each has it's own clientele, power base, friends, and enemies. Each department and locality is likely to compete with others in the same public agency for power, influence, and resources.

20. Tennessee State Dept. of Social Services, Annual Report 1992.

Public agencies are under civil service rules. Most of them also are unionized. As will be noted later, the influence of civil service and of unions has declined in the last twenty years. However they still will affect the assignment, promotion, and treatment of staff in ways not commonly found in voluntary agencies.

Public agencies have more extensive bureaucratic structures and procedures than voluntary agencies. Their size results in more levels of administration and oversight. Public agency's services are based on legal mandates and administrative directives which specify what can and cannot be done in individual situations from the purchase of paper to the service of clients. These mandates and directives stress equality in services to clients, further limiting discretion on individual cases. Public agencies compensate for less educated and experienced staff with written procedures to cover almost every possibility. In the Human Resources Administration, City of New York, it is said that there is a procedure for everything and a final procedure forbidding anything for which there is no procedure. Bureaucratic structure and procedures also influence accountability. There is an obsession with paperwork, with recording what was done and how often rather than what was the result. "Doing the numbers" is a major task for staff in public social service agencies.

This description of public agency administrative structure fits Kotin's and Sharaf's²¹ description of a "tight" administrative style. This style, related to the military model, emphasizes hierarchical structure and administration. It includes:

- clear cut lines of authority and responsibility
- an orderly and hierarchial chain of command through which communications flow up and down without skipping levels
- a reliance on formal communications (regular meetings, reports, printed forms, etc.)
- formal expressions of power (hearings, written notifications of promotions, dismissals, etc.)
- reliance on explicit written rules or, on their absence, tradition

Zaleznik²² describes this style as bureaucratic with an emphasis on orderliness, equality, and proportionality.

21. Joel Kotin, Myron Sharaf, "Management Sucession and Administrative Sytles", In Social Administration, Simon Slavin (Ed.), (New York: Hawthorne Press, CSWE, 1978), pp. 149-168.

22. Abraham Zaleznik, Human Dilemnas of Leadership (New York, Harper and Row, 1967) pp. 30-55.

However, as Hoshino²³ and Hanlan²⁴ note, social problems demand some discretion on the part of individuals and organizations trying to solve them. Individual departments and localities, first-level supervisors and line staff utilize discretion in deciding eligibility for and provision of services. The amount of discretion exercised increases in:

- newer departments (the Division of Aids Services in the Human Resources Administration, City of New York, for example) which lack procedural overlay and administrative administrative tradition
- dispersed localities serving different communities
- departments where there has been a major change in emphasis (public assistance's shift from financial support to moving clients into employment).

The devil is in the details - the details of implementation. In public social service agencies implementation often fosters a looser, administrative style - one which

23. George Hoshino, "Social Services: the Problem of Accountability", In Social Administration, Simon Slavin (Ed.), (New York: Hawthorne Press, CSWE, 1978), pp. 299-310.

24. Archie Hanlan, "Counteracting Problems of Bureaucracy in Public Welfare," in Selected Readings for Casework Supervisors in Public Agencies, Ann Arcaro, J.K. Williams (Eds.) (New York: MSS Educational Publishing Co., 1970), pp. 55-61.

Zaleznik²⁵ describes as circumventive. It provides "wiggle room" for local administrators and staff to implement or subvert mandates and directives. This is Kotin's and Sharaf's²⁶ "loose" administrative style with fluid lines of authority and communications. It is characterized by:

- absence in many areas of clearly designated authority and responsibility
- tolerance of role ambiguity and role diffusion
- frequent bypassing of chain of command in communication and authority
- informal exercise of power
- relatively little reliance on rules and tradition

In public agencies a tight, bureaucratic style reflects the way things are supposed to be. A loose, circumventive style generally reflects the way things really are. There is an uneasy coexistence between these two styles with one or the other predominating in different parts of administration, under different personalities, and in different situations.

25. Abraham Zaleznick, op. cit., 1967, p. 23.

26. Joel Kotin, Myron Sharaf, "Management Succession and Administrative Styles", In Social Administration, Simon Slavin (Ed.), (New York: Hawthorne Press, CSWE, 1978). pp. 149-168.

**Setting: The Human Resources Administration,
City of New York**

The Human Resources Administration, City of New York (HRA) is one of the largest public social service organizations in the United States. With 28,956 employees and a budget of over six billion dollars it directly provides a wide variety of services, including financial assistance, medical assistance, food stamps, protective and preventive services, foster care, temporary shelters, child care, employment counseling, family services, Head Start, services to people with Aids (PWA's), information and referral, etc. These services are supported by units providing construction, maintenance, security, transportation, planning, training, management information, legal services, accounting, eligibility verification, etc.* In December 1992²⁷ HRA:

* In addition to services provided by its own staff, HRA contracts out to over 300 organizations for a variety of direct and support services. In this description, all staff described are HRA employees. Figures on services include both service provided by HRA and contracted out. It should be noted that, with the exception of day care and foster care (where there is approximately an even split), the services described overwhelmingly are provided by HRA staff.

27. HRA Facts, Jan. 1993.

- provided public assistance to 1,053,654 people
- provided medical assistance for 1,624,218 people
- certified food stamps for 1,273,654 individuals
- supervised 48,415 children in foster care
- responded to 3,947 reports of child abuse/neglect
- provided case management services to 12,059 people with Aids
- provided day care for 43,179 children
- sheltered 6,915 individuals and 5,494 families
- placed 983 individuals in jobs
- collected \$12,011,000 in child support payments

Over the last decade, New York City has seen the evolution of new social problems (homelessness, addicted infants, Aids) and the steady growth of existing problems (family instability, child abuse/neglect, teen pregnancies, etc.). HRA has responded with new and expanded services. New services have been developed for people with Aids, kinship foster care families, families re-housed from shelters, adolescents in foster care, etc. HRA has expanded protective services for children and adults, child care, employment services and shelters. To support these services, it has increased transportation, construction, legal programs and management information services.

With the addition of new services, HRA has become less centralized. Officially, all HRA divisions adhere to the same rules regarding personnel administration, planning, financial reporting, etc. Officially they all strive to communicate and cooperate to provide social services to New Yorkers. In reality, each division of HRA has its own clientele, power base, friends, and enemies. Each is an environment unique in its staff and managers, in its emphasis on expertise, production, quality, creativity, structure, etc. Its analogy in history might be the Holy Roman Empire - held together, at best, loosely; at worst, not at all.

Since 1985, HRA staffing has increased by nearly 7,100 to supply its new and expanded divisions. New employees also have been hired to fill positions left vacant by resignations and retirements.

A substantial majority of HRA's new employees appear to be drawn from three groups. HRA is employing large numbers of new high school and college graduates. Through its employment programs, HRA is hiring many of its present and former public assistance clients. For many individuals from both groups, HRA is the beginning of their employment careers. It is their first long-term experience with the world of

work. HRA also is hiring many new immigrants.²⁸ These individuals may have little experience with American culture or with working in a social welfare bureaucracy.

HRA employees always have been a mosaic of ethnicities, cultures and lifestyles. That mosaic has added pieces, with the addition of a large number of non-traditional (Asian, African, South American) immigrants and openly gay and lesbian staff. While our mosaic is gorgeous, it poses new problems of interpersonal relations in the workplace.

Relatively few social workers are employed at HRA. There are very few positions for which a social work degree (BSW or MSW) is required. Those individuals who have degrees frequently leave. They go to work for voluntary agencies or start private practices -- career paths promoted by many schools of social work. HRA staff are not trained in social work values. Aside from some instruction offered to child welfare staff, there is very little training done in this area.

28. While figures on new immigrant hires are not immediately available, an example will suffice. Of the one hundred and ten case managers hired by the Division of Aids Services during April - June 1993, seventy percent were born and educated outside of the United States, primarily in Africa.

First-Level Supervisors at the Human Resources Administration

Who are the first-level supervisors in HRA? One way to discover who fits this description is to review Civil Service job titles. The most common supervisory titles are:

- Supervisor I, Welfare (Sup, W)
- Supervisor I, Social Work (Sup, SW)
- Office Associate (OA)
- Principal Administrative Assistant I (PAA I)

Generally, both categories of Supervisor I (Sup I) work with staff providing social services and case management. Office Associates (OA) and Principal Administrative Assistants I (PAA I) supervise staff offering income maintenance, support services, and accountability. However, these are broad-banded titles with job descriptions encompassing a variety of tasks. Individuals with these titles can be shifted among direct and indirect services and accountability.

A variety of titles on the same level, while smaller in number, also may have first-level supervision duties. They include Staff Analyst, Computer Specialist, Senior Houseparent, Motor Vehicle Supervisor, Construction Supervisor and Auditor. Many individuals in the titles noted above perform supervisory functions; some do not.

A small number of individuals, while in higher-level titles, primarily perform the duties of first-level supervisor. These individuals may be found in titles including Principal Administrative Assistant II, Principal Administrative Assistant III, and Supervisor II. While these are potential candidates for training, they will not be considered at the level of priority of individuals with first-level supervisors performing supervisory duties.

Whatever their titles, first level-supervisors need to be further divided into two groups: permanent and provisional. Permanent supervisors have passed a title-appropriate Civil Service test, been drawn from a list of those who passed, and been appointed to their title. Their titles are secure. Provisionals either have not taken a test or have not been appointed from the resulting list. Their titles and positions are much less secure. It is much easier for upper-level management to demote them to a lower-level position or even let them go. Since most permanents were provisionals first, they generally have more experience as supervisors.

Civil service tests for supervisory positions are given infrequently (every five or six years). First-level supervisory positions open up even when there is no civil service list from which to fill them. For the most part these positions are filled with staff provisionally promoted from

line positions. Thus there are always large numbers of provisional first-level supervisors. How many first-level supervisors are employed by HRA? The Office of Personnel Administration (OPA) has printouts for the four major titles which by definition perform supervisory functions. They are listed in Table 1 on the next page.

For the individuals in other titles who may have supervisory responsibilities, an aggregate estimate can be put together. It consists of some relatively hard estimates based on the author's knowledge of some titles (Staff Analyst, Computer Specialist) and some "guesstimates" regarding other titles. Altogether, it can be estimated that there are, conservatively 1,200 additional first-level supervisors (not in the four major titles). Adding this number to the figures for the major titles, it can be estimated that HRA has approximately 7,300 first-level supervisors. How much experience do these first-level supervisors have? Accurate and complete figures are not available. OPA printouts note when individuals were appointed but not their time spent as provisionals. The author informally has monitored the time in position of the supervisors coming through the Essential Supervisory Skills (ESS) courses previously offered by HRA. Their range was from no experience up to twenty years. It is the author's estimate that about half of supervisors in the ESS course have less than two years of supervisory

TABLE 1

Most Civil Service Titles
For First-Level Supervisors in HRA*

<u>Title</u>	<u>Status</u>					
	<u>Permanent</u>		<u>Provisional</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>n</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Office Associate	584	(9)	1,683	(28)	2,267	(37)
Principal Administrative Assistant I	827	(14)	1,095	(18)	1,922	(32)
Supervisor I, Welfare	1,455	(24)	328	(5)	1,783	(29)
Supervisor I, Social Work	<u>77</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>129</u>	<u>(2)</u>
TOTALS:	2,943	(48)	3,158	(52)	6,101	(100)

* figures based on August 1991 computer printout

experience. The substantial percentage of provisionals in the four major supervisory titles (52%) is another indicator of the number of less-experienced supervisors in HRA.

One way to describe first-level supervisors in HRA is by the three basic kinds of work that they supervise. Staff supervised primarily may be dealing directly with clients in the provision or arrangement of services - classic social work. They may be in such areas as shelters, day care, employment services, foster care, case management, and information and referral.

Supervised staff may provide services indirectly, not working with clients but rather with direct service staff and administration. They may be in such areas as office support services, records, legal, data processing, construction, maintenance, food services, transportation, supplies, security, recruitment, and consultation with programs.

Finally, staff supervised may be primarily in eligibility and accountability roles. They work with a client only regarding eligibility and/or relate to funders and mandators to account for how funds are spent and services provided. They are in areas including income maintenance, medical assistance, food stamp eligibility, child support enforcement, financial management, budget, and contract monitoring.

These kinds of work overlap to some degree within offices and even in individuals. However, most staff and their supervisors focus primarily on one of these three areas.

First-level supervisors can be described by where they work. While the number of supervisors in each division changes constantly, it is safe to say that a considerable majority work in Income Maintenance (IM), the Medical Eligibility Program (MEP), and the Child Welfare Administration (CWA). These divisions have predominated supervisory titles and patterns of supervision.

Most supervisors in IM are PAA I working with five or six staff who verify and re-verify eligibility for public assistance and make changes in public assistance budgets. Most supervisors in MEP are PAA I working with five or six staff who verify and re-verify eligibility for medical assistance and handle billings for that system.

Most supervisors in CWA are Sup I-W or Sup I-SW who work with five or six staff who provide direct services to children and foster and natural families.

Finally, each division has a smaller number of first-level supervisors in indirect service roles. They generally are

PAA I or OA who work with from one to four staff to provide a variety of support services.

Knowledge of/Training for First-Level Supervisors at HRA

How much and what kinds of supervisory knowledge do first-level supervisors at HRA have when they become supervisors?

Individuals become supervisors in one of two ways;

- they are promoted provisionally by upper-level managers in their office
- they pass civil service tests and are promoted to/made permanent in supervisory positions

Offices may have openings for supervisors because of promotions, resignations, etc. Frequently there is no civil service list of supervisors to fill these positions. Management has the option of promoting line staff on a provisional basis. Individuals are promoted provisionally because they were good line staff. In the author's discussions with provisional supervisors they were unanimous in reporting that they were promoted because of what they had done as line staff rather than because of any supervisory skills. Individuals provisionally promoted were in the right place at the right time - in offices when supervisory vacancies occurred and someone was needed to fill them.

First-level supervisors with civil service status have passed qualifying tests which included some questions on supervision. However the major foci of civil service tests are technical abilities and knowledge of rules and regulations. In a review of six civil service tests for three of the four major supervisory titles (Sup I-W, PAA I, OA) the author found that only twenty three percent of the questions concerned supervisory skills.

In a perverse way this is logical. The formal, bureaucratic side of HRA is interested in what is done and whether it is done within rules and procedures. There is less interest in the interpersonal, differential, adaptive supervisory skills needed for implementation - for actually getting the work done and keeping staff happy.

What kind of supervisory training do first-level supervisors at HRA receive once they are on the job? In abolishing the Office of Staff Development and Training (OSDT) in 1991, HRA dropped all generic courses in supervisory skills and informed each department that they were responsible for developing and implementing their own supervisory training. No guidelines or planning assistance in developing such courses were offered. Many departments, especially the smaller ones offer no courses. Courses offered by other departments generally are mixes of technical and supervisory skills.

Courses do not reach all first-level supervisors in any department within HRA.

HRA has never done an organization-wide needs assessment of the training needs of first-level supervisors. The generic supervisory course that it previously offered through OSDT was based on a 1979 training needs assessment of one department - the Office of Child Support.

HRA has never required that all first-level supervisors attend supervisory training. If supervisors attend courses it is because:

- management in individual offices or departments (the Division of Aids Services for example) requires that all new supervisors receive training
- management in offices identify supervisors who are having problems and send them for training
- individual supervisors decide they need training, learn about courses, and secure permission to attend
- trainers in a few departments aggressively market courses to individual offices.

Until 1991 HRA did have an organizational-wide training component, Office of Staff Development and Training, which

offered a generic course in supervisory skills for first-level supervisors.

The course, Essential Supervisory Skills (ESS), had five modules:

- Communication; for trainees to be able to define effective communications, identify problems in communications, and utilize various styles of supervisory communications
- Training; for trainees to be able to identify the roles of supervisors in on-the-job training, to know the principles of learning involved, to be able to assess the training needs of individual staff members, to design training to meet these needs
- Discipline; for trainees to identify the roles of supervisors in discipline problems, to know what is (and is not) a discipline problem, to be able to utilize HRA's disciplinary procedures, to know alternatives to these procedures
- Complaint Handling/Grievances; for trainees to know the grievance procedure and the supervisor's role in it, to know how to prevent complaints or handle them if they occur
- Leadership; for trainees to identify the qualities of effective leadership, to know the appropriate use

of various leadership styles, to know the steps in decision-making.

In the last year of OSDT operations 420 supervisors completed this course.

The other technical/bureaucratic courses offered for first-level supervisors included Absence Control, a one-day course which stresses HRA procedures regarding attendance and punctuality. In the last year of operations, 210 supervisors completed this course. The two-day course, Helping Supervisors Deal with Troubled Workers, emphasizes personnel procedures and HRA's services for problem staff. It was completed by 98 supervisors in the last year of operations. Non-Managerial Performance Evaluation (one day) covers the evaluation of line staff and was completed by 250 supervisors in the last year of OSDT operations.

Even before OSDT was disbanded, major departments within HRA--notably Income Maintenance and Child Welfare Administration--offered supervisory training. The most comprehensive course is offered by IM.²⁹ The course, Overview of Management Skills for Supervisors, was developed by Buffalo

29. Income Maintenance Training, Overview of Management Skills for Supervisors. (Buffalo, N. Y.: Center for Development in Human Services, Buffalo State College, 1988).

State College's Center of Development in Human Services in 1988. It is offered over four days and covers:

- Roles and Context of Supervision (job descriptions, administrative structure and goals of HRA)
- Leadership (styles and appropriate use, how leadership can improve productivity, delegation)
- Communications (nature, structure, barriers, assessing communication performance)
- Feedback (positive and negative, how feedback can reduce staff errors)
- Evaluation (key steps, positive and negative aspects, evaluation to reduce staff errors)
- Managing conflict (assessing situations, actions to manage conflict among staff)
- Time management (establishing priorities, managing work flow)
- Conducting effective meetings
- Problem solving (defining problems, exploring solutions, developing plans of action).

This course is not required and, according to IM Training)³⁰ about half of their new and experienced supervisors have taken it.

30. Interview with Steve Ferrer, Director of Training for Income Support Services, Jan 4, 1993.

Overview of Management Skills for Supervisors has some strong points. However it lacks emphasis on a number of points which may be important to first-level supervisors in HRA and other large public social service agencies.

Supervisors need training to develop a framework to understand the particular office in which they work - formal structure of authority, informal centers of power, how procedures are carried out, etc. This framework is particularly important for first-level supervisors on the boundary between directives and implementation. As Fenn³¹ notes, they need to know where power lies and how to access it.

Supervisors also need to learn how to analyze their staff - for individual and group strengths and weaknesses, cohesiveness, etc. Clearly, a major requirement for differential supervision is to distinguish among staff being supervised.

Clarity of expectations is crucial to supervisors. Training can help supervisors define what they can expect from subordinates and superiors and what subordinates and superiors can expect of them.

31. Daniel Fenn, "Finding Where the Power Lies in Government", Harvard Business Review, 24 (September/October 1979), pp. 144-153.

Supervisors may need training in how to communicate with, accommodate, and possibly manipulate bosses as well as staff. They need to be convinced that their positions in the hierarchy involve relating up as well as down.

Knowledge of rules and procedures involving discipline, grievances, and possibly other personnel matters is important to first-level supervisors. These are not pleasant matters but knowing how to handle them is good insurance for any supervisor.

Supervisors need to know how to plan and on what level. Before looking at delegation, time management, etc., they must define the parameters in which they operate and what they can and cannot do.

Supervisors cannot depend on others to train their staff. They must know something about adult education and be able to differentiate their staffs' needs and adaptability to do on-the-job training.

Finally any training must see first-level supervisors not just as part of the bureaucratic structure but as part of an adaptive and sometimes circumventive system of implementation. Supervisors need to be able to assess how much flexibility they have and when they can use it. Knowing one's

"wiggle room" is crucial to getting the supervisory job done and gaining satisfaction from it.

Overall training for first-level supervisors in HRA is offered in some but not all of its divisions. The training provided varies by division. In general it is rather static and does not emphasize analysis and adaptation in an environmental context. Even more importantly, it does not help first-level supervisors make the behavior, attitude, and knowledge necessary for their positions. As will be noted in the next chapter, such changes are crucial for new or experienced supervisors.

CHAPTER 2: UNMET NEED**Problems in Transition to First-Level Supervision**

The transition of individuals into first-level supervisor in a public social service agency involves three major changes:

- changes in behavior (what they do, to whom they relate)
- changes in attitude (what they think, perceive)
- changes in knowledge (what they need to know)

As in other transitions these changes may be made, partially made, or not made. New first-level supervisors, through training, guidance, and sheer luck, may make the changes in behavior, attitudes, and knowledge necessary to become good supervisors.

However as Middleman and Rhodes¹ note, supervisors may make some but not all of the changes. They may obtain knowledge, behave appropriately, but never really change their attitudes so that they are comfortable in the supervisory role. Supervisors may learn one way to lead, communicate, etc. and apply it in all situations. They may never learn how to

1. Ruth R. Middleman, Gary B. Rhodes, Competent Supervision: Making Imaginative Judgements. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1985) p. 51.

calibrate their behavior (in delegating, disciplining, motivating, etc.) to different staffs, superiors, office environments, and situations.

In the worst case they may become dysfunctional supervisors - never really making the behavioral, attitudinal and knowledge changes necessary to be good supervisors. However this does not mean that they get fired or demoted. In the civil service structure of public social service agencies once individuals have passed tests and been promoted to first-level supervisors it is very difficult to remove them from their positions. Management may find it easier to work around them than to remove them.

Thus first-level supervisors especially need training when they are new to their positions. However they are likely to need training during their supervisory careers to acquire knowledge, behavior, and attitudes that they lack and/or to change knowledge, behavior, and attitudes that have become dysfunctional.

Behavior

First-level supervision is ill defined in general and must be adapted to each specific situation. In Weatherley's²

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2. Richard Weatherley, Claudia Kottwitz, Denise Lishner, Kelley Reid, Grant Roset, Karen Wong, "Accountability of Social Service Workers at the Front Line", Social Service Review, 54 (4), 1980, pp. 556-571.

study of supervisors half said that they were unclear as to their role in the agency. Austin³ describes first-level supervision as having, "one foot in the work force and one foot in the management module, not being clearly associated with either." Towle⁴ describes supervisors as, "sub-administrators and supra-practitioners".

The definition of supervision in the social work literature has changed over time. Pettes⁵ notes that supervision in social service agencies started in the late nineteenth century as case based supervision to volunteers and untrained staff in settlement houses and other charitable organizations. This emphasis on education and tutoring continued even as more professionally trained staff began to enter the field. However with the rise of public social service in the nineteen thirties stress on the administrative role of supervisors became more prevalent. By nineteen

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3. Michael Austin, Supervisory Management for the Human Services, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1981), pp. 23.
 4. Charlotte Towle, "Role of Supervision in the Union of Cause and Function in Social Work", Social Service Review, 36 (4), 1962, pp. 396.411.
 5. Dorothy E. Pettes, Supervision in Social Work, (London: George Allen and Lenwin, Ltd., 1967), pp. 21-22.

sixty-three Towle⁶ defined supervision as, "an administrative process in the conduct of which staff development is a major concern". By the nineteen seventies the separation of income maintenance from social work in public agencies encouraged the administrative definition of supervision. Kadushin⁷ notes the ascendancy of administrative over supportive and training aspects of supervision. By nineteen eighty-seven, Irving Miller⁸, defining supervision in the Eighteenth Edition of the Encyclopedia of Social Work, put his definition in a situational context, "although supervisors usually carry out several functions, the particular style, content, and techniques associated with supervision grow out of the service to be delivered and the nature of the service itself".

Kadushin⁹ defines social work supervision as having three primary functions - administration, education, and support.

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6. Charlotte Towle, "The Place of Help in Supervision", Social Service Review, 37 (4), 1963, pp. 405-415.
 7. Alfred Kadushin, Supervision in Social Work, Second Edition, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), pp. 20-21.
 8. Irving Miller, "Supervision in Social Work", in R. Morris et. al. (Eds.) Encyclopedia of Social Work, 18th Issue. (New York: NASW, 1987) pp. 749.
 9. Alfred Kadushin, op. cit., 1985, p. 25.

However Middleman and Rhodes¹⁰ note that despite the social work literature's idealization of educational traditional supervision, the educational role is, "drifting towards extinction". The demands of support (keeping staff relatively contented) and especially of administration (getting the work done) are simply too great to allow for the master-apprentice roles of traditional social work supervision. This is especially the case in public social service agencies.

The overwhelming dominance of the administrative function, especially among first-level supervisors in public social service agencies is confirmed in several studies of how supervisors spend their time. Kadushin,¹¹ discussing a 1977 Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services study, notes that administrative tasks took up 60% of supervisors' time while training took up only 10%. Time for tasks related to staff support rarely was noted. Patti¹², studying individuals on a supervisory management level, noted that they primarily were involved in training and especially administrative functions related to the direct delivery of

10. Ruth R. Middleman, Gary B. Rhodes, op. cit., 1985, p. 27.

11. Alfred Kadushin, op. cit., 1985, p. 33.

12. Rino J. Patti, Social Welfare Administration: Managing Social Programs in a Developmental Context, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1983), p. 44.

services. Finally Poertner and Rapp,¹³ in a study of one hundred and nine supervisors in public child welfare, said that 80% on their time was spent on administrative management tasks with the remaining 20% divided between educational and supportive activities.

With more effort it might have been possible for the social work profession to promote the traditional trinity of supervisory responsibilities (administration, education, support) in public social service agencies. However the social work profession has gotten as far from public social service agencies as it can. Public social service agencies generally are not run by and, more important, not staffed by social workers. Patti and Austin¹⁴ decry a tendency towards the takeover of public agency administration by individuals from other professions. The loss of social work degreed staff in child welfare has been explored by Meyer¹⁵ and

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13. John Poertner, Charles Rapp, "What is Social Work Supervision?", Journal of Clinical Supervision, 1 (2) 1983, pp. 55-67.
 14. Rino J. Patti, Michael J. Austin, "Socializing the Direct Service Practitioner in the Ways of Supervisory Management", Administration in Social Work, 3 Fall, 1977, pp. 267-280.
 15. C. H. Meyer, "Staffing Issues in Child Welfare", in Child Welfare: Current Dilemmas, Future Direction, B. G. McGowan and W. Meezan (Eds.), (Itasca, Ill.: F. E. Peacock, 1983), pp. 479 - 502.

Samantrai.¹⁶ However, Trattner¹⁷ notes that social workers have been moving out of public agencies and into voluntary agencies and private practice since the nineteen forties.

By the nineteen eighties social work was moving away from meeting the basic needs of the poor and towards psychotherapy for the middle class. The increase in MSWs going into employee assistance programs and, more important, private practice, is a reflection of this trend. It also reflects the experience of the author who, as an adjunct professor of research and evaluation at several schools of social work in the New York area, had seven classes of MSW students survey themselves as to their career goals. Between nineteen seventy nine and nineteen eighty six the percentage of students planning to go into private practice steadily increased from 24% to 88%. Even more depressing a substantial portion of these students were attending school on scholarships from the Human Resources Administration, City of New York.

Specht and Courtney¹⁸ confirm and condemn the move of pro-

16. Krishma Samantrai, "Factors in the Decision to Leave: Retaining Social Workers with MSWs in Public Child Welfare", Social Work, 27 (September, 1992), pp. 454-458.

17. Walter Trattner, From Poor Law to Welfare State, Second Edition, (New York: The Free Press, 1979) pp. 127.

18. Harry Specht, Mark E. Courtney, Unfaithful Angels: How Social Work Has Abandoned It's Mission, (New York: The Free Press, 1993), pp 8-23.

fessional social workers towards psychotherapy for the middle class and their abandonment of the poor.

Another aspect of problems in behavior for first-level supervisors is how they identify themselves and are identified by others. Kadushin¹⁹ mentions problems in how first-level supervisors identify themselves. As line staff they had a firm sense of who they were and what they could do. That identity was confirmed by superiors, peers, and clients. Moving into their new position requires that supervisors dissolve their old identity and slowly develop a new one emphasizing supervisory traits. In building that new identity they have to work for confirmation from subordinates, peers, and superiors.

Direct service staff do not tell people what to do. Even if they are in client services they advise, consult, and guide but do not order. Supervisors advise, consult and guide their staff. However they also order them and can penalize them if orders are not followed. As one relatively experienced supervisors said, "I thought of myself as a nice guy. And all of a sudden I was bossing people, even yelling at them, chewing them out. What a downer it was." Kadushin²⁰ notes that with supervisory authority comes

19. Alfred Kadushin, op. cit., 1985, p. 298.

20. ibid. p 300.

responsibility. If work is not done/is done poorly by staff their supervisor bears responsibility.

Supervisors also have a larger and more diverse audience to satisfy. They are responsible for several caseloads/sets of customers. As a new supervisor of a HRA typing pool noted, "I used to work for three administrators. They were different but I learned what everybody wanted. Now my typists serve seventeen administrators. I've got to keep them all happy but I don't know them as well."

More is expected of first-level supervisors. Subordinates expect that they will be experts on the work at hand, offer moral support, and back up each subordinate in any disputes he/she has with peers, superiors, etc. Superiors expect that first-level supervisors will get work out of staff, maintain morale, and not bring problems to superiors unless absolutely necessary. Neither staffs' nor superiors' expectations are necessarily realistic. They often conflict. However they are all too common.

A first-level supervisor's performance is judged by more people. One supervisor in training noted, "When I was a driver if I got lost or goofed off maybe my foreman would find out but no one else. Now I'm in a fishbowl. My drivers

watch everything I do. If I goof up my boss hears about it quick".

Finally first-level supervisors have to explain to the people who do the work how administration wants it done. As Hoshino²¹ notes this implementation stage may change the emphasis or even the thrust of work. With little guidance, in different office environments, in different situations, supervisors must translate orders and procedures into what staff realistically can and will do. This translator role, poorly defined, often officially unrecognized, leaves first-level supervisors open to complaints from above and below.

Attitude

Middleman and Rhodes²² describe attitudinal problems in transitioning from line staff to first-level supervision which may have long-term implications. The first of these, use of authority, already has been mentioned but needs further discussion. New supervisors often are uncomfortable in directing and ordering staff. They accept their earned authority (as technical experts) but are less comfortable

21. George Hoshino, "Social Services: the Problem of Accountability", In Social Administration. Simon Slavin (Ed.), (New York: Hawthorne Press, CSWE, 1978) pp. 299-310.

22. Ruth R. Middleman, Gary B. Rhodes, op. cit., 1985 pp. 56-72.

with assigned authority (from upper-level management). They tend to see supervision as a process that compels and restrains staff rather than allowing them to grow. Patti et al.²³ confirm that the use of authority is the most difficult area of adjustment for individuals entering administrative jobs in social services. In the large, confusing, and often contradictory bureaucracies that public social service agencies often are, supervisors' attitudinal problems with authority is compounded with a lack of clarity as to how much authority they really have. Authority granted varies by office environment, personalities, situations, etc. First-level supervisors may react with passivity and apathy in leading their units and with a growing suspicion of management.

Most new supervisors will have an attitudinal problem in shifting from "one of us" (staff) to "one of them" (management). Kadushin²⁴ describes it as a shift from peer and collegiate norms (rapport, trust, expression) to instrumental norms (task-centered, focus on production and accountability). On a more personal level one HRA supervisor noted, "It's hard to be friends with someone you boss". Breaking

23. Rino J. Patti, et al., "From Direct Service to Administration: a Study of Social Workers Transitions from Clinical to Management Roles", Administration in Social Work, 3 (2), 1979, pp. 131-151.

24. Alfred Kadushin, op. cit., 1985, p. 295.

away from the old gang is complicated by the fact that the new gang (other supervisors) is a fluid and competitive group. There is turnover among first-level supervisors as individuals are promoted, retire, etc. Few experienced first-level supervisors have the time or inclination to be a mentor for newer peers. Supervisors are by nature more active and competitive--they would not have been promoted otherwise. They may be more interested in their own careers than in camaraderie. Supervisors do not have the regular contact that line staff (generally in units, sitting next to each other) have with each other. Feeling isolated, first-level supervisors may relate inappropriately with staff or try to operate existentially without relevant ties to staff, peers, or superiors.

Middleman and Rhodes²⁵ note problems in changing attitudes towards accountability and evaluation among supervisors. As line staff they were accountable for their work and probably made sure that work met their personal standards as well as office standards. They had intimate and complete knowledge of the cases/situations/customers with which they dealt. Now they are accountable for the work of a number of subordinates with different styles and standards and more knowledge of individual situations. They have to assure that all work

25. Ruth R. Middleman, Gary B. Rhodes, op. cit., 1985 p. 66.

is done and that it meets office standards rather than their personal standards. They have to tolerate workers with different styles and depend upon those workers to give them relevant information. Placed in this more impersonal, quantity oriented role many first-level supervisors feel that they have sold out.

Finally first-level supervisors may have problems adjusting to the fact that they are operating in different environments, on a different rung of the hierarchical ladder. Rather than simply relate up to their supervisor they must learn to relate down to subordinates, sideways to peers, other departments, etc., and up to superiors. They need to ascertain how their peers and superiors operate formally (hierarchical structure, communication channels, rules and regulations) and informally (centers of power, history, how rules are applied). They need to identify staff roles, norms, and cohesiveness. Learning this new environment is not enough. Since environments change rapidly, first-level supervisors' information and strategies must be updated constantly.

Knowledge

Kadushin²⁶ notes that the knowledge and skills that made first-level supervisors good line workers often are irrele-

26. Alfred Kadushin, op. cit., 1985, p. 296.

vant or even detrimental to their performance as supervisors. They need both a new knowledge base and skills in applying that knowledge differentially in varied situations. This knowledge base includes the rules and guidelines set by public social service agencies to govern staff relations and performance. It includes information on such areas as leadership, communication, training, motivation, conflict management, planning, assessing environments, etc. However this information must be tailored to the first-level supervisory position. Finally first-level supervisors need skills in how to apply this knowledge in a variety of situations and with varied personalities.

Many first-level supervisors in public social service agencies lack knowledge of many of the rules and regulations which these organizations have developed to guide staff relations and performance. HRA, for example, has a variety of complicated rules and procedures to meet most, if not all, situations that a supervisor might encounter. Included are guidelines and procedures regarding staff evaluation, grievances, discipline, referral for employment assistance programs, staff behavior, etc. There is no set process through which new first-level supervisors receive these procedures or are oriented to them. They may try to collect and read these procedures over time but often do not have all of them or time to absorb them. More frequently they

regard subjects such as discipline and grievances as problems they never will face and ignore them. One HRA supervisor, noting that she lacked many procedures and did not understand many of those she had noted, "It's bad enough to have to learn as I go along but nobody tells me what the rules are".

Yet public social service agencies' rules and procedures cover crucial tasks for first-level supervisors. A review of these tasks and problems in carrying them out is in order.

Staff should be evaluated by their supervisors at least annually. In HRA many supervisors, not having the relevant procedures or knowledge of how to implement them, fail to evaluate staff. Others evaluate their staff but in a cursory and often incorrect way.

Public social service agencies have complicated and detailed procedures to discipline staff. These procedures must be followed exactly if a disciplinary action is to be successful. Many supervisors do not have or understand disciplinary guidelines or their role in implementing them. Many are not aware of alternatives to the disciplinary process. The result is that first-level supervisors often do not know when to use discipline or use it inappropriately and/or incorrectly.

As unionized organizations, public social service agencies have specific grounds for grievances and delineations of management rights. Ignorance in these areas is common and puts supervisors at risk of provoking grievances and not knowing how to handle them.

Public social service agencies have broad guidelines regarding staff behavior. Some of these (attendance, ethical behavior) are applied uniformly over the organization. Others (dress code) often are written in a manner which allows different interpretations in different locales. Often first-level supervisors are not aware of these guidelines or how to apply them. Procedures for identifying troubled employees and referring them to mental health or employee assistance programs are common in public social service organizations. However their supervisors often do not know how or where to refer troubled employees.

Rules and procedures for HRA and other large public social service agencies generally are written for the whole organization. However they are applied in different departmental and office environments which influence which rules are applied and how. Even if first-level supervisors know the rules, they often come to grief by trying to apply them

without regard to the supports and constraints of their office environment.

Rules and procedures change to reflect new laws (regarding family leave, for example), union contracts, and changes in the administration of public social service agencies. Supervisors should receive notice of these changes. However, without the original procedures or knowledge of them, they often cannot incorporate these changes.

Finally first-level supervisors are not aware of or do not utilize the many options open to them as supervisors. Middleman and Rhodes²⁷ and Christensen et al.²⁸ note that many aspects of supervision are differential - that different methods are applicable depending on the situations and personalities involved. They add that the goals of supervision are relatively constant - get the work done and keep staff happy. Among the areas where this "constant goals, different methods" approach is applicable are:

- communications
- leadership
- motivation

27. Ruth R. Middleman, Gary B. Rhodes, op. cit., 1985, p. 297.

28. Christina Christenson, op. cit., 1982, pp 36-42.

- complaint handling
- delegation
- discipline
- training
- conflict management
- planning

In these areas first-level supervisors need to assess the specific situation, office environment, and personalities involved. They need to decide on which approach to utilize, monitor its success, and change it if necessary. They also should realize that staff, superiors, and situations will change over time and different approaches may be necessary.

Even in large, bureaucratic, rule defined public social service agencies first-level supervisors have some leeway to try different options in leading, motivating, etc. While its level will vary by office and situation, discretion does exist. Supervisors can utilize different options.

In discussions with first-level supervisors in HRA and in teaching courses in supervisory skills it has become clear to the author that both new and more experienced supervisors are not aware of the varied options open to them as they do their jobs. Even if options are known they may not be uti-

lized or are used incorrectly. Thus problems in learning supervisory options include both ignorance and resistance.

Many supervisors, especially new ones, are not aware of the options available to them in training, communications, negotiations, etc. New to the job, they may not have considered how different circumstances and personalities require different approaches.

Supervisors may know various options but use them inappropriately. They are not aware of how to analyze situations, develop approaches, monitor them, and change if necessary.

First-level supervisors may not know when to change their approach to leadership, motivation, etc. They may continue with one way of doing things even when it becomes ineffectual and self-defeating.

Like most of us, supervisors have personal preferences that influence their styles in various areas of their jobs. They may feel awkward and uncomfortable with alternate approaches and thus avoid them.

First-level supervisors may utilize one or two styles of leadership, delegation, etc., find them comfortable and relatively effective, and argue that "one size fits all".

Their analysis of problems and situations may be influenced by the methods they like. Having only hammers, they may see everything as nails.

Supervisors may confuse uniformity and fairness. They may believe that to avoid charges of favoritism all staff must be treated the same way using the same techniques. They need to redefine fairness as constant goals but methods tailored to individuals and situations.

Lack of knowledge about or unwillingness to use different approaches to various aspects of supervision leads to half baked supervision, to first-level supervisors unable to realize their full supervisory potential. It means that they:

- cannot maximize staff performance
- cannot maximize staff satisfaction
- may make situations worse thorough inappropriate approaches
- do not grow by utilizing new approaches
- are not fair because they use the same approach with all staff regardless of their needs and abilities

Adult Learning: Theory and Application

The supervisors learning rules and skills are adults. The proposed training is set in the context of adult education, but also with the restraints and requirements of a large public social service agency like HRA. The concepts of adult education, and their application to this situation, need to be discussed.

Malcolm Knowles²⁹ notes that the goal of education is to create competent people able to apply knowledge under changing conditions. He says that core competence is the ability to engage in lifelong, self-directed learning.

Knowles³⁰ outlines six objectives for adult education:

- to help learners diagnose the need for particular learning (diagnosis)
- to plan with learners a sequence of experiences that will produce the desired learnings (planning)
- to create conditions that will make the learner want to learn (motivation)
- to select the most effective methods and techniques (methodological function)

29. Malcolm Knowles, The Modern Practice of Adult Education, (Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1980), p. 9.

30. *ibid.* pp. 26-29.

- to provide human and material resources for learning (resource function)
- to help learners evaluate the impact of learning as action (evaluation)

Ingalls and Arceri,³¹ drawing from Knowles, discuss four ways that adult education with its base in androgyny differs from the education of children, based on pedagogy.

The self-concepts of learners are different. Children are dependent while adults are independent. Androgyny results in interdependent teachers and learners, and a helping relationship instead of a directing one.

Adults have more experience which is valuable in learning and which can be shared with each other. This experience should facilitate a community of learners and teachers helping each other.

Adults have a greater readiness to learn but are more selective in their learning. They determine what to learn and when to learn it. Teachers help them to diagnose their needs and obtain resources.

31. John Ingalls, Joseph Arceri, A Trainer's Guide to Androgyny, (Waltham, Mass.: Data Education Inc., 1972), pp. 38 -45.

Adults' orientation to learning is focused in the present and on the problems of the present. Training must be relevant and tied into competence in practice.

Houle³² defines adult education as performance-based. Knowles³³ adds that adult learning links energy with a drive for mastery over an environmental situation. He says that the task of meeting life challenges at different developmental points directs adult learning choices. R. White plays a similar theme when he describes adult development as a continued quest towards increased autonomy. He says that "competence motivation" inspires activities which promote effective interaction with an individual's environment.

Knox³⁴ tempers this optimistic view by noting that inertia and the desire for stability mitigate an adult's push for further education. To find, enroll, and participate in training takes effort which may or may not be rewarded. It definitely will involve challenges to the trainees' present notions and ways of operation. Training means doing some-

32. Cyril Houle, The External Degree, (San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers, 1977), pp. 126-127.

33. Malcolm Knowles, op. cit., 1980, p. 28.

34. Alan B. Knox, Adult Development and Learning. (San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishing, 1977), p. 168.

thing rather than nothing, taking risks rather than accepting situations.

What are the goals of adult education in large institutions? Knowles³⁵ notes three such goals:

Institutions can expect that training programs will encourage trainees' consistency in working towards organizational goals. They may expect greater skills from trainees and/or an attitudinal change in their understanding of and support for the organization.

Organizations promote training to improve their operations. Newly acquired trainees' skills should translate into efficiencies and savings.

Finally, organizations promote training not only for their staff but also for the public. Training for both groups should develop public understanding of and possible involvement with the organization.

In her summary of research on adult education, Cross³⁶ brings out several issues relevant to the proposed project.

35. Malcolm Knowles, op. cit., 1980, p. 126-130.

36. Katheryn Patricia Cross, Adults as Learners. (San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers, 1982) pp. 38-52.

Explaining the growth in job-related training, she notes that in a rapidly changing work environment, job skills and even jobs themselves often become obsolete. There is greater competition for a reduced number of supervisory and managerial jobs. At the same time, individuals who previously might not have aspired to such jobs (women, minorities) now do so.

Cross³⁷ describes professionals and managers as self-directed learners. They become involved in training to keep up with their profession and to prepare for promotion.

In her discussion of recruitment of adult learners, Cross³⁸ notes the difference between serving adults (finding out what they want and providing it) and recruiting them (developing a set program and selling it to potential audiences). She also notes the conflict between voluntary and mandated continued education. The latter may be for professional requirements or to obtain or maintain a position. She notes that little research has been done in this area but that common sense indicates that voluntary learning is more effective, but that compulsory learning is better than nothing.

37. *ibid.* p. 71.

38. *ibid.* pp. 96-101.

Ingalls and Arceri³⁹ discuss factors important to adult learning environments. They stress the importance of physical surroundings which promote the interaction of trainer and trainees and the ability of the trainees to concentrate on the subject without distractions. The importance of interpersonal relations is stressed. The trainer should create a comfortable psychological climate where trainees can relax, where their anxieties are eased, and where they get acquainted with each other. Finally, they note the organizational setting. This is a broad area encompassing the organization (climate, training, recruitment material, required or voluntary training) and the trainer who represents it (personality, flexibility, openness).

Any new supervisory skills training should be designed with androgyny in mind. It should promote the independence of trainees and draw on their experience. It should allow participants to state what is important to them and should be problem- and present-oriented. Training encourages competence and autonomy.

However, supervisory training takes place in a large bureaucracy which realistically expects some uniformity among its supervisory staff. It wants to assure that they all know

39. John Ingalls, Joseph Arceri, op. cit., 1972, pp. 218-261.

certain rules and procedures (discipline, grievances, etc.) relevant to their positions.

Like most large social service bureaucracies, HRA has problems with apathy and resignation among its staff. These feelings definitely exist among first-level supervisors and, as Knox⁴⁰ notes, are manifested in a number of different ways.

Many first-level supervisors are conservative people. If their present methods of leadership, communications, etc., have not failed completely, they may be reluctant to change them. They may see different methods as hard to learn and as likely to be less effective as more.

Supervisors may feel that they operate in an organization that does not reward change; an organization, in fact, may be threatened by it. Whatever skills they pick up in supervisory courses make no difference in their pay. Attempts to apply these skills may disrupt relations with staff and superiors.

Supervisors, once past their civil service exam, may see no need for further training. Even if they are not successful supervisors, they see their jobs as safe. If they are

40. Alan B. Knox, op. cit., 1977, pp. 99-131.

satisfied at their present level, the incentive for further training may not exist.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY, PROGRAM DESIGN, AND POLITICS**What is Proposed**

A need exists to develop a generic training course for first-level supervisors in public social service agencies. This course should reflect what first-level supervisors:

- report as training needs
- report as important areas of their supervision
- report as areas where they spend much of their supervisory time
- report as particularly problematic areas

However, sources for this training course also will include a review of factors relatively unique to the roles of first-level supervisors in public social service agencies.

The course to be developed will:

- consist of related modules covering various aspects of first-level supervision in public social service agencies
- be tailored to the supervisory milieu in public social service agencies
- incorporate the experiences of participants in public social service agencies

- encourage participant involvement
- be relevant for first-level supervisors in direct, indirect, or accountability services
- be relevant to both new and experienced supervisors
- use as it's example one agency - Human Resources Administration, City of New York - but be relevant and adaptable to other public social service agencies as well

Methodology

A Training Needs Assessment for First-Level Supervisors (Appendix A) has been developed and used to survey eighty-four first-level supervisors at the Human Resources Administration. It included:

- background questions: who are supervisors, their experience and training, the environments in which they supervise
- circumstance questions: specific problems facing supervisors, their severity, difficulties in solving them
- training questions: how supervisors rate their knowledge in a variety of supervisory areas, how they rate the importance of these areas

Respondents to this survey were supervising in direct service, support and accountability areas. They included both new and experienced supervisors and those with/without previous training in supervisory areas. In the analysis resulting from this Training Needs Assessment respondents are described as to their supervisory experience, work supervised, training, and problems (including severity and difficulty in solving). Their ratings of their knowledge of and the importance of thirty four aspects of supervision will be analyzed separately and in categories. Their overall knowledge rating will be compared with their supervisory experience, training, and the kind of work they supervise.

Aspects of supervision where respondents rate their knowledge as low and importance as high will be identified and categorized. Whether and how much experience, training, and job duties influence respondents' knowledge scores will be determined to see if these variables will influence training design.

To broaden the perspective of supervisory training needs a second survey was designed and implemented. It explores how first-level supervisors utilize their time. This survey, Supervisory Activities During A Thirty-Five Hour Week (Appendix B), reflects the way supervisors actually spend their time. It also identifies the activities most

problematic to respondents and why they are problematic.

Twenty-five first-level supervisors in the Human Resources Administration were surveyed. As in the previous survey, their work experience, training, and type of work supervised were diverse. Analysis of this material was descriptive in nature. It was utilized as an alternate view of first-level supervisors and their training needs. In effect it added what supervisors do to what they think.

The results of these two surveys will be discussed with an eye to identifying the outlines and some of the components of training modules for first-level supervisors.

The third input to the development of training for first-level supervisors will be the literature review of supervision in general, social work specific, and related to the unique aspects of supervision in public social service agencies. The literature on adult education also will be consulted. This review will expand the perspective of training for first-level supervisors beyond immediate needs to a long-term perspective.

These three sources will be the basis of a discussion of the overall and specific training needs of first-level supervisors in public social service agencies. That

discussion will include:

- a description of how/what training modules were created and their androgynous aspects
- generic areas of concern regarding the training of first-level supervisors in public social service agencies
- suggestions as to how social work can regain a role in the training of first-level supervisors in public social service agencies

Finally, as appendices, there will be six training modules consisting of research findings on the area covered by the module, a narrative guide for trainers and specific training material to be used with participating first-level supervisors.

Politics

At the present time there is very little chance that the training modules resulting from this thesis will be implemented on a wide-scale basis within HRA. However it may be implemented on a smaller scale sometime late this year. With the reallocation of HRA training there is a possibility of selling the new training design for first-level supervisors in the organization that will handle training for HRA.

As noted HRA has abolished all organization-wide training. Each department within HRA decides on what training will be developed and offered. Many smaller departments offer minimal training. The two largest departments within HRA, Income Maintenance and the Child Welfare Administration, already have training courses for first-level supervisors.

At present there is a developing plan to shift all HRA training out of the organization and to the City University of New York. Departments are not likely to accept a new approach to training first-level supervisors knowing that they may be out of training altogether.

However, there is some hope. The Division of Aids Services (DAS) is adding about twenty new first-level supervisors. They will include new promotions and transfers from other departments. DAS has agreed to utilize the training modules developed for this thesis in training its new supervisors. Additional modules on Aids and procedures within DAS also will be included in this training course which should begin in late November 1993.

By early 1994, it should become clear which part of City University of New York will be coordinating training, who will be in charge, and what the schedule for transferring training will be. With this information in hand an attempt

will be made to sell the first-level supervisor training course developed for this thesis. Among the selling points will be:

- its source, a representative survey of first-level supervisors in HRA
- its generic nature, applicable throughout HRA
- its suitability for new and experienced supervisors
- its core nature, allowing add-ons specific to different departments

Ideally the training course developed for this thesis has "legs" beyond HRA. Public social service agencies throughout the country need better ways to train their first-level supervisors. Efforts will be made to market the training course to the State of New York Department of Social Services and to national organizations of public social service agencies.

**CHAPTER 4: TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (TNA) FOR
FIRST-LEVEL SUPERVISORS**

A Training Needs Assessment questionnaire (TNA) was developed for first-level supervisors to ascertain who they were, where they worked, what problems they had, how they rated their knowledge in various potential training areas, and how important they considered these areas to be. A copy of the questionnaire is found Appendix A.

In the questionnaire supervisors were asked how long they have worked for the Human Resources Administration (HRA) and in supervisory positions in HRA. They were questioned about supervisory experience outside of HRA. Finally they were asked about courses or training in supervision that they had taken. They were not asked specifically about academic degrees which is a less relevant and precise indicator of supervisory training.

Respondents were queried about their job titles and the departments in which they worked. They were asked about the number of staff they supervised and what that staff did.

Respondents were asked about to note the most serious problem currently facing them as supervisors. They were to rate

the problem as to it's severity and to note difficulties, if any, in solving it.

On thirty four individual aspects of supervision respondents were asked to rate their knowledge and how important these aspects were in their supervision. A Lickert Scale (1 - 5) was used to rate levels of knowledge and importance. The thirty four aspects covered various aspects of supervision including:

- supervisory responsibility
- leadership/influence
- conflict handling
- discipline
- feedback
- time management
- training
- social work values
- dealing with diverse staff and clients
- evaluation
- motivation
- planning work
- delegation
- teamwork
- complaint handling
- assesssing work environment
- realistic expectations re: staff and superiors
- communications
- personnel policy administration
- administration
- grievances

Finally respondents were asked if there were any additional areas where they needed training.

The questionnaire did not ask for respondents' names. It was expected that anonymity would encourage more candid answers and ratings especially from supervisors unsure of their positions.

Population

The population for the Training Needs Assessment was first-level supervisors enrolled in two Office of Staff Development and Training (OSDT) courses - Essential Supervisory Skills and Equal Employment Opportunities Orientation (ESS and EEO). ESS was an optional course targeted on first-level supervisors. Approximately forty individuals were trained per month. EEO was a mandatory course for all levels of supervision. From eighty to one hundred individuals were trained monthly, about half of whom were first-level supervisors. Both courses drew new and experienced first-level supervisors from all parts of HRA.

For the purpose of the survey , first-level supervisors were defined as individuals in first-level supervisory titles or other titles who directly supervised from one to ten staff within HRA. Those staff might be involved in direct services to clients or indirect or support services of various kinds.

During January 1991 ninety individuals attending EEO and ESS courses completed the questionnaire. Six were dropped from the sample because they did not meet the qualifications for first-level supervisors, leaving a sample of eighty-four.

Respondents were given time before courses began to complete the questionnaire. None reported problems in doing so and all questions were answered on most questionnaires.

Background of Respondents

Overall eighty four supervisors responded to the survey. The N for the univariate analysis below is eighty four unless otherwise noted.

Eighty three first-level supervisors supervised an average of 6.1 staff each with a range of from zero (a few supervisors were in the process of reassignment, one new supervisor had not yet been assigned staff) to ten and a mode of five staff.

Respondents had worked for HRA for an average of slightly over ten years (122.3 months). Their HRA experience ranged from five to four hundred and fifty six months. They had been in supervisory positions at HRA an average of 48.9 months (range of two months to three hundred months). Howev-

er forty nine of the respondents had been first-level supervisors for two years or less.

Twenty nine of the respondents reported experience in supervising outside of HRA. Of the twenty seven who reported where they had worked, fifteen had supervised in private industry, six in other government organizations, and six for not-for-profit organizations. They had supervised an average of 57.6 months with a range of from twelve to one hundred and eight months (N=15). They had supervised an average of 11.7 staff with a range of from two to forty seven staff (N=24).

The respondents were primarily in two civil service titles, Supervisor I - Welfare (twenty five) and Principal Administrative Assistant (twenty five). Five respondents were Computer Specialists and ten were in other first-level supervisor titles. Fourteen respondents had mid-level supervisory civil service titles (but were performing first-level supervisory functions). Four supervisors had more esoteric titles (N=83).

When asked in which department of HRA they worked, twenty eight supervisors noted the Child Welfare Administration. They included individuals in Kinship Foster Care, Protective Services, the Division of Adoption and Foster Care Services,

and Direct Child Care Services. Eighteen respondents worked in Income Maintenance; eight in the Adult Services Administration; seven each in the Division of Aids Services and the Medical Eligibility Program; six in Management Information Services; four in the Agency for Child Development; and six in other departments of HRA.

Respondents were asked to briefly describe the kind of work their unit did. Combining key words and phrases from this question and the departments where respondents worked, it was possible to classify respondents into three groups of twenty eight each.

One third of respondents (twenty eight) were supervisors of staff providing or arranging services for clients - direct service supervisors. Another third were supervisors in indirect services - providing support to direct services and administration (office supports, records, legal, data processing, transportation, food services, etc.). The final third supervised eligibility and accountability staff in such areas as income maintenance, medical assistance, Food Stamp eligibility, child support enforcement, etc.

Respondents were asked about training or courses they had in management, supervision, and/or personnel issues. Fifty one reported such training while thirty one did not (N=82).

Only one had a degree in management. Thirty nine respondents detailed the type of courses/training they had experienced. Twelve reported courses/training in management, thirty one in supervision, four in personnel, and two in other management areas. Ten reported courses/training in more than one area.

Knowledge Ratings

Respondents were asked to rate their *knowledge* in thirty four different aspects of first-level supervision. These covered various aspects of supervision in a large social service bureaucracy. They rated their knowledge on a Lickert Scale of 1 (low) to 3 (medium) to 5 (high). Few failed to rate each aspect. In no case did fewer than eighty of the eighty four respondents rate themselves.

The supervisors responding rated their supervisory knowledge over all thirty four aspects with an average 3.6 rating, somewhat higher than the midpoint of 3 (medium) on the knowledge scale.

Another way to analyze supervisors' knowledge ratings is to look at the percentage of low (1) to medium (3) ratings. Over all aspects, 43% of scores were low to medium.

This somewhat above average rating and below average percentage of low-medium scores are not surprising. Respondents were asked for a subjective self-rating of their knowledge rather than tested on their knowledge in a more objective manner. Further, they were asked to rate their knowledge in an area where they have some experience and where they have (and think others have) certain expectations of them.

As noted the first-level supervisors responding had supervised for an average of over four years. Even though over half of respondents had been supervisors for less than two years, all of them could claim some on-the-job experience. Experience may or may not make a good supervisor - it can mean repeating the same mistakes. However it builds confidence which may be reflected in inflated impressions of knowledge.

A supervisory position means higher expectations both from the organization that promotes an individual and from the individual him/herself. In rating their supervisory knowledge some respondents may have been saying, "Of course I know how to be a supervisor. They made me one, didn't they?". Looking at HRA's present environment of layoffs and demotions some respondents, especially those in provisional positions, may have inflated their ratings to meet what they see as organizational expectations.

On the other hand, respondents were supervisors who came for (or had been sent to) training. They felt or had been told by superiors that they needed training. Their responses to the questionnaire may well be their true opinions of what they saw as their training needs.

The analysis of knowledge ratings will use the average rating (3.6) and average percentage of low-medium scores (43%) as guides but not absolute cut-off points. Aspects will be analyzed whatever their rating. Aspects with ratings slightly above average and low-medium percentages slightly below average still will be considered as candidates for inclusion in a training curriculum.

Table 2 (next page) lists each knowledge aspect, number of respondents, their average rating, and the percentage of respondents rating their knowledge as low-medium. Knowledge ratings for aspects ranged from an average high of 4.1 (Memo writing, The responsibilities of a supervisor) to a low of 2.7 (Management rights). Of the thirty four knowledge areas rated, twenty were at or below the average of 3.6, fourteen were above it. Respondents rating their knowledge as low to medium ranged from 24% (Dealing with individuals of varied backgrounds - staff and clients) to 79% (Management rights). On eighteen knowledge aspects 43% or more of respondents

TABLE 2: RESPONDENTS KNOWLEDGE RATINGS

QUESTION	# RESPOND- ING	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW - MEDIUM
Various ways to lead staff	83	3.4	54%
How supervisors lead	82	3.5	52%
How to motivate staff	84	3.2	61%
How to develop a team approach in your unit	84	3.5	48%
The responsibilities of a supervisor	84	4.1	26%
Dealing with conflict (with staff, bosses, etc.)	84	3.5	49%
How to influence your staff's attitudes	84	3.2	60%
Distinguishing between discipline and other problems	84	3.6	53%
How to apply HRA's disciplinary procedures	83	3.1	63%
Documenting staff behavior	83	3.4	47%
How to give feedback to your staff	83	3.8	36%
How to give feedback to your boss	83	3.9	33%
Memo writing	83	4.1	37%
How to run meetings	83	3.8	41%
Various styles of communications	82	3.7	40%
Handling staff complaints	84	3.5	45%
Grounds for grievances	83	2.8	73%
Management rights	82	2.7	79%

QUESTION	# RESPOND- ING	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW - MEDIUM
How to do on-the-job training	84	3.7	37%
How to train staff in appropriate behavior	84	3.2	58%
How to spot staffs' strengths and weaknesses	84	3.8	31%
How to evaluate staff	82	3.6	44%
How to manage your time	83	3.8	33%
How to plan your unit's work	83	3.8	34%
How to delegate work to staff	84	3.8	37%
How to administer personnel policies (absences, vacations, etc.)	84	3.4	52%
Who in your department has power and uses it	82	3.7	38%
What you need to know about your boss	83	3.5	48%
What supervisors realistically can expect from their staff	83	3.6	40%
What staff realistically can expect from their supervisors	81	3.7	36%
What supervisors realistically can expect from their bosses	81	3.5	46%
What bosses realistically can expect from their supervisors	80	3.6	40%

QUESTION	# RE- SPONDING	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW - MEDIUM
Social work values	80	3.6	45%
Dealing with individuals with varied backgrounds (staff and clients)	82	4.0	24%

rated their knowledge as only low to medium while on sixteen knowledge aspects less than 43% of respondents gave themselves low-medium scores.

Twenty five of the thirty four aspects were at the 3.6 average or grouped within 0.3 above or below it (within a range of 3.3 through 3.9). Three aspects (The responsibilities of a supervisor, Memo writing, Dealing with individuals with varied backgrounds - staff and clients) have averages above 3.9. Six aspects (How to motivate staff, How to influence your staff's attitudes, How to apply HRA's disciplinary policies, How to train staff in appropriate behavior, Grounds for grievances, and Management rights) were below a 3.3 average with the last two of these below a 3.0 average.

Twenty four aspects were within ten percent above or below the 43% average low-medium scores (range of 33% through 53% low-medium scores). On three aspects less than 33% of respondents rate their knowledge as low-medium (The responsibilities of a supervisor, Dealing with individuals of varied backgrounds - staff and clients, How to spot staff's

strengths and weaknesses). However there are seven aspects where the percentage of low-medium scores is 53% or above (How to train staff in appropriate behavior, Various ways to lead staff, How supervisors lead, How to motivate staff, How to influence your staff's attitudes, How to Apply HRA's disciplinary procedures, Grounds for grievances, Management rights, Distinguishing between discipline and other problems). On the last two of these the percentage of low-medium scores is above 70%.

Importance Ratings

First-level supervisors also were asked to rate the importance of each of the thirty four aspects in their jobs as supervisors. They again responded on a Lickert Scale of 1 (low) to 3 (medium) to 5 (high). Few respondents failed to rate each aspect. On only two aspects did less than eighty of the eighty four respondents fail to offer a rating (on these aspects seventy nine and seventy seven respondents rated importance). Respondents rated the average importance over all the thirty four aspects as 4.3, well above the scale's midpoint of 3.0. The range of scores was from 3.9 through 4.6.

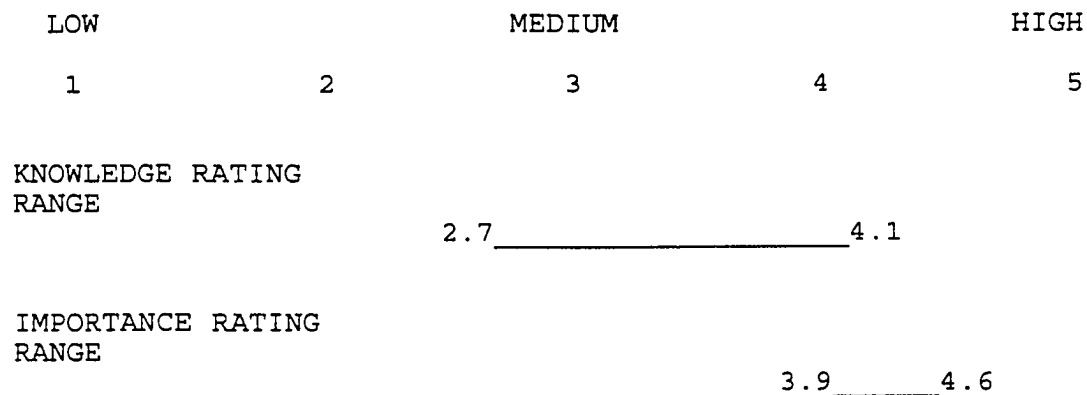
In analyzing how first-level supervisors rated the importance of various aspects of supervision it is necessary to consider several factors. First, a respondent's knowledge

ratings involve judgements of him/herself, her/his experience and learning. Ratings on the importance of various aspects do not require such personal judgements. Considering this factor it might be expected that respondents would be more candid in their importance ratings. However asking supervisors to distinguish among the importance of various aspects of supervision is like asking mothers to distinguish among the importance of various aspects of motherhood. In both cases there is a tendency to say that everything is important - to rate all aspects uniformly high. Thus while respondents might not be personally involved in the importance ratings they might let their views on the overall importance of supervision influence their ratings on individual aspects.

As noted the overall importance score (4.3) is very high on the five point scale and much higher than the average knowledge score (3.6). The range of importance ratings (3.9 through 4.6) is much more narrow than the range of knowledge ratings (2.7 through 4.1). As noted on Graph 1 (next page) it also is higher on the 1 - 5 scale. It appears that the motherhood factor (all aspects of supervision are very important) has shown some effect.

Another factor to consider is the relation of respondents' ratings of their knowledge of an aspect of supervision and

GRAPH 1: RESPONDENT'S RATINGS RE KNOWLEDGE AND IMPORTANCE OF THIRTY FOUR ASPECTS OF SUPERVISION: A COMPARISON



and the importance of this aspect. If first-level supervisors rate their knowledge in an aspect as low there may be a tendency to rate its importance equally low or lower ("I don't know much about that but it's not important anyhow"). In the same way a high knowledge rating might engender a high or higher importance rating. It is necessary to:

- look at how much difference there is between knowledge and importance scores
- look at how often that difference is positive (importance score higher) or negative (knowledge score higher)
- look at the difference between knowledge and importance ratings on those aspects where respondents have the lowest and highest knowledge scores

Table 3 (next page) covers all of these areas. The difference between knowledge and importance ratings ranges from +0.1 to +1.8 with an average of a considerable +0.7. On six of the aspects the difference is more than +1.0 while on three aspects it is less than +0.4.

Over all aspects the difference between importance and knowledge ratings is positive - importance always is rated higher than knowledge. The assumption that low knowledge ratings may result in even lower importance ratings does not hold.

On the six aspects with the lowest knowledge ratings (3.2 or below) the average difference between knowledge and importance ratings is +1.4 which is clear evidence that respondents have not lowered importance ratings to match low knowledge ratings. On the four aspects where respondents rated their knowledge as highest (3.9 and above) the average difference between knowledge and importance ratings is +0.3. This seems to indicate a lack of inflation in importance scores on aspects where the knowledge score is high.

In summary it appears that while importance scores on the various aspects of supervision may be slightly inflated overall, they are not affected by respondents' knowledge scores.

TABLE 3: RESPONDENT'S KNOWLEDGE AND IMPORTANCE RATINGS COMPARED

QUESTION	AVERAGE KNOWLEDGE RATING	AVERAGE IMPORTANCE RATING	DIFFERENCE KNOWLEDGE/IMPORTANCE*
Various ways to lead staff	3.4	4.4	+1.0
How supervisors lead	3.5	4.2	+0.7
How to motivate staff	3.2	4.6	+1.4
How to develop a team approach in your unit	3.5	4.4	+0.9
The responsibilities of a supervisor	4.1	4.6	+0.5
Dealing with conflict (with staff, bosses, etc.)	3.5	4.1	+0.6
How to influence your staff's attitudes	3.2	4.3	+1.1
Distinguishing between discipline and other problems	3.6	4.1	+0.5
How to apply HRA's disciplinary procedures	3.1	4.4	+1.3
Documenting staff behavior	3.4	4.4	+1.0
How to give feedback to your staff	3.8	4.3	+0.5
How to give feedback to your boss	3.9	4.0	+0.1
Memo writing	4.1	4.2	+0.1

QUESTION	AVERAGE KNOWLEDGE RATING	AVERAGE IMPORTANCE RATING	DIFFERENCE IMPORTANCE/ KNOWLEDGE*
How to run meetings	3.8	4.2	+0.4
Various styles of communications	3.7	4.2	+0.5
Handling staff complaints	3.5	4.0	+0.5
Grounds for grievances	2.8	4.4	+1.6
Management rights	2.7	4.5	+1.8
How to do on- the-job training	3.7	4.4	+0.7
How to train staff in appropriate behavior	3.2	4.1	+0.9
How to spot staffs' strengths and weaknesses	3.8	4.4	+0.6
How to evaluate staff	3.6	4.4	+0.8
How to manage your time	3.8	4.5	+0.7
How to plan your unit's work	3.8	4.6	+0.8
How to delegate work to staff	3.8	4.5	+0.7
How to administer personnel policies (absences, vacations, etc.)	3.4	4.2	+0.8
Who in your department has power and uses it	3.7	4.1	+0.4
What you need to know about your boss	3.5	3.9	+0.4

QUESTION	AVERAGE KNOWLEDGE RATING	AVERAGE IMPORTANCE RATING	DIFFERENCE KNOWLEDGE/ IMPORTANCE*
What supervisors realistically can expect from their staff	3.6	4.2	+0.6
What staff realistically can expect from their supervisors	3.7	4.1	+0.4
What supervisors realistically can expect from their bosses	3.5	4.1	+0.6
What bosses realistically can expect from their supervisors	3.6	4.1	+0.5
Social work values	3.6	4.0	+0.4
Dealing with individuals with varied backgrounds (staff and clients)	4.0	4.3	+0.3
OVERALL RATINGS	3.6	4.3	+0.6

* calculated by comparing each respondent's knowledge and importance ratings on each aspect

Table 4 (p. 94) lists each importance question, the number of respondents, their average rating, and the percentage of respondents rating the importance of each aspect as only low to medium. As noted, the average importance rating over all the thirty four aspects was 4.3. Importance ratings range from a high of 4.6 (How to motivate your staff, The respon-

sibilities of a supervisor, Planning your unit's work) to a low of 3.9 (What you need to know about your boss). Importance ratings were above the 4.3 average on fourteen aspects and at or below it on twenty aspects. Over all thirty four aspects, importance was rated as low to medium by only 16% of respondents. On nineteen of the aspects, 16% or less of respondents rated importance as low to medium while on fifteen aspects more than 16% rated importance as low to medium.

The aspect with the highest percentage of low-medium importance scores was Social work values (32%). Planning work had the lowest percentage of low to medium scores (6%).

Categorized Analysis

To better analyze respondents' ratings of their knowledge in and the importance of various aspects of supervision, it was necessary to group these aspects into broader categories which reflect the various facets of first-level supervision in HRA. The thirty four aspects on which knowledge and importance ratings were requested have been grouped into eight categories. These cover specific bureaucratic, interpersonal, environmental, value, and developmental knowledge and skills. As do the specific aspects, they relate to first-level supervision in general and supervision in large public

TABLE 4: RESPONDENTS' IMPORTANCE RATINGS

QUESTION	# RE- SPONDING	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW - MEDIUM
Various ways to lead staff	84	4.4	12%
How supervisors lead	82	4.2	23%
How to motivate staff	83	4.6	7%
How to develop a team approach in your unit	84	4.4	12%
The responsibilities of a supervisor	84	4.6	8%
Dealing with conflict (with staff, bosses, etc.)	84	4.1	12%
How to influence your staff's attitudes	83	4.3	12%
Distinguishing between discipline and other problems	84	4.1	24%
How to apply HRA's disciplinary procedures	83	4.4	11%
Documenting staff behavior	83	4.4	10%
How to give feedback to your staff	82	4.3	13%
How to give feedback to your boss	83	4.0	13%
Memo writing	82	4.2	26%
How to run meetings	83	4.2	22%
Various styles of communications	83	4.2	19%
Handling staff complaints	84	4.0	21%
Grounds for grievances	82	4.4	10%
Management rights	82	4.5	11%

QUESTION	# RE- SPONDING	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW - MEDIUM
How to do on-the-job training	84	4.4	11%
How to train staff in appropriate behavior	84	4.1	19%
How to spot staffs' strengths and weaknesses	83	4.4	10%
How to evaluate staff	81	4.4	10%
How to manage your time	83	4.5	8%
How to plan your unit's work	82	4.6	6%
How to delegate work to staff	84	4.5	10%
How to administer personnel policies (absences, vacations, etc.)	83	4.2	20%
Who in your department has power and uses it	81	4.1	25%
What you need to know about your boss	82	3.9	30%
What supervisors realistically can expect from their staff	83	4.2	19%
What staff realistically can expect from their supervisors	81	4.1	20%
What supervisors realistically can expect from their bosses	81	4.1	22%
What bosses realistically can expect from their supervisors	77	4.1	23%

QUESTION	# RE- SPONDING	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW - MEDIUM
Social work values	79	4.0	32%
Dealing with individuals with varied backgrounds (staff and clients)	81	4.3	16%

social service agencies in particular. These eight categories are:

- Leadership
- Conflict Management
- Communications
- Training/Development
- Planning
- Procedures
- Relations with the Work Environment
- Social Work Values

These categories and their components were discussed with a group of seven HRA first-level supervisors. They were asked to comment on the relevance of the categories and of the questions that made them up. They generally approved of the categories and their components but suggested moving several questions from one category to another. Several supervisors (from support areas) did question the relevance of knowledge

of social work values to their jobs. The categories and their components follow.

The Leadership category includes six questions. Three of these cover the more intellectual/theoretical aspects of leadership. They are:

- Various ways to lead staff
- How supervisors lead
- The responsibilities of a supervisor

The three remaining questions stress the application of leadership in a small unit. They are:

- How to motivate your staff
- How to develop a team approach in your unit
- How to influence your staff's attitudes.

The three questions in the Conflict Management category primarily reflect the strains that can occur among staff and between staff and supervisors. They are:

- Dealing with conflict (with staff, bosses, etc.)
- Distinguishing between discipline and other problems
- Handling staff complaints

Distinguishing between discipline and other problems initially had been in the Procedures category but the first-level supervisors who reviewed the original categories pointed out that it involved a judgement on behavior and relations that occurred before the disciplinary process was invoked.

Two of the Communications questions involve knowledge of form and structure:

- Memo writing
- How to run meetings

The three other questions are more interpersonal:

- How to give feedback to your staff
- How to give feedback to your boss
- Various styles of communications

Two of the Training/Development questions stress training:

- How to do on-the-job training
- How to train staff in appropriate behavior

Two look at the assessment and development of staff:

- How to spot staff's strengths and weaknesses
- How to evaluate staff

It could be argued that the evaluation question belongs under the Procedure category. However the first-level supervisors interviewed, considering the variations in the practice (as opposed to the written procedure) of evaluation in HRA, thought it more reasonable to put it here.

The Planning category stresses unit-scale planning and the assignment of work. It's questions include:

- How to manage your time
- How to plan your unit's work
- How to delegate work to staff

The Procedures category is one of the largest and most complicated. It includes questions on discipline, grievances, and other personnel policies. This is the category that is most related to first-level supervision in a large bureaucracy. It's questions include:

- Documenting staff behavior
- How to apply HRA's disciplinary procedures

- Grounds for grievances
- Management rights
- How to administer personnel policies (absences, vacations etc.).

The Relations with the Work Environment Category places first-level supervision in an environmental context. It looks at supervisors in their relations with and knowledge and expectations of staff and superiors. Questions in this category include:

- Who in your department has power and uses it
- What you need to know about your boss
- What supervisors realistically can expect from staff
- What staff realistically can expect from their supervisors
- What supervisors realistically can expect from their bosses
- What bosses realistically can expect from their supervisors.

Finally, the Social Work Values category includes both intellectual and interpersonal questions. They include:

- Social work values
- Dealing with individuals with varied backgrounds (staff and clients)

Categorized Knowledge Ratings

In Table 5 (next page) respondent's *knowledge ratings* on individual aspects are grouped into the eight categories previously described. The Planning Work category has an above average overall knowledge score (3.8) with each of its aspects at that same score. Its overall percentage of low-medium scores (35%) is below average as are the scores of all of its aspects.

The Communications category is only slightly less consistent. Its overall knowledge score (3.8) and those of all of its aspects are above average. The mean low-medium percentage (37%) is less than the norm as are all of the aspects. The only significant score to relate is the high (4.1) knowledge rating for the Memo writing aspect.

The Social Work values category has two very differently rated aspects. Knowledge of social work values is average with a significant percentage of low-medium scores. However the rating on Dealing with individuals of varied backgrounds - staff and clients is one of the highest with the smallest percentage of low-medium scores. Overall the category has an above average knowledge rating and below average percentage of low-medium scores.

TABLE 5: RESPONDENTS' KNOWLEDGE RATINGS GROUPED INTO CATEGORIES

CATEGORIES/ QUESTIONS	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW MEDIUM
<u>Planning Work</u>		
How to manage your time	3.8	33%
How to plan your unit's work	3.8	34%
How to delegate work to staff	3.8	37%
Planning Work Averages	3.8	35%
<u>Communications</u>		
How to give feedback to your staff	3.8	36%
How to give feedback to your boss	3.9	33%
Memo writing	4.1	37%
How to run meetings	3.8	41%
Various styles of communications	3.7	40%
Communication Averages	3.8	37%
<u>Social Work Values</u>		
Social work values	3.6	45%
Dealing with individuals with varied backgrounds (staff and clients)	4.0	24%
Social Work Values Averages	3.8	35%
<u>Training/Development</u>		
How to do on-the-job training	3.7	37%
How to train staff in appropriate behavior	3.2	58%
How to spot staffs' strengths and weaknesses	3.8	31%

CATEGORIES/ QUESTIONS	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW MEDIUM
<u>How to evaluate staff</u>	3.6	44%
Training/Development Averages	3.6	41%
<u>Relations with The Work Environment</u>		
Who in your department has power and uses it	3.7	38%
What you need to know about your boss	3.5	48%
What supervisors realistically can expect from their staff	3.6	40%
What staff realistically can expect from their supervisors	3.7	36%
What supervisors realistically can expect from their bosses	3.5	46%
What bosses realistically can expect from their <u>supervisors</u>	3.6	40%
Relations with the Work Environment Averages	3.6	41%
<u>Conflict Management</u>		
Dealing with conflict (with staff, bosses, etc.)	3.5	49%
Distinguishing between discipline and other problems	3.6	53%
<u>Handling staff complaints</u>	3.5	45%
Conflict Management Averages	3.5	49%
<u>Leadership</u>		
Various ways to lead staff	3.4	54%
How supervisors lead	3.5	52%
How to motivate staff	3.2	61%

CATEGORIES/ QUESTIONS	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW MEDIUM
How to develop a team approach in your unit	3.5	48%
The responsibilities of a supervisor	4.1	26%
How to influence your staff's attitudes	3.2	60%
Leadership Averages	3.5	50%
<u>Procedural</u>		
How to apply HRA's disciplinary procedures	3.1	63%
Documenting staff behavior	3.4	47%
Grounds for grievances	2.8	73%
Management rights	2.7	79%
How to administer personnel policies (absences, vacations, etc.)	3.4	52%
Procedural Averages	3.1	63%

The Training/Development category also is a mixed bag. While it's overall rating is at the average and percentage of low-medium scores is slightly below average, it is pulled down by a very low knowledge score/high percentage of low-mediums on the How to train staff in appropriate behavior aspect.

The knowledge rating for the Relations with the Work Environment category is average with a slightly below average low-medium score percentage. Two aspects - What you need to know about your boss, What supervisors realistically can

expect from their bosses - have notably low scores/high low-medium percentages.

The Conflict Management category has an overall below average knowledge score (3.5) and higher than average low-medium scores. So do all of its aspects.

The summary score in the Leadership category is below average (3.5) with a much higher than average percentage of low-medium scores. However one aspect - the Responsibilities of a supervisor - is tied for the highest of all the knowledge ratings (4.1) and has the second lowest percentage of low-medium scores.

As a whole the Procedural category has the lowest knowledge rating (3.1) and the highest percentage of low-medium scores (63%). All of its aspects fit this description. It includes the three lowest rated aspects with the highest percentage of low-medium scores.

It is important to see how clustered or diverse aspects within each of the eight categories are. This indicates the relation of the face validity which guided the grouping of aspects into categories and respondent's actual ratings of aspects within categories.

Respondents' knowledge ratings on aspects within five of the categories (Planning Work, Communications, Social Work Values, Relations with the Work Environment, Conflict Management) are tightly bunched with 0.4 or less separating the lowest and highest aspect rating within a category. In four of the five categories the percentage of low-medium scores also are clustered (10% or less separating the highest and lowest). It is notable that three of these categories (Planning Work, Social Work Values, Relations with the Work Environment) have the highest overall ratings. Apparently in categories where respondents think that they are knowledgeable, they are consistently so.

Knowledge scores on aspects within the other three categories show less togetherness. They range from 0.6 through 0.9 between the highest and lowest aspect score within a category. Differences in low-medium percentages within categories also are considerable. However in two of these categories - Training/Development and Leadership - one aspect is either much higher or much lower than the others. This magnifies the spread within aspects. The spread among aspects in the Procedural category is one of the widest. However this is a spread between lower and lowest knowledge ratings, between above average and excessive percentages of low-medium scores.

Before analyzing knowledge scores on individual aspects and categories as a whole it would be wise to further discuss factors that might influence respondent's ratings of their knowledge on individual aspects. One set of factors that might influence respondent's knowledge ratings - their own and perceived organizational expectations - already has been noted but requires further discussion. Several additional aspects which may influence responses need to be explored.

Factors Influencing Ratings

Respondent's self view and their perceptions of what HRA expects from them can be argued to color all ratings. However it may influence some ratings more than others. What a first-level supervisor does is defined by some aspects (The responsibilities of a supervisor, Dealing with individuals of varied backgrounds - staff and clients) more than others. There may be a tendency to rate these aspects higher than those which are not as central to job definition.

The thirty four aspects on which respondents are asked to rate their knowledge vary in their degree of specificity. Some cover broad areas (Dealing with individuals of varied background - staff and clients, How to give feedback to your staff, How to give feedback to your boss). Others focus on specific pieces of knowledge (Grounds for grievances, Applying HRA's disciplinary procedures). Many are in a middle

area of specificity. It may be that respondents tend to rate their knowledge higher in less specific aspects (where they have less specific measures against which to rate themselves) than in more specific aspects.

Respondents' knowledge ratings also may be influenced by the frequency with which they are involved (or have thought about) the various aspects of supervision. Supervisors delegate work, write memos, manage their time, and give feedback to staff on a regular basis. They may not do these things well, but they do them. This familiarity may increase their confidence and be reflected in their ratings. On the other hand, supervisors are not involved in some of the supervisory aspects on a regular basis. They do not often discipline or deal with grievances. First-level supervisors are no more introspective than the rest of us. They may not have thought much about their expectations of bosses and staff or especially of bosses' and staffs' expectations of them.

Finally supervisors' knowledge ratings in various aspects may be influenced by how obviously their knowledge has failed them in application. They may be doing a poor job of delegating or giving feedback to staff but it may be some time before they realize this. They may never realize it. However if they fail in training staff in how to behave, that failure faces them daily. If a grievance is filed

against them it will be clear whether or not they know the grounds for grievances. An obvious failure in an area may lead to a healthy humility in a supervisor's knowledge rating.

Considering clustering and diversity as well as the various factors that might influence a respondents knowledge ratings, it is time for a more detailed analysis of the knowledge ratings by category.

Knowledge Ratings Analyzed by Category

Aspects in the Planning category reflect things that supervisors do on a regular basis and that they think they should know how to do. Both these factors may push their knowledge ratings upward. However even the Planning category with the highest knowledge rating (3.8) is not much above the average rating and over a third of respondents rate their knowledge as low to medium.

The Communications category is a mix of more form and structure oriented aspects (Memo writing, How to run meetings) and more interpersonal aspects (How to give feedback to bosses and staff, Various styles of communication). For the most part these are specific aspects but ones which supervisors do on a regular basis and which they feel they should know how to do. They rate them highly.

Few respondents are social workers. While working for a social service agency, most of them do not supervise direct services to clients. They appear to have given little thought to Social work values and rate their knowledge in this aspect as relatively low. However it would be hard for supervisors not to rate themselves highly in the loosely defined Getting along with people from diverse backgrounds (staff and clients) aspect. Everyone likes to think that they know how to get along with people.

The Training and Development category has two aspects (How to do on-the-job training, How to spot staff's strengths and weaknesses) that supervisors in HRA are expected to know how to do and that they actually try to do regularly. However failure in training of staff shows up quickly. Thus respondents rate themselves relatively high in both areas but slightly lower in How to do on-the-job training. The relatively low rating on How to evaluate staff may have to do with the infrequency of evaluation in HRA (officially annually; in reality, less often). The very low rating and high percentage of low-medium scores for How to train staff in appropriate behavior may have to do with the obviousness of failure in this area. It also relates with some of the aspects in the Leadership category where respondents give themselves low ratings on their knowledge of how to persuade staff.

In the Relations with the Work Environment category respondents seem fairly confident of their knowledge as to What staff realistically can expect from their supervisors. This ties in with their high knowledge rating on The responsibilities of a supervisor (see the Leadership category). It also may reflect a view of supervision focussed on supervisor-subordinate relations. This idea is reenforced by respondents' lower ratings and high percentage of low-medium scores on What supervisors realistically can expect from their bosses and What you need to know about your boss. They are not overly confident about their knowledge of Who in your department has power and uses it. These scores reflect an insular view of supervision - fairly confident about expectations to and from staff but less so in relations with superiors and their department.

Aspects in the Conflict Management category look at supervisory knowledge in dealing with things out of the ordinary (conflicts, complaints, unsatisfactory staff). These also are aspects where failure is obvious. Knowledge ratings on all of them are below average with high percentages of low-medium scores.

As noted, the Leadership category is divided between intellectual and interpersonal aspects. One of the intellectual aspects - The responsibilities of a supervisor - stands out

for its high knowledge rating and very low percentage of low-medium scores. This is something that respondents are supposed to know and, if they've ever been given a job description, can say that they do know. However the other two intellectual aspects (Various ways to lead staff, How supervisors lead) may be things that supervisors, pressed by the normal flow of work, have not thought about very much. They rate themselves much lower here. Low ratings on the interpersonal aspects (How to motivate staff, How to develop a team approach in your unit, How to influence your staff's attitudes) are not surprising. These also may be aspects to which first-level supervisors have not given much thought. They also are areas where failure is obvious.

The consistently low knowledge ratings and very high percentage of low-medium scores in the Procedural area has several possible explanations. These are specific aspects - you know the rules or you don't. They are not in the normal daily work of supervisors. Failure in efforts to apply procedures is hard to deny. Finally, while HRA (and many other large public social service agencies) expects first-level supervisors to know and enforce procedures it offers minimal training in this most technical of areas.

Categorized Importance Ratings

In Table 6 (next page) respondent's *importance ratings* on individual aspects are grouped into the eight categories described in the previous section.

The Planning Work category is ranked highest in importance with the category and all of its aspects above the 4.3 average for importance and below average (16%) in low-medium scores. It includes the aspect with the highest importance ranking and lowest percentage of low-medium scores (How to plan your unit's work).

The Leadership category is rated almost as high. It includes the second and third highest rated aspects (The responsibilities of a supervisor, How to motivate staff). However it also contains one aspect (How supervisors lead) with a below average importance rating and well above average percentage of low-medium scores.

Almost as highly ranked is the Procedural category. Overall and in four of its five aspects it has above average importance ratings and below average percentages of low-medium scores. The one aspect with a lower score is How to administer personnel policies (absences, vacations, etc.).

TABLE 6: RESPONDENTS' IMPORTANCE RATINGS GROUPED INTO CATEGORIES

CATEGORIES/ QUESTIONS	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW MEDIUM
<u>Planning Work</u>		
How to manage your time	4.5	8%
How to plan your unit's work	4.6	6%
How to delegate work to staff	4.5	10%
Planning Work Averages	4.5	8%
<u>Communications</u>		
How to give feedback to your staff	4.3	13%
How to give feedback to your boss	4.0	13%
Memo writing	4.2	26%
How to run meetings	4.2	22%
Various styles of communications	4.2	19%
Communication Averages	4.2	19%
<u>Social Work Values</u>		
Social work values	4.0	32%
Dealing with individuals with varied backgrounds (staff and clients)	4.3	16%
Social Work Values Averages	4.2	24%
<u>Training/Development</u>		
How to do on-the-job training	4.4	11%
How to train staff in appropriate behavior	4.1	19%
How to spot staffs' strengths and weaknesses	4.4	10%

CATEGORIES/ QUESTIONS	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW MEDIUM
<u>How to evaluate staff</u>	4.4	10%
Training/Development Averages	4.3	13%
<u>Relations with The Work Environment</u>		
Who in your department has power and uses it	4.1	25%
What you need to know about your boss	3.9	30%
What supervisors realistically can expect from their staff	4.2	19%
What staff realistically can expect from their supervisors	4.1	20%
What supervisors realistically can expect from their bosses	4.1	22%
What bosses realistically can expect from their supervisors	4.1	23%
Relations with the Work Environment Averages	4.1	24%
<u>Conflict Management</u>		
Dealing with conflict (with staff, bosses, etc.)	4.1	12%
Distinguishing between discipline and other problems	4.1	24%
<u>Handling staff complaints</u>	4.0	21%
Conflict Management Averages	4.1	19%
<u>Leadership</u>		
Various ways to lead staff	4.4	12%
How supervisors lead	4.2	23%
How to motivate staff	4.6	7%
How to develop a team approach in your unit	4.4	12%

CATEGORIES/ QUESTIONS	AVERAGE RATING	% LOW MEDIUM
The responsibilities of a supervisor	4.6	8%
How to influence your staff's attitudes	4.3	12%
Leadership Averages	4.4	12%
<u>Procedural</u>		
How to apply HRA's disciplinary procedures	4.4	11%
Documenting staff behavior	4.4	10%
Grounds for grievances	4.4	10%
Management rights	4.5	11%
How to administer personnel policies (absences, vacations, etc.)	4.2	20%
Procedural Averages	4.4	13%

The Training/Development category, while rated slightly lower, is a duplicate of the Procedural category. Three of its aspects have above average importance ratings with minimal low-medium scores while one (How to train staff in appropriate behavior) has a below average rating and fairly high percentage of low-medium scores.

As a whole the Communications category has a slightly below average importance rating and higher than average low-medium percentage. So do most of its aspects.

The two aspects in the Social Work Values category have very different importance ratings. Dealing with individuals with varied backgrounds (staff and clients) is at the average in rating and low-medium scores. However Social work values has a well below average rating and the highest percentage of low-medium scores of any aspect.

Conflict Management's rating overall and for all of its aspects is below average. Finally the category that responding supervisors ranked lowest in importance is Relations with the Work Environment. The category and all of its aspects have below average ratings including the lowest rating (3.9 for What you need to know about your boss). All aspects have above to well above average percentages of low-medium scores.

Considering the narrow range of Importance ratings overall it could be expected that ratings within each of the categories would be clustered. They are. Within every category 0.4 or less separates the highest from the lowest rated aspect. There is slightly more variation in the percentage of low-medium scores within categories (up to 16% between the lowest and highest percentage of low-medium scores within a category). However this spread within categories generally is caused by one aspect with a slightly higher percentage of low-medium scores.

Comparing Knowledge and Importance Ratings

It already has been noted that over all the aspects low knowledge ratings do not result in low importance ratings and that importance ratings on every aspect are higher than knowledge ratings. There is a need to explore whether or not this pattern holds over categories of aspects. Do supervisors tend to attribute higher importance to the categories where they rate their knowledge as high? Table 7 (next page) ranks knowledge and importance scores by categories.

Planning Work, the category with the highest knowledge rating also has the highest importance rating. However the categories with the next two highest knowledge ratings (Social Work Values and Communications) are in the middle-lower range of importance scores. Categories in the middle of the knowledge rankings (Relations with the Work Environment and Training) are in the lower and middle importance rankings. In fact Relations with the Work Environment has the lowest importance rating. One category with a low knowledge rating (Conflict Management) also has a low importance rating. However the two categories lowest in the knowledge rankings (Leadership and Procedural) are ranked high, second and third respectively in the importance ratings.

TABLE 7: COMPARISON OF KNOWLEDGE AND IMPORTANCE RATINGS BY CATEGORIES

<u>KNOWLEDGE SCORES</u>			<u>IMPORTANCE SCORES</u>		
<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>	<u>% LOW/ MEDIUM</u>	<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>	<u>% LOW/ MEDIUM</u>
Planning Work	3.8	35%	Planning Work	4.5	8%
Social Work Values	3.8	35%	Leadership	4.4	12%
Communi-cations	3.8	37%	Procedural	4.4	13%
Relations with the Work Environ-ment	3.6	41%	Training	4.3	13%
Training	3.6	41%	Communica-tions	4.2	19%
Conflict Management	3.5	49%	Social Work Values	4.2	24%
Leadership	3.5	50%	Conflict Management	4.1	19%
Procedural	3.1	63%	Relations with the Work Environment	4.1	24%

A clear relationship between respondent's knowledge and importance scores by categories does not exist. The category (Planning) where respondents list their knowledge as highest also ranks first in importance. However the category with

the second highest knowledge rating (Social Work Values) is near the bottom of the scale in importance. The two categories with the lowest knowledge ratings (Leadership and Procedural) are ranked second and third respectively in importance.

Communications, the category with the third highest knowledge rating, is in the middle of the importance rankings while Relations with the Work Environment, fourth in knowledge is at the bottom in importance. Training is in the middle of both knowledge and importance ratings while Conflict Management is near the bottom in both.

Table 8 (next page) notes the difference between importance and knowledge scores for each category. These differences and their direction are important in choosing subject areas for supervisory training. As noted in every aspect (and thus in every category) respondents rate importance higher than knowledge with an average of + 0.7 difference and a range of + 0.4 through +1.3. One category shows a dramatic difference between importance and knowledge scores. This is Procedural where a +1.3 difference indicates that respondents are not knowledgeable but realize that they need to be. In Leadership (+0.9 difference) they also report a significant difference between importance and knowledge. Training has the

TABLE 8: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN IMPORTANCE AND KNOWLEDGE SCORES BY CATEGORY

CATEGORY	DIFFERENCE KNOWLEDGE/ IMPORTANCE
Planning Work	+ 0.7
Social Work Values	+ 0.4
Communications	+ 0.4
Relations with the Work Environment	+ 0.5
Training	+ 0.7
Conflict Management	+ 0.6
Leadership	+ 0.9
<u>Procedural</u>	<u>+ 1.3</u>
Average	+ 0.7

average +0.7 difference between importance and knowledge ratings. Surprisingly so does Planning - the category with the highest importance and knowledge ratings. While respondents rated their knowledge high in this category they rated importance so much higher as to make the difference notable. Conflict Management has a slightly below average difference (+0.6) between importance and knowledge ratings. The same pattern applies with the Relations with the Work Environment category with a +0.5 difference. Finally, two categories have the smallest differences between importance and knowledge scores - Communications and Social Work Values, both +0.4.

Most Serious Problems Facing Supervisors

Respondents were asked what was the most serious problem facing them as first-level supervisors and to rate the seriousness of that problem on the Lickert Scale below.

Not Too Serious		Somewhat Serious		Very Serious
1	2	3	4	5

This was the least answered of all the questions on the survey with only seventy two supervisors (86%) responding. Respondents who did not answer the question fit into no particular category in terms of location, seniority, time as supervisors, or training. They may reflect particular work situations where not reporting problems (even on a survey) is seen as politically expedient. This seems a realistic supposition considering the atmosphere of uncertainty (of programs, jobs, etc.) in HRA and the large number of supervisors whose positions are provisional.

In classifying answers to this open-ended question, key words in responses were identified and used to develop relatively specific categories. This was most difficult when analyzing problems with staff. Efforts were made to clarify problems with staff in general vrs. problems with specific staff members; staff needs vrs. problems in the supervisor-

staff relationship; and general vrs. specific deficiencies with staff.

Of the seventy two respondents who reported on problems one failed to note the severity of the problem. Thus Table 9 (next page) which notes the most serious supervisory problem faced by supervisors and it's severity is based on a N of seventy one.

First, six of the seventy one respondents noted no problems. These individuals are notable only in that they had all been first-level supervisors less than two years. In the focus group to classify aspects into categories a very experienced supervisor said, "I've seen about every problem but I had to be around a while before I did". It may be that the six respondents who report no problems need to be around a while longer.

Of the sixty five respondents who noted problems, forty eight (74%) rated these problems as being of medium to high severity. Twelve (18%) said that their problems were very serious. On the 1 to 5 scale the average rating for a problem was 3.2. The most commonly noted problems (twelve or more responses) were Managing time and work (2.6 average

TABLE 9: PROBLEMS NOTED BY FIRST-LEVEL SUPERVISORS AND THEIR SEVERITY

Problem	Severity of Problem					Total	Average Severity
	Not Too Serious	Somewhat Serious	Very Serious				
	1	2	3	4	5		
Managing time and work	4	2	4	2	1	13	2.6
Problem worker	1	0	5	2	4	12	3.7
Employees need training	0	0	3	1	1	5	3.6
Respondent needs training	0	2	2	0	1	5	3.0
Not enough staff	0	0	0	2	0	2	4.0
New roles for respondent	2	2	2	0	0	6	3.0
Problems with upper level management	0	0	4	1	1	6	3.5
Lack supplies, space	0	0	1	0	1	2	4.0
Motivating staff to get work done	1	3	4	3	2	13	3.2

Currently have no staff	0	0	0	0	1	1	5.0
Report no problems	-	-	-	-	-	6	-
Totals	8	9	25	11	12	71	3.2

N = 71

severity score), and Problem workers (3.7). Problems reported somewhat less frequently (five to eleven times) included Problems with upper level management (3.5), New roles for the respondent (3.0), Respondent needs training (3.0), and Employees need training (3.6). Two respondents noted a Lack of supplies/space (4.0), two mentioned Not enough staff (4.0), and one responded that they Currently have no staff (5.0).

The problems noted by respondents can be grouped into four clusters based on first-level supervisors' personal development, relations with staff, relations with bosses, and need for resources.

Problems related to personal development (Managing time and work, Respondent needs training, New roles for respondent) are noted by twenty four individuals and have an average severity rating of 2.5. A substantial number of supervisors responding define their most serious problem in terms of

self management and development rather than in terms of the supervisory environment. However their relatively mild severity rating seems to indicate that respondents believe these problems are within their ability to solve.

The largest number of respondents (twenty five) stressed problems in relations with staff (Problem workers, Motivating staff to get work done). They rate these problems as fairly severe (3.4) which may reflect the view that these problems are less within their control.

A concern with relationships possibly combined with lack of ability to influence them also is evident in Problems with upper level management (six respondents, 3.5 severity average).

Finally the Lack of Resources problem cluster (Currently have no staff, Not enough staff, Employees need training, Lack of supplies/space) is noted by ten respondents and has a high (3.9) severity rating. This apparently is the area where supervisors feel that they have least control.

Historic/Situational Factors Influencing Knowledge Ratings

There are several factors in the responding supervisors' history and current situation which might influence their overall knowledge ratings. This section of data analysis

will describe possibly influential factors covered in the needs assessment questionnaire and explore their relation with respondents' overall knowledge scores.

Respondents were asked how long they had been supervisors with HRA and how long (if at all) they had supervised in other settings. It might be assumed that more experienced supervisors feel more knowledgeable about their jobs. However there is a question as to which experience is relevant - experience supervising in HRA, elsewhere, or both.

This analysis will focus on supervisory experience in HRA. While there are many generic aspects to supervision, the first-level supervisor position in HRA and other large public social service agencies is unique in some significant ways. HRA is a:

- large bureaucracy
- with set rules but rules differentially enforced
- in the business of serving individuals considered by much of society to be non-productive and/or dysfunctional
- involved in both serving and enforcement roles with it's clientele
- whose mission has expanded considerably but which has little overall sense of purpose

First-level supervisors in HRA:

- have poorly defined jobs
- have a poorly defined position in the overall hierarchy
- have few official parameters around their relations with staff
- supervise staff with a greater degree of permanency (civil service) than most staff.

This cocktail of differences argues for stressing respondent's experience in HRA rather than combining that experience with less relevant supervisory experience in other organizations.

As previously noted respondents had supervised in HRA an average of 48.9 months (range 2 to 300 months). However one half of the respondents had been supervisors for less than two years. For analysis respondents will be divided into two groups - those with two years or less supervisory experience and those with more than two years.

Another factor that might influence respondents' supervisory knowledge ratings is whether they had ever had any training in supervision or related areas. Supervisors with training in one or more aspects of supervision should report a greater knowledge of the subject. The questionnaire asked respon-

dents if they had any training or courses in supervision. If yes, they were asked to note the titles and content of this training/these courses.

Fifty one respondents said they had taken courses/had training. However only thirty nine of these specified the subject(s) of these courses or training. This subgroup of thirty nine is discussed earlier. To compare supervisors' courses/training with their knowledge ratings on various aspects of supervision it is necessary to utilize the less detailed but more responded to question - "Have you had any courses or training in supervision?". Fifty one respondents had and thirty three had not.

Finally it would be interesting to know how supervisors of different kinds of work rated their supervisory knowledge. Respondents were asked in which division of HRA they supervised and to briefly describe the kind of work their unit did. Combining answers to the first question and key words and phrases from the second, it was possible to classify respondents into three groups of twenty eight each - direct service supervisors, support service supervisors, and accountability and eligibility supervisors. These will be compared with supervisory knowledge scores.

Table 10 compares overall knowledge scores of responding supervisors by their time on the job (two years or less vrs. over two years) and whether or not they have had any training in supervision, management, or personnel issues (N=83).

TABLE 10: KNOWLEDGE SCORES OF FIRST-LEVEL SUPERVISORS BY TIME SUPERVISORY EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING

<u>Training</u>	<u>Experience</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	Two years and less	More than two years	
	<u>Knowledge Score (N)</u>	<u>Knowledge Score (N)</u>	
Yes	3.7 (27)	3.6 (24)	3.6 (51)
No	3.4 (21)	3.3 (11)	3.4 (32)
<u>Totals</u>	<u>3.6 (48)</u>	<u>3.5 (35)</u>	<u>3.6 (83)</u>

It would be expected that supervisors with experience and training would rate their knowledge as highest and supervisors with less experience and no training would rate their knowledge as lowest. Supervisors with training but less experience or more experience but no training would be in the middle.

The results are not as expected. The group that gave themselves the highest rating (3.7) were less experienced supervisors with training. The group rating their knowledge as lowest (3.3) were more experienced supervisors without

training. In the middle were supervisors with experience and training (3.6) and supervisors without extensive experience or training (3.4). Overall supervisors with two years or less experience rated their knowledge as slightly higher than supervisors with more experience - again, not what might be expected. On the face of it training (or it's lack) is more influential than experience (or it's lack) in determining knowledge scores.

Several factors may influence this juxtaposition of scores. Experience is a wonderful teacher. One of the things it teaches is humility. Supervisors with more experience may have a better understanding of what they do not know, have not been able to do. This appears to be the case especially with experienced supervisors without any formal training in their jobs. If experience engenders humility, the relative lack of it may engender supervisors' confidence (justified or not) in their skills. This confidence may be heightened by training especially if that training is of recent vintage.

Table 11 compares overall knowledge scores of responding supervisors by their time on the job (two years or less vrs. over two years) and the kind of work done by their units (N=84).

TABLE 11: KNOWLEDGE SCORES OF FIRST-LEVEL SUPERVISORS BY TIME SUPERVISORY EXPERIENCE AND AREA OF SUPERVISION

Area of Supervision	Experience		Totals
	Two years and less	More than two years	
	Knowledge Score (N)	Knowledge Score (N)	
Direct Services	3.6 (21)	3.5 (7)	3.6 (28)
Indirect Services	3.2 (10)	3.5 (18)	3.4 (28)
Accountability/Eligibility	3.8 (18)	3.5 (10)	3.7 (28)
Totals	3.6 (49)	3.5 (35)	3.6 (84)

Totals by area of supervision indicate a noticeable spread among the three categories. Supervisors of Indirect Services (3.4) have the lowest knowledge rating while supervisors of Accountability/Eligibility (3.7) are the highest, with supervisors of Direct Services (3.6) in between. There is a considerable variation in supervisory experience among respondents supervising various kinds of work.

Over two thirds of direct service supervisors and nearly that percentage of accountability/eligibility supervisors have been on the job for two years or less. By contrast, almost two thirds of indirect service supervisors have been in supervisory positions for more than two years. Thus apparent differences in supervisory ratings by area of super-

vision seem to be caused by time as supervisors. The previously noted pattern of less experienced supervisors ranking their knowledge as higher than more experienced supervisors is evident here.

Finally, Table 12 (next page) compares overall knowledge scores of responding supervisors by the kind of work done by their units and whether or not they have had any training in supervision, management, or personnel issues (N=83). As expected, supervisors with supervisory training rate their knowledge as higher than supervisors without training. This pattern holds across all three areas of supervision although it is somewhat weaker (and scores in both categories somewhat lower) for supervisors in indirect services. A majority of respondents in all three areas of supervision have some training but it is a bare majority in indirect services compared with a two to one majority in accountability/eligibility and nearly that in direct services. This difference in the number of supervisors with training further explains the already noted difference in knowledge scores among respondents in various areas of supervision.

Supervisory Tasks and Difficulty in Performing

Another perspective on the kind of training needed by first-level supervisors is afforded by looking at what they do on the job and what they find hardest to do. The same focus

TABLE 12: KNOWLEDGE SCORES OF FLS BY TRAINING AND AREA OF SUPERVISION

Area of Supervision	Training		Totals
	Yes Knowledge Score (N)	No Knowledge Score (N)	
Direct Services	3.7 (18)	3.4 (10)	3.6 (28)
Indirect Services	3.4 (15)	3.3 (13)	3.4 (28)
Accountability/ Eligibility	3.7 (18)	3.5 (9)	3.7 (27)
Totals	3.6 (51)	3.4 (32)	3.6 (83)

group of seven supervisors used to categorize potential training areas was asked to outline how they spent an average week - in what tasks they were engaged and for how long. Their responses fit into ten categories:

- Review staff work (for completion quality)
- Communicate with staff (re work assignments completion corrections)
- Handling personnel issues (time/leave grievances, discipline etc.)
- Communicate with superiors (re work assigned plans personnel issues etc.)
- Do work normally done by staff
- Plan own work and that of staff
- Obtaining supplies/resources
- Training staff in work/behavior

- Preparing reports statistics, etc.
- Other

These categories went into a questionnaire for HRA first-level supervisors which asked how much time they spent on each of these tasks during an average thirty five hour week. Respondents also were asked which of these tasks was the most difficult to perform and why. Finally they were asked where they worked and how long they had been supervisors with HRA. A copy of the questionnaire is included as Appendix B.

The questionnaire was administered to twenty five first-level supervisors during July 1991 just before they began ESS or EEO courses offered by OSDT. Results are found in Table 13 (following page). In terms of supervisory experience at HRA and the kind of work they supervised, respondents were not very different than the eighty four respondents who completed the original training needs assessment.

They had been in supervisory positions at HRA an average of 52.1 months (range of three to two hundred and eight months). Fifteen had been supervisors for two years or less.

TABLE 13: SUPERVISORY ACTIVITIES DURING A 35 HOUR WEEK

Activity	# Hours*	Range of Hours	# Noting	# Listing as Most Difficult Area**
Review staff work (for completion, quality)	9.5	7 - 14	25	0
Communicate with staff (re work assignments, completion, corrections)	7.5	5 - 10	25	13
Handling personnel issues (time/leave, grievances, discipline, etc.)	3.0	2 - 4	24	4
Communicate with superiors (re work assigned, plans, personnel issues, etc.)	2.5	1 - 4	24	3.5
Doing work normally done by staff	4.5	0 - 11	20	0
Planning own work, that of staff	1.5	0 - 2	19	4.5
Obtaining supplies/resources	2.0	0 - 4	15	0
Training staff in work/behavior	2.0	0 - 5	14	0
Preparing reports, statistics, etc.	2.0	0 - 4	14	0
Other	0.5	0 - 5	16	0

* Rounded off to the half hour

** One respondent listed two areas

Questions on the department in which respondents worked and on what their units did were combined to ascertain the kind of work that respondents supervised.

Ten were supervisors of staff providing or arranging for services to clients - direct service supervisors. Seven were supervisors of staff providing indirect services - office supports, legal, records, data processing, transportation, food services, etc. Finally eight of the respondents were supervising eligibility and accountability staff in such areas as income maintenance, medical assistance, food stamp eligibility, child support payments, etc. Neither in experience nor in what they did were these respondents very different than the larger sample of supervisors used for the needs assessment.

Supervisors responding spent the largest proportion of their time reviewing staff work (nine and a half hours or 27%). Relatively close behind was the amount of time spent communicating with staff (seven and a half hours or 21%). They spent an average of four and a half hours (13%) doing work normally done by staff, three hours (9%) handling personnel issues, and two and one half hours (7%) communicating with superiors. They spent an average of two hours per week (6%) on each of the following activities: getting supplies and resources, training staff in work/behavior, preparing re-

ports/statistics, etc. An average of one and a half hours (4%) was spent on planning and one half hour (1%) was devoted to other activities.*

All twenty five respondents said that they reviewed staff work and communicated with staff. Twenty or more mentioned handling personnel issues, communicating with superiors, and doing work normally done by staff.

When the various activities are considered separately, supervisors spend the greatest number of hours in review of subordinates' work - a quality control aspect inherent in supervision. However only slightly over a quarter of their time (27%) is spent this way. Respondents report that another eighth of their time (13%) is spent doing work normally done by staff. This may reflect covering for absent staff - increasingly common in a time of increased work and decreased staff. However it also may reflect doing work that staff could and should do and thus a possible failure on the part of the supervisor.

Taking several activities together, the largest block of supervisory time is devoted to dealing with staff - communi-

* "Other" activities included dealing with staff conflicts, politicking, learning the job, dealing with other agencies, running meetings.

cating (7.5 hours or 21%), handling their personnel issues (3 hours or 9%), and training them (2 hours or 6%).

Another large block of time is spent in dealing with the environments outside of a supervisor's immediate unit - communicating with superiors (2.5 hours or 7%), preparing reports, statistics, etc. (2 hours or 6%), and obtaining supplies/resources (2 hours or 6%).

Finally a small amount of time (1.5 hours or 4%) is spent by supervisors in planning all of the above - their own work and that of staffs'.

Over half (13) of respondents said that their most difficult activity was communicating with staff (re work assignments, completion, corrections). Planning their own work and that of the staffs' was noted as most difficult by 4.5 respondents. (One respondent's split answer listed two activities as most difficult.)

Four supervisors said that handling personnel issues (time/leave, grievances, discipline, etc.) was most difficult and 3.5 mentioned communication with superiors (re work assigned, plans, personnel issues, etc.).

When asked why communicating with staff was their most difficult activity, eight of the thirteen respondents noted difficulty in getting work out of staff, seven said that staff had problems in understanding instructions and orders, and five mentioned unmotivated staff.*

Respondents who said that their greatest difficulty was in planning work explained by noting problems in handling changing priorities (four) and in finding time for planning (three).

All four supervisors whose greatest difficulty was in handling personnel issues said that they did not know relevant rules and procedures.

Lastly the four respondents who reported serious difficulties in communicating with superiors said that it was not clear what was expected from them and three added that they had some trepidation in giving feedback to their superiors.

In reporting their most serious problem, no respondents mentioned reviewing staff work or doing work normally done by staff. Supervisors apparently feel that they have the technical competence to carry out these tasks. Technical

* In explaining why certain activities were most difficult respondents frequently gave several answers. Thus the sum of answers frequently is greater than the number of respondents.

competence also is a factor in preparing reports, statistics, etc. and training staff in work/behavior - other areas which no respondents reported as their major problem.

Two thirds of supervisors (17) responding reported that their most difficult activity was in relating to subordinates - communicating with them and handling their personnel issues. These are activities that involve both the interpersonal skills of leadership, team building, crisis management, and communications and technical knowledge of personnel policies and how they are applied. It appears that these skills and knowledge are lacking in some supervisors.

Trying to plan work was the major difficulty for eighteen per cent (4.5) of respondents. This might be expected in an organization like HRA (or in any other large public social service agency) which often operates in an atmosphere of crisis and changing priorities and which is unclear as to the role played by first-level supervisors in planning.

Lastly, one seventh (3.5) supervisors note that their most difficult task is in communicating with superiors. Here again a lack of organizational clarity about priorities may heighten this concern as may a certain level of intimidation in relations with superiors common in large public social service bureaucracies like HRA.

Data Analysis Summary

First-level supervisors have been surveyed re who they are, what they do, what problems they have, and how they rate their knowledge and the importance of various aspects of supervision. A separate group of supervisors were surveyed as to what they do on the job, how much time they spend doing it, and what they find as the most difficult aspect of the job.

These two surveys give a good picture as to who first-level supervisors in HRA are. They reveal their:

- time as supervisors with HRA
- training that they may have had in any aspect of supervision
- where they supervise in HRA
- what kind of work they do

These measures reflect the kind of population that will be covered by the proposed training program for first-level supervisors. They give some ideas as to how that program needs to be adapted to it's audience.

These two surveys also offer a number of measures of the importance of various aspects of supervising and the need to include them in the proposed training program. This multi-

plicity of measures should offer some definite ideas as to which categories and aspects of the supervisory job need to be included in the proposed training.

Supervisors surveyed were, for the most part, relatively new on the job (58% were supervisors for less than two years). This relative lack of experience is important in several ways. Newer first-level supervisors are less likely to have dealt with many of the technical aspects of the job (discipline, grievances, other personnel procedures), to have dealt with problem employees, to have supervised in different offices/ environments, or to have worked for different bosses. Not having had these experiences, they may not comprehend what they do not know and thus may rate their knowledge higher than it actually is. The most immediate concern of these new supervisors probably has been the staff under them. They seem less likely to have focussed on their superiors or the office environment around them. They may discount the importance/influence of this environment. Finally new supervisors are more likely to be provisional, more afraid for their positions, less likely to admit problems or ignorance.

However, when asked about their major problem these newer supervisors were more likely than their more experienced

counterparts to note the challenge of dealing with new roles and their need for training.

Any training developed for these newer supervisors needs to temper their confidence and promote their willingness to admit the need for help. It should point out that there are things that they do not know, that they do not know well, that they can (should) admit that they do not know. Such training also needs to sell supervisors on the idea of options -- that whatever way they are handling situations is not sufficient; that different approaches to leadership, problem-solving, communications, etc. need to be learned and utilized. Finally any training developed will have to convince supervisors of the importance of various aspects of supervision, especially environment and relations with superiors. Like all good training it will have to broaden their horizons.

Most first-level supervisors surveyed had some training in some aspect of supervision. Such training may raise confidence both in a supervisor's ability to deal with present situations and to handle situations not yet faced. This confidence boosting is especially evident among newer (less than two years supervision) supervisors surveyed. Any training developed needs to ascertain what trainees already have learned by asking them about other training and it's content

and usefulness. Training will have to be tailored as much as possible to the knowledge level of each group of trainees. It should build on what they already know, adding options and sophisticated application.

Finally supervisors surveyed supervise in very diverse environments within HRA. A third of respondents were in direct services, a third in support services and a third in accountability/eligibility. The work they supervise involves various levels of contact with clients and others in the organization. It has different indicators of quality/ success. Staff have different levels of education and experience. Departments within HRA have various bureaucratic structures and management styles. Any training developed must help supervisors to learn and adapt to this multiplicity of environments.

The two surveys of first-level supervisors have provided a guide as to who will be trained in the proposed supervisory training and what they need to know. Development of the training modules and a guide for their presentation can commence.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This final section covers the factors that have gone into the creation of the six training modules found in Appendix C through H. It summarizes the results of the Training Needs Assessment and the survey of Supervisory Activity During a Thirty-Five Hour Week as to their impact on the development of modules. It looks at how modules were identified and created based on results of research as well as literature review. How principles of androgyny are reflected in the training is described.

Markets for this training other than public social services agencies are discussed. Prominent among them are the "quasi public" voluntary social service agencies.

Factors fairly unique to first-level supervisors in public social service agencies are identified and how they have been incorporated into the modules is explained.

Finally the potential role of social work and its values in training first-level supervisors in public social service agencies is discussed.

Impact of Surveys on Module Development

Eighty four first-level supervisors in HRA were surveyed as to their duties, experience, and training. They were asked to rate their knowledge in thirty four aspects of supervision as well as the importance of these aspects. Finally they were asked about their most serious problem. The thirty four aspects were clustered into eight categories reflecting first-level supervision in public social service agencies:

- Planning Work
- Communications
- Social Work Values
- Training/Development
- Relations with the Work Environment
- Conflict Management
- Leadership
- Procedural

A smaller sample of twenty five supervisors were asked how they spent an average work week, which area of their work was most difficult, and why. Their responses were categorized as follows:

- Review Staff Work
- Communicate With Staff
- Handling Personnel Issues
- Communicate With Superiors

- Doing Work Normally Done By Staff
- Planning Own Work, That Of Staff
- Obtaining Supplies, Resources
- Training Staff in Work, Behavior
- Preparing Reports, Statistics, Etc.
- Other

These two surveys offered a multi-faceted view of first-level supervisor training needs including:

- self ratings of their knowledge of various aspects of supervision
- self ratings of their view of the importance of these aspects
- a review and rating of their most serious problems in supervision
- a breakdown of how much time they devote to various aspects of supervision
- an identification of their most difficult aspects of supervision

How each category of supervision (Planning Work, Communications, Social Work Values, Training/Development, Relations with The Work Environment, Conflict Management, Leadership, Procedural) was reflected in the surveys influenced which of

them were developed into training modules and how they were packaged. A summary of findings re each category follows.

First-level supervisors realized the importance of the Planning category. They also gave themselves high knowledge ratings in this area. However the difference between their importance and knowledge ratings (importance 0.7 higher) is one of the largest among all categories. Supervisors spent an average of 1.5 hours per week (based on a 35 hour week) on planning and eighteen percent rated it as their most difficult task. They noted difficulty in finding time to plan and planning in changing office priorities. Their importance ratings argue for a training module in this area. Such a module should emphasize planning as it relates to first-level supervisors. It should sell the necessity for planning and the relative ease of the process.

Supervisors responding rated their knowledge of the Communication category as high - 3.8 average score (on a scale of five), 37% low-medium scores. Importance scores (4.2 average score, 19% low-medium scores) were about average. However when asked how they spent their time, a separate group of supervisors noted 7.5 hours weekly communicating with staff and another 2.5 hours communicating with superiors. Over half (52%) of these respondents said that communicating with staff was their most difficult task and an additional nine

percent noted communications with superiors. They noted problems in staff comprehension of communications, getting results from communications, and trepidation about giving bad news to superiors.

It appears that a module on communications is needed. However supervisors seem to feel that if they can write and speak they can communicate. They need to be convinced that communication is effective only if it brings results. They need to learn about different styles of communication and how to choose which one to use.

Respondents' opinion of their knowledge of Social Work Values was tied for the highest rating. However their rating of the importance of this area was one of the lowest. No one noted lack of knowledge of social work values as their most severe problem and no one mentioned spending time on this subject during an average week. In reality social work values seem to have little to do with the work of first-level supervisors in public social service agencies. There is serious question as to whether a training module should be developed to cover this area.

Both respondents' rating of their knowledge and of the importance of the Training/Development category were in the middle range. Their importance was +0.7 higher than

their knowledge rating. Staff needing training were noted as their most severe problem by seven percent of supervisors responding with a high 3.6 (on a scale of five) severity rating. Supervisors reported spending 2.0 hours per week training staff. Considering the above and the precarious state of training programs in HRA there is a need for a module on training emphasizing on-the-job training.

Respondents rated their knowledge of the Relations with the Work Environment category in the middle range. (3.6 average score, 41% low-medium scores). Scores on aspects relating to supervisors' relations with their bosses were especially low. Respondents gave this category their lowest importance score. However, when asked about their most serious problem, they frequently mentioned environmental issues (problems with upper-level management, lack of resources) and gave them high severity scores. Knowledge of their environment is important to supervisors as they link management and its objectives with workers and how they implement. However trainees will need to be sold on the ideas that their environment is important and that they can influence it.

Respondents gave the Conflict Management category low knowledge scores (3.5 average score, 49% low-medium scores) but ranked it near the bottom as to importance. However nineteen percent of respondents mentioned problem staff as their most

severe problem - clearly a subject for conflict management - and gave it a high 3.9 severity rating. How can this contradiction be explained? Conflict management is not a well defined area. There are few procedures written on it. Supervisors may feel uncomfortable about this area, deny that it is their responsibility, and argue that little can be done about conflict anyhow. There is a need for a module on conflict management. However the responsibility and necessity to deal with it must be made clear. Supervisors need to be convinced that conflicts can be resolved.

Respondents rated their knowledge of the Leadership category as relatively low (3.5 average, 50% low-medium scores). They rated it's importance as high - a significant +0.9 higher than knowledge. Motivating staff was noted as their most serious problem by eighteen percent of respondents. A leadership training module will need to stress a supervisory definition of leadership, how to utilize various styles of leadership in different situations and how to motivate staff.

The Procedural category has the lowest knowledge rating (3.1 average score, 63% low-medium scores). Three of it's aspects have the lowest knowledge ratings of all the aspects. Respondents gave Procedural the second highest importance score of all the categories. The difference between the

importance and knowledge ratings for Procedural (+1.3) is the highest for any category. Supervisors spent three hours per week on personnel issues and sixteen percent reported it as their most difficult activity. Clearly there should be a procedural module in the training package for first-level supervisors.

Creating Training Modules

Modules are training guides and material covering one broad category of first-level supervision in public social service agencies. For the most part they are based on categories utilized in analysis of materials for surveys of first-level supervisors. However not all categories have resulted in training modules. Some were divided or combined and one was not chosen for a training module.

Several categories were rearranged for training modules. Two categories - Conflict Management and Procedural - were combined into one module since most of the types of procedures covered (discipline and grievances) relate to conflict management and frequently are a follow-up if it fails. Motivation was taken out of the Leadership category and combined with the Communications category in a module. Conveying expectations and motivations to staff and being open to their expectations all tie in with communications.

One category, Relations with the Work Environment - was renamed for the Environmental module to sound more real-world and less doctoral.

Finally the Social Work Values category had only two aspects with very mixed knowledge and importance scores. Many supervisor, especially in accountability and support services, do not see themselves as social workers. Further, HRA and many other public social service agencies do not go out of their way to emphasize the area of social work values. No training is offered in this area. Knowledge of social work values is not mentioned in job descriptions for social workers or other staff in public social service agencies. The broader Getting along with people from diverse backgrounds (staff and clients) aspect can be incorporated into Leadership, Communication/Motivation, and Planning modules, among others. Social work values could and should be relevant to public social service agencies. It is up to the social work profession to make them so.

In developing modules efforts have been made to incorporate the principles of androgyny into both methods and material.

Self assessments are utilized in several of the modules. They allow training participants to assess their knowledge and behavior in a variety of supervisory situations. They

are designed to raise participant's awareness of how they really operate. They ask insight questions which participants may not have had time to consider. These assessments are completed in confidence which should encourage participants to be candid with themselves. Ideally they will increase self awareness of the need for training in a variety of areas.

Ties with present/real world situations are encouraged. Participants are asked to describe specific situations in their offices which are springboards to discussing strategies and procedures. Trainers should assure that these examples reflect common situations recognized/experienced by many participants. These situations are discussed by participants and one or more solutions are offered. This emphasis promotes group cohesiveness, may provide solutions to the situations discussed, and connects training to the here-and-now.

Participants are asked to relate past experiences in a variety of supervisory situations. They may be relating their own supervision or the supervision of others. The trainer asks them to discuss how these situations were dealt with and other participants are encouraged to discuss and assess the degree of success or failure of methods applied. This "telling of war stories" is the traditional way that

newer supervisors learn from older ones. However in this training it is guided story telling where the story and it's moral are reviewed critically.

Participants get to develop their own training. They are asked to contribute to lists and guidelines in a variety of areas. They review and criticize what they have developed. This is one of the highest levels of participant participation.

While the training is designed for mixed groups of new and experienced supervisors it allows participants to start at different points utilizing what they already know and have experienced. It offers a variety of options to deal with situations and, in doing so, allows experienced supervisors to review and incorporate what they already know. New supervisors can develop a knowledge base. Their more experienced classmates can add on to and formalize their knowledge bases.

By relating their past and present experiences, developing and analyzing solutions to problems, and creating lists and guidelines participants are bonded. They should transcend identity with office or division and begin to identify with each other and with their roles as supervisors.

**Relevance to Voluntary Social Service Agencies/
Schools of Social Work**

The primary audience for these training modules for first-level supervisors is public social service agencies. The modules were designed to reflect the environment and circumstances in which first-level supervisors in public social service agencies operate. However they may be relevant in other parts of the social welfare system as well.

This project has emphasized differences in first-level supervision in public and voluntary social service agencies. Those differences remain real but they may be decreasing. In their funding, size, staff, services, administration and clientele voluntary agencies are becoming more like their public agency counterparts. This affects who, how, and what their first-level supervisors supervise.

The key factor is funding. Voluntary agencies, already dependent on government funding, are becoming more so.

Voluntary social service agencies traditionally have had four primary funding streams - United Way/federations, endowments, client fees, and government monies. Over the last ten years United Way/federation funding has increased but only moderately. It has decreased as a percentage of voluntary agencies' total funding. Overall, giving for endowments also has increased slightly. However most of the

increase has been to educational or religious institutions, not social services. Generally only older voluntary agencies have endowments and their earnings have barely kept pace with inflation. Voluntary agencies compete with each other and for-profit organizations for a small pool of full fee paying clients. They are at a disadvantage in that they are seen as "charitable" organizations.

What is left is government funding. Such funding (primarily from or through state or local sources) has not increased dramatically. However it has increased at a more steady rate than other sources. It now is the largest funding stream for most voluntary social service organizations.

Several factors are behind the phenomena of an increase in the proportion of government funding. The first is a philosophical preference towards utilizing voluntary agencies. In the social welfare field privatization means contracting out to voluntary agencies. Second, voluntary agencies have the reputation of providing services cheaper than their public counterparts. Third, voluntary agencies have the reputation of being more flexible and adaptable in the provision of services. The last two points are not always true. Voluntary agencies can featherbed as much as their public counterparts. Public agencies have had to tackle problems and populations

from which voluntaries initially have shied away. However perception, not reality, often drives funding.

With government monies comes government influence. This influence initially may apply only to the programs that are funded. However as government funding increases and covers more services it profoundly influences the gestalt of voluntary agencies - whom they serve, how they are staffed, what services they provide, what standards guide them, and how they are administered.

Government funders have grown more specific about whom they want served with their monies. Target populations generally are expected to be poorer, more vulnerable, and more dysfunctional individuals and families. Thus voluntary agencies must shift away from their traditional middle class and "worthy poor" populations to these newer, more demanding, less cooperative groups.

For the most part government contracts do not pay for MSWs. Agencies must hire less educated, experienced, and motivated worker - in many cases without even a bachelor's degree.

Government funders are interested in concrete services or services that provide measurable results. They pay for nights of foster care, meals delivered, etc. They want to

know if clients are housed, keep clinic appointments, do not get pregnant, etc. They are much less interested in softer measures of success - gained insight, growth in personality, etc.

Government funding means increased and more specific accountability. More paperwork is necessary, especially from the line staff and first-level supervisory level. Accurate reports in proper format are required.

Finally government funding is best handled by larger voluntary social service agencies. Such agencies have gone through the same pattern of merger and growth as in the for-profit world. Even where agencies remain independent, they are part of larger confederations which influence or actually set many of their service standards and personnel policies.

All of these factors influence how first-level supervisors in voluntary agencies supervise. Increasingly they deal with the same emphasis on quantity of uniform services rather than quality of individualized services. They are more likely to supervise untrained staff without grounding in social work. They have to emphasize administrative over supportive and educational roles. Even when they play these latter roles, it is with the goal of getting work done.

Their paperwork increases. They facilitate the implementation of policies made at great distances from the provision of services.

As voluntary social services become "quasi-public" there are definite possibilities for marketing training modules for first-level supervisors to them. Such marketing might be to individual agencies. It also might target local or regional confederations of voluntary social services. For example, in New York the Council of Voluntary Child Care Agencies and the New York State Association of Family Service Agencies are possible targets.

Schools of social work may be another potential market for the training modules for first-level supervisors. There is anecdotal evidence that supervision courses currently offered in these schools emphasize the traditional trinity of supervisory functions - administration, training, support. They are, for the most part, designed for MSWs supervising other MSWs providing counseling services. A decreasing number of first-level supervisors actually have those credentials, supervise that staff, or work in that environment. If schools of social work want to reestablish or strengthen ties with public social service agencies (and, as noted previously, with voluntary social service agencies) they may want to consider a basic supervisory course. This course

would utilize the training modules developed for this project and stress the supervision of untrained staff offering concrete services. Such a course would be open to supervisors inside and outside of MSW programs.

Factors Affecting Training of First-Level Supervisors in Public Social Service Organizations

A variety of factors inherent in supervising in a public social service organization may influence the training of first-level supervisors from that sector. Each of these needs to be considered in developing training modules.

Civil Service

Almost all public social service agencies are under civil service rules. Civil service traditionally has meant:

- staff appointed to positions based on merit reflected in:
 - knowledge tests
 - education
 - experience
 - uniform procedures for grievances, evaluation, discipline

However in the 1980s civil service evolved into a caste system where staff were hired in different ways and where staff differing in seniority and civil service title had

differing levels of security and protection. This phenomena reflected a similar shift in many unionized sections of private industry (airlines, auto manufacture) where new workers were hired at lower pay levels and with less benefits and protection than those hired earlier.

While some new staff in public social service agencies are appointed directly into civil service positions based on test results and/or education and experience, a substantial minority are "provisional" appointments, without benefit of civil service status. These employees are expected to take the civil service test in their job title when it next is offered. However tests for many titles are offered on a very irregular basis (once every four or five years). Staff may remain "provisional" for many years. A significant subgroup of "provisionals" are employees who have a lower paying civil service title but who have been provisionally promoted to a higher title. Included in this group are many first-level supervisors. Even after staff receive civil service status they are "probationary" for at least a year before becoming permanent in their job title.

Provisional and probationary employees have less protection in issues of discipline and dismissal. Discipline actions have less steps and complexity than those against civil service employees. Lower levels and less incidents of insub-

ordination and incompetence are needed to activate dismissal.

This two-caste system impacts on training first-level supervisors several ways. The Leadership and Communication/Motivation modules will need to stress how staffs' civil service titles are a factor in differential supervision. The Conflict Management/Procedural module will have to consider how staff's civil service status influences discipline and grievance handling. The Environmental and Planning modules will cover how a supervisor's own civil service status will affect the flexibility he/she has in planning and how he/she relates to bosses and staff.

Unions

Most public social service agencies are union shops with line and several levels of supervisory staff unionized. In this environment:

- staff have contractually defined rights re discipline, grievances, pay, etc. (although these may differ between civil service and "provisional" employees)
- there are set procedures for discipline and grievance actions

- there are union delegates to inform and advocate for staff
- management directives that may go against union contractual rights are, for the most part, implemented by first-level supervisors
- first-level supervisors are union members themselves yet an arm of management implementing it's decisions

The union flavor of most public social service agencies impacts on almost all of the modules in supervisory training. The Environmental modules needs to stress supervisory knowledge of:

- the history and present situation of union-management relations in their offices
- how well acquainted staff are with their union contract ground for grievances, etc.
- what rights, protection supervisors have under union contracts

The influence of a union shop and union sensitive staff on the use of various leadership styles needs to be stressed in the Leadership module. The effect of a union shop on motivation techniques and styles of communication needs to be covered in the Communication/Motivation module. The Conflict Management/Procedural modules with it's emphasis on disci-

pline and grievances will stress union rights and limits and the role of union delegates. It also will emphasize management rights. Union agreements and how they affect work assignment will be covered in the Planning modules.

Job Definition

First-level supervisors in public agencies have poorly defined jobs. Management often does not clearly delineate their on-the-job duties. Supervisors themselves have personal conflicts about their roles, duties, and objectives.

Supervisors frequently are under generic job titles/ descriptions that do not fit the variety of situations to which they are assigned. Their job descriptions emphasize objectives (work assigned/monitored, quality maintained, staff disciplined, etc.) rather than the processes and strategies involved in reaching these objectives. How first-level supervisors fit into the hierarchy is different for each office and frequently different for each supervisor. The tasks assumed by a supervisor may change over time. Finally supervisors themselves often are confused as to what they should/should not be doing. Middleman and Rhodes¹ note that, coming from line positions, supervisors often have

1. Ruth R. Middleman, Gary B. Rhodes, Competent Supervision, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall Inc., 1985), pp. 45-50.

problems in delineating their jobs from those of their staff. Shulman² adds that as supervisors they are outsiders to a group (staff) where they were formally "in". Supervisors need to move towards managerial attitudes and broaden their perspective beyond individual cases/assignments. They also need to change from a collegial to a directive relationship with staff.

Training should help first-level supervisors to take their job descriptions, office norms, boss's expectations, and their own standards and develop a flexible supervisory role for themselves. It will emphasize the consistent goals of supervision (get work done, keep staff relatively happy) and the flexible methods necessary to reach those goals. Job definition should be reflected in most of the modules. In the Leadership module the concept of leadership is to be fitted to the first-level supervisory position. In both the Leadership and Communication/Motivation modules trainees need to be convinced to use different methods of leadership, communication, and motivation to reach supervisory goals. The Environmental and Planning modules should emphasize how a supervisor adapts his/her style and expectations to the office environment and supervisory demands. Finally the

2. Lawrence Shulman, Skills of Supervision and Staff Management, (Itasca, Ill.: Peacock Publishing, 1982), p.28.

Conflict Management/Procedural module should stress supervisory as opposed to staff roles and attitudes in discipline and grievances.

Emphasis on Outcome

As noted in previous sections supervision in public social service agencies emphasizes production more than process. It stresses the quality and quantity of work obtained from staff over the motivation, support, guidance, and training of staff. Job descriptions, office norms, and superior's expectations stress getting the work done rather than the interpersonal processes involved in encouraging staff to produce.

There is a certain seductiveness to this production approach. It is the quickest way to keep bosses happy. It allows supervisors to be "tough" and single minded. In contrast, working with staff as individuals is complicated and demanding. It involves assessments and ever changing plans for motivation and training. It requires toleration and patience and the willing to get to know people who otherwise would not be of interest.

Trainees will need to be convinced that an exclusive emphasis on production will not obtain it. Staff commitment and satisfaction are necessary to get good work on a regular

basis. These points will be stressed most in the Leadership and Communication/Motivation modules but also in the Training and Conflict Management/Procedural modules.

Selling to Organizations

Training for first-level supervisors in public social service agencies has two customers - the supervisors being trained but first, the agencies that buy into the training. This latter customer needs to be satisfied if training is to occur at all. Public social service organization leadership generally has some notions about the kind of training it's supervisors need. These notions may be right or wrong - more likely the latter. In large agencies leadership is far away from first-level supervisors. The modules should be presented to leadership as a flexible package that can be utilized in whole or part and with specific items (disciplinary procedures, for example) which can be adapted to a specific agency. Even more important is selling the idea of conducting a training needs assessment before training is finalized. Such an assessment of first-level supervisors probably will provide the trainer with arguments for training in general and for specific modules.

A training needs assessment also is a selling point with the trainees themselves. It provides the information for tailoring training to their needs and circumstances. It gives

trainees a sense of ownership in the training since some of their colleagues were consulted on it's development.

Unclear Structures of Command

Public social service agencies are bureaucracies but poorly defined bureaucracies. They have formal chains of command (organizational charts) but also informal power structures. These informal power structures are especially relevant to the implementation of policy as services. They include personalities, history, and relations.

Personalities are those individuals in an office - whatever their title - who have power. That power may be based on leadership, knowledge, influence with others, aggressiveness, longevity, etc.

History is how an office has operated in the past. It includes the office's challenges, missions, successes, scandals, failures, etc.

Relations are how an office relates to it's environments. Included are relations with clients, unions, other offices in the same department, different departments, community groups, etc.

The informal power structure defines the parameters in which first-level supervisors operate. It determines how much "wiggle room" a supervisor will have to add his/her own style to the supervisory gestalt. The Leadership, Communication/Motivation, and Conflict Management/Procedural modules note this informal structure of power. It is the main theme of the Environmental module.

Authority

Supervisors need to realize that their base of authority has shifted. As staff their authority was based on technical expertise in a program area but as supervisors authority comes from an ability to get work out of staff while keeping them satisfied. Murdock³ notes that this new authority is both assigned from superiors and earned from staff. It also is based on title - extremely important in a civil service bureaucracy. However in public social service agencies, union shops with frequently strained staff-management relations, authority is a dirty word. The job of training is to encourage supervisors to drop their expertise authority and become comfortable with supervisory authority. The Leadership module needs to sell both the sources of and definition of this new authority. Supervisors' base of authority also

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3. John B. Murdock, "The New Supervisor: Awareness of Some Problems Experienced and Some Suggestions for Problem Resolution Through Supervisory Training", The Clinical Supervisor, 8 (January 1990), pp. 81-92.

should be evident in the Planning, Communication/ Motivation, and Environmental modules.

Accountability and Evaluation

Tied to their job descriptions and use of authority are supervisors' different levels of accountability and evaluation. Trainees need to accept and positively utilize the idea that they now are responsible for the work of a whole unit. This implies that they need to guide and motivate not only themselves but also five or six subordinates. Their perception of and standards for work will need to become more flexible and less personal. Supervisors must look at production in the aggregate. Public social service agencies are concerned with production within deadlines. Supervisors in these agencies do not have as much time to focus on individual cases or situations. They must assure that their unit meets the agency's quantity and quality standards rather than their own, often higher, standards. This shift to production and overview should be covered in the Leadership module. It also will be discussed in the Planning module in an explanation of how supervisors set standards. Finally it is to be stressed in the Training module.

Standing in the Hierarchy

Middleman and Rhodes⁴ note that supervisors need to learn how to deal with a more complicated environment. That environment is especially complicated in large, public social service agencies. Supervisors are of a different rung of a long hierarchial ladder. They are relating less to clients/customers and more to subordinates, superiors, and other organizations. The breadth of these contacts should be discussed in the Environmental module. Communication styles with different groups and levels and motivation techniques are to be covered in the Communication/Motivation module. The Conflict Management/Procedural module must consider the office environment in which procedures are implemented.

Morale

One of the hardest problems with which training for first-level supervisors must cope is that of defeatism. It is hard to make things work in a public social service organization. Their mission is multifaceted and often unclear. These agencies have both service (day care, public assistance, shelters) and enforcement (child abuse investigation, probation, child support enforcement) roles. Often the same clients are provided with both services and enforcement, sometimes by the same worker. Public social services fre-

4. Ruth R. Middleman, Gary B. Rhodes, op. cit., 1985, p. 58.

quently deal with a clientele considered by the public to be at best, non-productive, and at worst, dysfunctional. These agencies have seen both their service and enforcement roles expand over the last decade as new social problems have emerged (homelessness) or society has been sensitized to existing problems (domestic violence). Public social service agencies are supposed to "do something" about these problems without a consensus about what should be done.

Constantly shifting objectives plus their aforementioned poorly defined jobs may cause a sense of hopelessness on the part of public agency first-level supervisors. The first objective of this supervisory training is to effect an attitudinal change in trainees. Supervisors must be convinced that they can make a difference on their staff and work. Yet their expectations must be realistic and fit into the bureaucratic environment. This modified message - strive for change but understand the milieu in which you do so - will be most emphasized in the Leadership module. There trainees need to be challenged to realistically define what they as supervisors can do. They need to be offered different approaches to obtain their objectives and ideas on how to analyze which approach is best. This same format - things can work if you diagnosis the situation and choose an approach - are to be stressed in the Communication/Motivation,

Planning, Training, and Conflict Management/Procedural modules.

Procedures

First-level supervisors in public agencies generally are candid in expressing their lack of knowledge re procedures in discipline, grievances, and other personnel matters. They have real incentive to absorb the Conflict Management/Procedural module. But supervisors need to be convinced that utilizing procedures is a last step to be taken only after more informal and personal efforts to resolve conflicts have failed. Trainers need to connect procedures to the office environment in which they are implemented. Even more, they need to stress that procedures are not clockwork mechanisms but can and should be adapted to individual situations.

Variable Approaches

Public agencies generally provide both services and enforcement "by the book" - under set and relatively simple procedures. Raised in this environment, supervisors may go into training thinking that they will learn the "One Way" to lead, communicate, plan, train, etc. Wiberg⁵ emphasizes that training must stress that the "One Way" is a chimera.

5. Lars-Erik Wiberg, "Should You Change Your Leadership Style?", Management Solutions, 33 (January 1988), pp. 5-12.

Supervisors must analyze each situation regarding circumstances, personalities, and environment. They then choose among a number of different approaches. Goals - production and staff satisfaction - are constant but methods are always changing. This differential diagnosis and treatment approach especially will be stressed in the Leadership, Communication/Motivation, Planning, Training, and Conflict Management/Procedural modules.

Getting Along with Bosses

Coming out of staff, most first-level supervisors are more comfortable relating to them than to immediate superiors or other levels of administration. Yet how much discretion and power a supervisor is given depends on his/her relations with superiors. Supervisors in training need to be convinced that it is both appropriate and necessary to accommodate superiors. In the Leadership, Conflict Handling/Procedural, and Communications/Motivation modules it will be important to stress the influence of superiors on a supervisor's work. Specifically what a supervisor can do to accommodate superiors and how he/she can do it are covered in the Environmental module.

Expectations

New and even experienced first-level supervisors in public social service agencies are unclear as to what to expect

from (or what is expected from them by) their staff and superiors. Job descriptions tell them what to do but not how to relate up and down. They need to think through what they reasonably can expect from staff and superiors and what staff and superiors can expect from them. It is necessary to communicate and negotiate these expectations. The Environmental module should include a section where supervisors can think through and list their expectations of staff and superiors as well as what can be expected from them. The Leadership, Communication/Motivation, and Training modules need to emphasize how supervisors establish and communicate their expectations to staff.

Balancing

No matter how well supervisors in public social service agencies integrate their job descriptions, personal standards, office environments, and superiors' expectations they still face a problem of balance. They constantly are balancing the bureaucratic and circumventive aspects of public social service agencies and how they implement policy. As one supervisor said, "You're always juggling between the way 250 Church (HRA headquarters) says it's supposed to be done and what's necessary to get it done." First-level supervisors take the directives of a formal bureaucracy and negotiate and nudge them to implementation. In doing so they deal

with office standards, the histories and personalities of staff and superiors, and their own personal style.

The Environmental module does little but outline how first-level supervisors can survive and thrive in complicated bureaucracies and relate to staff and superiors. Balancing organizational standards and directives against environment and situation also are to be covered in the Conflict Management/Procedural, Leadership, and Planning modules.

Social Work and Training First-Level Supervisors in Public Social Service Agencies

What role, if any, does social work and social work values have in the training of first-level supervisors in public social service agencies?

There is little love lost between the social work profession and public social service agencies. Each side blames the other for the breaking their relations and each side shares part of the blame. However the social work profession needs to realize that if its primary mission still is helping the poor it will have to effect a rapprochement with the public social service agencies. First-level supervisors are key in the operations of public agencies. If the profession is to regain any influence over the public social service agencies, training their supervisors is a good place to start.

The social work profession can contribute some of its values to the objectives of first-level supervisors in public agencies. The key objectives for supervisors in public agencies have been to get the work done and keep their staff happy. Quite bluntly most of the emphasis has been on getting the work done with staff satisfaction as a means to that end. What has not been considered is the recipients of services, and the objective of providing needed services for them. Providing services is more than getting the work done. It is seeing clients as individuals for whom "the work" must be customized. Several social work values and concepts are relevant here.

The social work concept of clients as individuals with strengths and needs rather than as recipients of the service being offered is important. This broader perspective would serve a number of purposes. It would encourage supervisors to have staff build on clients' strengths. Even within the "everybody gets the same" concept of services common in large bureaucracies it would encourage some tailoring. Individualizing clients also would encourage more respect for them. Most staff in public social service agencies are not many steps from poverty themselves. Staff often perceive clients as asking to be given things that they, the staff, had to earn. It certainly would not hurt for supervisors to

encourage staff to see clients as "he" or "she" rather than "them".

The concept of case management is becoming crucial in public social service agencies. The profession has some skills in identifying, negotiating with, and coordinating services for clients. With welfare reform the coordination of a number of players to provide a complete range of services become important. First-level supervisors oversee the birth, care, and feeding of case management plans. Social work can train them how to do so.

Social work could revive one of it's original values and utilize it in training supervisors in public agencies. That value stresses the importance of concrete services. The profession has ignored and in some cases denigrated the provision of income support, Food Stamps, Medicaid, day care, etc. Social work started out in settlement houses providing concrete services to help people and put them on the road to self sufficiency. Public agencies still do. To relate to public social service agencies and their first-level supervisors, social work has to reaffirm the value of what they do.

It could be argued that these values are good for supervisors in direct service units but not relevant to supervisors

in indirect service or accountability units. They may be less so, but they still are relevant. All supervisors, whatever they do, are employees of helping agencies. They need to be sensitive as to whom those agencies serve. It also may be argued that relating to the administrators using a typing pool or the institutions receiving surplus food in agency trucks involves the values of individualization and at least considering other customer needs.

Social work also may be able to contribute to the objective of keeping staff happy by instructing first-level supervisors on roles of training and especially supporting staff. To install the social work values noted above will necessitate supervisors becoming involved in the long term acculturation of staff. They will need to sell and consult more than to formally train if they are to change staffs' mindsets and feelings. Staff need to be convinced that they are doing work of value for people of value. The profession knows a lot about the instructing roles of supervision. It needs to adapt this generic knowledge to the environments, pressures, and demands of public social service agencies. It should sell supervisors on the idea of doing something more than simply getting work out of staff.

Staff in public social service agencies need moral and emotional support to do their hard and often thankless work.

Their supervisors are the most immediate source of that support. Supervisors will be trained in how to motivate staff but support is something more. As one new supervisor, reminiscing on her old boss, said, "She helped me to get over the hard parts." Supervisors need to be convinced that on occasion it is important to go beyond professional support and offer personal support as well.

As noted earlier, a potential customer for this package of training modules for first-level supervisors is schools of social work. These schools may be a key factor in reconnecting the social work profession to public social service organizations. They have some history of providing training to staff in these agencies. They could market realistic training for first-level supervisors in public agencies with an extra ingredient - social work values - mixed in.

Public social service organizations are less and less likely to come looking for support from the social work profession in training their supervisors. The profession will have to sell itself to these organizations as understanding the training needs of their supervisors and as willing to adapt itself to meet those needs. It will be interesting to see if the social work profession is willing to do so.

APPENDIX A

FIRST LEVEL SUPERVISORS
TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Date: _____

First-Level Supervisors:

The Office of Staff Development and Training is revising its Essential Supervisory Skills course. Your answers to the following questions will help highlight the training needs of first-level supervisors. Do not put your name on this questionnaire. Your answers are confidential. Please be honest and complete in answering these questions. Your responses will be a major influence on training developed for first-level supervisors. Thank you.

1. How many staff do you supervise on a regular basis?

2. How long have you worked for HRA?

_____ years _____ months

3. How long have you been a supervisor for HRA?

_____ years _____ months

4. What is your present job title? _____

5. In which division of HRA do you work (Protective Services for Children, Transportation, Kinship Foster Care, Division of AIDS Services, etc.)?

6. Briefly describe the kind of work your unit does.

7. Do you have any supervisory experience outside of HRA?

_____yes _____no

If yes, please note where you were a supervisor, for how long, and the number of staff you supervised.

8. Have you had any courses or training in supervision?

_____yes _____no

If yes, please note the titles and content of these courses (use the other side of this page if necessary).

There are many aspects to supervision. Few supervisors are knowledgeable in all of them. Some of these areas may be more important in your supervisory job than others. **FIRST**, rate how knowledgeable you are in each of the following areas. **SECOND**, rate how important knowledge in each area is to your job. Circle the appropriate answers.

	LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE					LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE				
	Low	Medium	High			Low	Medium	High		
9. Various ways to lead staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
10. How supervisors lead	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
11. How to motivate staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
12. How to develop a team approach in your unit	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

	LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE					LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE				
	Low	Medium	High			Low	Medium	High		
13. The responsibilities of a supervisor	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
14. Dealing with conflict (with staff, bosses, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
15. How to influence your staff's attitude	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
16. Distinguishing between discipline problems and other problems	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
17. How to apply HRA's disciplinary procedures	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
18. Documenting staff behavior	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
19. How to give feedback to your staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
20. How to give feedback to your boss	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
21. Memo writing	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
22. How to run meetings	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
23. Various styles of communications	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
24. Handling staff complaints	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

	LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE					LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE				
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High	
25. Grounds for grievances	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
26. Management rights	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
27. How to do on-the-job training	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
28. How to train staff in appropriate behavior	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
29. How to spot staff's strengths and weaknesses	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
30. How to evaluate staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
31. How to manage your time	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
32. How to plan your unit's work	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
33. How to delegate work to staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
34. How to administer personnel policies (absences, vacations, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
35. Who in your department has power and uses it	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
36. What you need to know about your boss	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

	LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE					LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE				
	Low	Medium	High			Low	Medium	High		
37. What supervisors realistically can expect from their staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
38. What staff realistically can expect from their supervisors	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
39. What supervisors realistically can expect from their bosses	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
40. What bosses realistically can expect from their supervisors	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
41. Social work values	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
42. Dealing with individuals with varied backgrounds (staff and clients)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
43. Are there any other aspects of supervision where you do not feel knowledgeable but which are important to you?										
	_____yes					_____no				
	If yes, what are they?									

44. What is the most serious problem presently facing you as a supervisor?

45. How serious is this problem?

Not too Serious		Somewhat Serious		Very Serious
1	2	3	4	5

46. Are you having any difficulties in solving this problem?

_____yes _____no

If yes, what are they?

47. If you have anything else you'd like to tell us about your training needs, please note it below.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX B

SUPERVISORY ACTIVITY DURING A THIRTY-FIVE HOUR WEEK

Date: __/__/__

First-Level Supervisors:

The Office of Staff Development and Training is revising its Essential Supervisory Skills course. Your answers to the following questions will tell us what first-level supervisors do on the job and what they find most difficult. This knowledge will help us to identify and prioritize areas where training is needed.

Do not put your name on this questionnaire. Your answers are confidential.

Please think through what you do on the job, how much time you spend on each task, and which task is the most difficult. Then answer the questions below.

Your responses will be very helpful in developing training for first-level supervisors. Thank you.

Look at the supervisory activities listed below. Estimate how much time (hours and minutes) you spend performing each of these activities during an average **thirty-five hour week**. If there are things that you do that are not listed below, please specify them under "Other" and note the time you spend doing them.

Next, review the list of activities again and note the **single most difficult activity for you to do** in the column on the right side of the page.

Activity	Hours/Minutes Spent In Average Week	Most Difficult Activity
Review staff work (for completion, quality)	____/____	____
Communicate with staff (re work assignments, completion, corrections)	____/____	____
Handling personnel issues (time/leave, grievances, discipline, etc.)	____/____	____
Communicate with superiors (re work assigned, plans, personnel issues, etc.)	____/____	____
Doing work normally one by staff	____/____	____
Planning own work, that of staff	____/____	____
Obtaining supplies/ resources	____/____	____
Training staff in work/behavior	____/____	____

Preparing reports,
statistics, etc.

____/____ ____

Other (please
explain)

____/____ ____

Why did you note the activity that you did as most difficult?

How long have you been a supervisor for HRA?

____ years ____ months

In what division of HRA do you work (Protective Services for Children, Transportation, Kinship Foster Care, Division of AIDS Services, etc.)?

Briefly describe the kind of work your unit does.

If you have any other comments about your work that you would like to share, please note them here.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX C - LEADERSHIP MODULE**Research Background**

On the Training Needs Assessment supervisors responding rated their knowledge in the Leadership category as low (3.5)* and the importance of this category as very high (4.4). This was the second widest gap between knowledge and importance ratings. One aspect - The responsibilities of a supervisor - was rated higher than average in both knowledge and importance. However all other aspects had knowledge ratings well below average with low scores on How to motivate your staff and How to influence your staff's attitudes especially notable. Leadership concerns were evident when first-level supervisors were asked to note their most serious problem. Thirteen responded that they had serious problems in motivating staff, another six that they had problems in adjusting to new supervisory roles, and five that they needed training themselves. Supervisors reported that the greatest portion of their time (9.5 hours weekly)** went into communication with staff re. work assignments, completion, corrections - definitely related to leadership. All respondents spent some time on this task and thirteen of the twenty five respondents to this questionnaire said that communications with staff re: work assignments, completion,

* on a scale of 5

** based on a 35 hour week

corrections was their most difficult area. When asked to specify, they noted difficulty in getting work out of staff, staff problems in understanding instructions and orders (perhaps more of a communications issue), and unmotivated staff. Clearly leadership must have a major place in the proposed training with emphasis on influencing staff attitudes and various ways to lead staff. However it will be advisable to tailor that training to the situation and mindset of supervisors in public social service agencies.

Objectives

To develop a Leadership training module for supervisors in HRA or any large public service agency necessitates consideration of problems that they may have with leadership in general and with leading a small unit in a large agency in particular. These problems have to do with:

- identifying with the supervisory role
- the use of authority
- accountability for the work of others
- levels of leadership
- the functions of a supervisor leader
- assessing preferred leadership style
- utilizing different styles of leadership

The identity problems of new and experienced supervisors have been summarized as shifting from "one of us" (staff) to "one of them" (management). With this new identity comes a new set of norms and expanded relationships. The norms are more impersonal (production, accountability). The relationships are more varied, not only with colleagues but also with subordinates, superiors, other organizations, etc. These relationships often are more pragmatic and instrumental than the trusting and helpful relationships that supervisors remember from fellow line staff. They naturally regret the loss of a supportive environment and common line staff identity. Supervisors need to be convinced that it is no longer functional to be one of guys/gals and that in their new role they need to modify how they see themselves and others see them. They need to assume a supervisory identity and to lead staff.

The acceptance and use of authority are crucial to good supervision. Authority is a bad word to many supervisors and no more than a necessary evil to others. Supervisors are more comfortable in utilizing earned authority based on technical expertise than assigned authority, granted by superiors. Ironically their technical expertise is only a small part of supervisors' earned authority. Further this expertise will decrease as they are less involved in detailed, hands-on work. Supervisors need to hear and accept

that their earned authority will come primarily from their reputation as leaders - for fairness, clarity, advocacy, expectations, etc. This authority will be earned from subordinates (who accept their leadership and do work) and superiors (who give leeway in how they supervise). Supervisors must learn to assess how well they are leading and, in doing so, earning authority.

Moreover supervisors need to comprehend the idea that their superiors assigned them authority (made them supervisors) with the expectation that they would use that authority to assure that staff under them produce a certain level of work with minimum disruption. They have to use assigned authority with those goals in mind.

However supervisors work for HRA or other often confusing and contradictory bureaucracies where the extent of their assigned authority often is unclear. Their reaction to this lack of clarity may be minimalist supervision - doing no more than necessary for staff or bosses. The Environmental and other modules stress supervisors' assessment of how much assigned authority they actually are given. They need to learn how to increase their earned authority and ideally to expand their assigned authority but to supervise within the constraints of their assigned authority.

As line staff supervisors were responsible only for their own work, now they are accountable for their own work and that of the staff they supervise. When they were line staff they followed bureaucratic rules and norms but still had their own style of working. That style included their pace of work, emphasis on quantity/quality, interest in some parts of the job more than others, and manner of relating to their supervisor and other staff. Now they supervise staff who probably have different paces, emphasis, interests, and styles of relating. They must learn to supervise by accommodating these various ways of doing work as long as the work is done in an appropriate manner and staff are relatively happy. As one new supervisor said, "It's hard to accept that just because things aren't done my way that they can still be done in an o.k. way".

Supervisors also need to adjust to different standards for the work being done by their units. As line staff they had immediate and complete knowledge of and involvement in their work. Now in supervisory roles they have only overview knowledge and must limit their involvement in individual situations. Their superiors generally hold supervisors more responsible for assuring that work is done (and on time) than that it is done to the specific standards an individual supervisor may expect. For people who frequently got to be

supervisors because of the quality of their work as line staff, this is extremely frustrating.

Supervisors frequently have not defined leadership in a context reasonable for their positions. They have not thought through the various levels on which a they can lead staff from ordering to influencing. Without putting a framework around how they can lead, it is more difficult to lead.

In a related lack of insight supervisors frequently do not have a clear idea of what as leaders they should and should not be doing. They may not have a job description. If they do, it probably focuses on the results of leadership (production, development, etc.) rather than on leadership itself. Supervisors need to learn and to put onto a personal context the roles they will play as leaders of a small unit. They also need to know what is generally inappropriate for a supervisor to be doing.

Supervisors lead staff, well or badly but they do lead. However they seldom assess how they lead - their normal style with it's strengths and weaknesses. This is not unusual since the day-to-day demands on a supervisor leave little time for reflection. Supervisory training should give the opportunity and tools for self assessment both of their style and of it's pluses and minuses. Without such self

assessment supervisors have little idea how well they are doing and what they need to change.

Finally supervisors tend to lead staff in one accustomed style and not consider alternatives. Supervisory leadership should be differential - the approach used should be based on the situation, personalities, and environment involved. Turning back to the objectives of supervisory leadership, get the work done and keep staff happy, supervisors need to realize that there are different approaches to these objectives, learn and become accustomed to these approaches, and be able to decide when to use them.

The Leadership module should help supervisors to:

- accept that they are leaders
- define a leadership framework with objectives and functions
- buy into the idea that within limits, they can lead in HRA or other large social service bureaucracies
- accept the idea of authority in leadership
- analyze how and how well they lead
- accept the idea of differential leadership
- learn how to lead differentially

In any training of this sort there is a problem of putting things into boxes - of separating interrelated subjects into distinct training modules. Here the specific problem is dividing leadership and motivation. The stress in this module is on how to lead staff. Motivation is stressed more in the Communication/Motivation module.

Since it needs to sell participants on ideas and actions, the Leadership module utilizes persuasion as much as instruction. It should utilize structured discussions and self assessments as much as lectures and handouts.

Leadership Module

The module starts out with a discussion and handouts on whether supervisors in large public social service agencies can be leaders and on defining leadership in a supervisory context. Participants will be encouraged to note positive and negative responses to the question of whether they can be leaders in their organizations or other large bureaucracies which the trainer will list on the board. He/she should assure that the following items are listed and discussed:

Can be Leaders:

- can train and mold staff
- can develop a team approach in unit

- can have an impact of the quality/quantity of work done
- can reward and discipline staff
- can advocate for staff
- can be identified and rewarded for what you have done
- are expected to lead by staff/superiors

Cannot be Leaders:

- must hand down commands from above whether or not you agree with them
- have little leeway to change things
- can't really punish or reward staff
- staff will resist if you lead
- superiors don't expect you to lead
- no one will notice what you do
- if you really lead staff your superiors may feel threatened

The discussion should bring out both the doubts and frustrations of participants and more positive attitudes towards leadership. It is designed to clear the air and help the trainer identify issues that are particular to this group of participants and that the trainer may want to work into his/her presentation.

The trainer then should leave the question of whether first-level supervisors can be leaders unanswered, noting that before it can be resolved it is necessary to define leadership and what it means for supervisors. He/she should question the concept of an all-powerful leader, noting that to be effective a leader must communicate with his/her followers and often needs to persuade them. Moses and General Swartzkopf are good examples. Referring to the handout defining leadership for first-level supervisors (Training Material C1) the trainer goes over the three levels of leadership:

- influence behavior (tell staff what to do through orders, "bossing" staff, the hardest type of supervision requiring constant effort and monitoring)
- influence thinking (the supervisor clarifies to staff his/her expectations re: production, behavior, attitudes, etc., staff may or may not agree with these expectations, but they define boundaries and act as a restraint on staff)
- influence attitudes (staff generally accept a supervisor's expectations and style, operate as the supervisor does even when he/she are not present, the highest form of influence, with at least some staff at this level the supervisory job becomes easier)

The trainer says that ideally all staff could be supervise on the third (influence attitudes) level but that different staff may be supervised on different levels at different times. Participants should be asked about their own experience in this area. The trainer stresses that the level of leadership applied depends on the office environment, specific situation, and personalities of individual staff. He/she should allow discussion in this area and make sure that most participants accept the proposed definition of supervisory leadership (most, if not all, generally do).

The trainer goes back to the question of whether supervisors in a large bureaucracy can be leaders. Utilizing the definition of first-level supervisory leadership just discussed and the expectations of subordinates and superiors towards a supervisor, he/she argues that supervisors can and must be leaders, noting:

- supervisors lead within the bounds of the bureaucracy and the orders of their superiors
- but they can influence their staff's behavior, thinking, attitudes
- they can influence the quality and quantity of work done by staff
- within limits they can discipline and reward staff

- HRA and other large public agencies are changing and supervisors who lead can be part of that change, be recognized and rewarded

Regarding expectations from staff and superiors, the trainer should note:

- staff expect some order and direction on the job
- staff expect that their supervisor will protect them
- staff expect that their supervisor will provide examples of quality, timeliness, behavior
- superiors expect supervisors to lead, to get work out of staff

Finally the trainer should argue that vacuums of leadership get filled - if supervisors don't lead someone else, superiors or staff, will and supervisors may not be supervisors for long.

In the next section of the Leadership module participants are encouraged to think through the overall objectives of their role as supervisor leaders - what they need to get from staff. The trainer writes on the board, "What Are the Objectives of Supervisory Leadership - What Do Supervisors Need To Get From The Staff They Lead?". He/she will list their responses and help participants to narrow down objec-

tives to those that are most crucial and encompassing. Ideally it will be possible to list objectives under two broad categories:

- get the work done (staff produce work of sufficient quantity and quality, are ready to take on new tasks)
- a basic level of staff satisfaction (staff are **relatively** committed to objectives, motivated, happy to be on the job)

The trainer should argue the validity of these objectives. There may be opposition to the production objective - participants may view it in a "slavedriver" context. They may also bemoan the impossibility of ever keeping all of their staff happy. Participants should be reminded that they were given their jobs to get work out of their staff. The trainer can agree that it is impossible to keep all staff happy all the time. However the objective is to keep most staff satisfied enough that they will do their work without constant supervision. The trainer will stress that satisfied staff produce more and better work.

Next the trainer will begin to work on defining supervisory authority and persuading participants that authority is a necessary and positive factor. As noted, authority is a

difficult concept for many supervisors to accept. The trainer writes on the board, "What can a supervisor do with authority?" and records participants' comments. Most of these will be negative (boss people, punish staff, etc.). If not mentioned by participants, the trainer needs to note the positive aspects of supervisory authority including:

- establishing expectations (for quality, quantity, timeliness of work, staff behavior, etc.; note that it is easier to work for a supervisor whose expectations are clear whether or not you agree with them)
- increasing the quality, quantity, timeliness of work (to encourage, guide staff towards more and better work)
- protecting/promoting staff (a supervisor's superiors, recognizing his/her authority, will listen to him/her defend and recommend staff)

The trainer will ask participants if it is possible to lead staff without using authority of some sort, stressing that use of authority is essential to an effective supervisor.

The trainer refers to the handout on different kinds of authority (Training Material C2) and lectures on authority assigned and earned. Assigned authority is defined in the supervisor's job title/description. Its boundaries are

specified by supervisors' superiors who expect that they will get work out of staff and call upon their bosses for assistance only if necessary. Some participants may complain that their bosses undermine their authority (reversing their orders, dealing directly with staff, etc.). The trainer explains that this problem will be covered further in the Communications/Motivation module. He/she adds that if a supervisor can get work out of staff and limit their dissension there is less chance that their superiors will pull back assigned authority.

Supervisors can earn authority from both staff and superiors. Referring back to the levels of leadership, the trainer notes that as a supervisor earns authority from staff they can move to the higher levels of leadership. Staff will not accede to the authority of a supervisor simply because of his/her position. However a supervisor can earn authority from:

- his/her ability to organize staff and get work done
- his/her protection of staff,
- his/her fairness towards staff (which is **not** the same as treating every staff person the same)
- his/her individualization of staff
- his/her expertise in leading
- his/her accessibility towards staff

- his/her motivation of staff
- his/her expertise in the work of the unit

The trainer should note that a supervisor will not have time to keep up on every technical aspect of the job. It should be emphasized that while supervisors will occasionally have to do the work of line staff, this should not become habitual. **The expertise of a supervisor should be in leading.**

They need only to have enough technical expertise in the work of the unit to assign it appropriately, know when it should be done, and know how to identify appropriate quantity, quality, and timeliness, and know where to refer staff questions.

Authority also is earned from superiors who monitor a supervisor's performance and decide how much leeway to grant them in supervision. The trainer should bring up the concept of "wiggle room" - the amount of discretion supervisors are allowed in their supervision. Supervisors are limited in their wiggle room by the structure of HRA or other large bureaucracies. However they can earn wiggle room from their superiors by assuring that staff do their work with relatively few disruptions.

The trainer then will ask participants to assess how well they are earning leadership from staff. He/she will hand out

the Leadership Self-Assessment (Training Material C3) and ask participants to answer the questions on the first page as candidly as possibly. These questions focus on particular aspects of leadership. It should be noted that participants will not be sharing their assessments with others. Participants then should turn to the second page and review the list of leadership traits reflected in the questions. The trainer will stress that all of these characteristics are important in supervisory leadership.

The assessment indicates where participants are doing well and need improvement; that improvement is possible as they become better supervisors. Participants should take the assessment with them for review on a regular basis.

Next the trainer should bring up the specific tasks of a supervisor in working with staff. Participants refer back to their first handout (Training Material C1) for a list of these tasks. The objective here is to make more specific and concrete the kind of work that supervisors do with staff. The trainer should use examples as much as possible, asking participants how certain tasks relate to their supervision. He/she should expect questions as to whether some tasks (negotiating with staff, providing enthusiasm) really belong to a supervisor. Asking the participants to follow along on

the handout, the trainer goes through and explains the tasks of supervisors in working with staff.

In discussing how a supervisor establishes, communicates, and clarifies goals the trainer stresses that this involves more than simply handing down commands from superiors. A good supervisor tailors orders from above to his/her style and staff. He/she may establish goals for staff as a whole or individual members but they must be communicated clearly and specifically. Feedback from staff should be encouraged to assure that they understand goals.

In securing staff commitment to goals a supervisor must clarify what time, energy, and ability are needed to achieve goals and assure that staff are willing to commit it. Salesmanship, especially appeals to self interest, will be needed.

The supervisor plans the whole activity to achieve goals. Before making assignments it is necessary to make sure that all parts of the job are in order, that roles are assigned, and that the interaction among roles is clear. This is a crucial job - nothing will make a supervisor look more foolish than going back to re-plan a job half way through it.

In defining and negotiating roles a supervisor clarifies who does what, how much, and by when. This frequently is done with individual staff and as a negotiation may involve redefinition of roles by the supervisor to get the commitment needed.

To secure commitment to roles the supervisor makes sure that each staff member commits to the specific job they are to do. That commitment may not be wholehearted but has to be at the point where each staff is ready to do his/her job.

The supervisor must set performance standards both for each job and for the work of each staff person. He/she should be specific as to the quantity, quality, and timeliness of work and insure that staff understand standards.

The supervisor provides both positive (stroking) and negative (corrections) feedback to staff collectively and individually. It is very important not to forget the positive feedback - don't just bring bad news. In most situations the supervisor should hold feedback until a piece of work is done rather than interrupting work in progress. Feedback will be covered further in the Communications/Motivation module.

By providing coaching and on-the-job training the supervisor demonstrates to staff how the job should be done and how to avoid mistakes.

Providing enthusiasm and example are one of the supervisor's hardest and most continual jobs. The trainer should ask participants how often they are enthused about their jobs. He/she then notes if the supervisor does not provide enthusiasm (even when they are not feeling that way), no one else will. The trainer also observes that every supervisor is a celebrity to their staff. Their behavior (attendance, attitude, focus on work) always is observed and often imitated by staff. Participants should be asked if they don't observe their own bosses - when they get to work, are in a bad mood, etc.

Finally supervisors are the strongest influence on the climate and group process of their staff. Climate (how staff feel about each other and the job) is colored by their attitude, example, and involvement in relations among staff. Group process (how staff work as a team to achieve goals) needs constant encouragement from the supervisor.

In the next section of the Leadership module, participants assess their leadership attitudes (the way they would naturally lead). Leadership attitudes are discussed within the

framework of the basic objectives of supervisory leadership - getting work done, keeping staff satisfied. The trainer encourages participants to go beyond their normal leadership attitudes towards maximizing these objectives. While the trainer will make comments on and show preference towards certain leadership styles, it is important not to be too judgmental and to stress that leadership attitudes can change with experience.

The trainer gives out the Leadership Questionnaire (based on work by Blake and Mouton) which assess how respondents would act in various leadership situations (Training Material C4). He/she tells participants it is to help them discover their leadership attitudes and explain the concept of leadership attitudes. Participants should answer questions reflecting the way they would normally act as a supervisor. Their answers and scores are in confidence and do not have to be shared. After participants have answered the questions, the trainer should refer them to the second page of the handout, explain the scoring scheme, and assure that all participants figure their "people" and "production" (or tasks) scores. The trainer copies the grid on the second page on the board and makes dots indicating five patterns of scoring - people 1, production 9; people 9, production 1; people 5, production 5; people 1, production 1; and people 9, production 9 (see next page for a copy of the grid). The trainer discusses

and work always should come first. They frequently see staff as a replaceable resource and believe that management knows what's best. However they do get work done, at least in the short run.

The people 9, production 1 pattern can be referred to as a social approach or "country club" supervision. This attitude also assumes conflict between production and staff satisfaction but favors the latter. Supervisors with this attitude see staff as making the organization what it is and as more knowledgeable about work than management. They use personal relations to insure cooperation with staff and keep them happy.

Middle of the road or "middle-muddle" supervision is reflected in a people 5, production 5 pattern. The supervisor again assumes conflict between people and production but tries to balance them, managing the competing demands of staff and superiors. It is not expected that either will be very satisfied.

Impoverished or "foxhole" supervisory attitudes are reflected in a people 1, production 1 pattern. Supervisors falling into this pattern try to avoid the people-production conflict by doing the minimum necessary to keep staff and superiors happy. This is a common pattern among burned-out

supervisors or new supervisors who see it as a way to stay out of trouble. It is the supervisory attitude most likely to cause trouble since it really makes no real attempts to satisfy staff or superiors any more than minimally.

Finally supervisors with a people 9, production 9 attitude can be called situational supervisors or "super sups". They believe that there does not have to be conflict between people and production demands and constantly work to create an environment where staff are relatively happy and organizational needs met. This attitude stresses flexibility and the utilization of a number of different supervisory styles. The trainer should note that this attitude makes many demands on the supervisor. Further, situations where both people and production needs are satisfied are inherently unstable. Good staff get promoted, production standards change, often good supervisors are asked to do even more. Participants should be asked if they ever were supervised by someone who inspired them to work very hard but with whom they were happy. Those that have should be asked to describe how this "9,9" supervisor operated.

The trainer needs to stress that a participant's attitudes towards leadership can change with training and experience (good or bad). A "9,9" attitude is a reasonable goal towards which one can work. Such an attitude promotes the utiliza-

tion of many leadership styles to meet the objectives of getting work done and keeping staff satisfied.

In the final part of the Leadership module the trainer continues to push the idea of differential leadership - utilizing different leadership styles depending on the situation, personalities, and environment involved. However he/she makes the idea more concrete by:

- outlining four different leadership styles, stressing authority and responsibility
- noting the advantages and disadvantages of each style
- noting factors which influence the choice of different styles

The objective is to move participants beyond their natural leadership attitudes so that they understand, to some degree accept, and assess when to use different leadership styles. The trainer should be sensitive to the degree of comfort that participants have with each of the leadership styles. He/she should encourage them to express situations where each style might be appropriate.

The trainer begins by referring participants back to the second handout (Training Material C2). Using eight large

coins, four representing authority and four representing responsibility, he/she role plays the four leadership styles with a volunteer participant playing a staff member.

Explaining the **authoritarian** style, the trainer stresses that the supervisor defines the work and sets specifications for it. He/she has all authority and responsibility. In the role play the trainer keeps all eight coins. He/she tells the volunteer specifically what to do and how to do it. The trainer monitors the volunteer closely and is quick to make corrections if the work is not done in the way he/she prefers. It should be noted that the authoritarian style can be "hard" or "soft". In the "hard" role play the trainer uses a loud, arrogant voice to tell the volunteer exactly what to do and how to do it. The "soft" role play involves the trainer assigning work in a normal tone of voice and noting that it is to be done per normal procedure and within the usual schedule. It should be noted that many regular assignments to staff are made in the "soft" authoritarian style.

In the **consulting** style the supervisor sets objectives but consults staff re methods and tries to sell them on the methods he/she chooses. In role playing this style the trainer keeps all of the responsibility coins but gives the volunteer one of the authority coins.

In the **participatory** style the supervisor still sets objectives but increases the amount of authority given staff re methods to achieve them. He/she incorporates staffs' expertise on process, timetable, etc. In the role play the trainer keeps the responsibility coins but gives the volunteer two (half of) the authority coins.

Finally, in the **delegating** style of leadership the supervisor sets objectives within broad limits but leaves it up to staff as to how they are achieved. After setting a framework of objectives (what needs to be done, by when) the supervisor may or may not consult further with staff. In the role play the volunteer gets three (most of) the authority coins and, for the first time, one of the responsibility coins.

The trainer should stress that these styles may be used with staff as a whole or individual members. Depending on the situation, environment, staff personalities and expertise, different styles may be used with staff and individual members.

Noting that they almost always bear full responsibility for staffs' work, some participants may question why they should ever give up authority to staff. The trainer notes that staff with some authority are more likely to be motivated and imaginative. The style where supervisors hold on to all

authority (authoritarian) is the most time consuming and one where they are most involved in the minutiae of the job.

The trainer will then discuss how supervisors can decide which style to use. The need for supervisors to consider their office environment, personalities involved, and specific situations before choosing a leadership style needs to be stressed. The trainer emphasizes that their first choice is not necessarily the right one. If one style does not work, another should be tried. Participants should put aside their Leadership Styles handout (Training Material C2). Utilizing the handout, the trainer will go over the factors determining leadership style on pages 2 and 3:

- who has the facts
- who has the knowledge/expertise
- how creative can we be
- how much resistance is there
- how soon does the work have to be done
- how important is the task
- what does the boss expect

He/she will allow participants to discuss the situations and decide on appropriate leadership styles. Participants will then review the styles proposed on the handout but understand that these are suggested styles, not absolutes.

Also discussed will be the process of choosing a style:

- analyze the situation
- choose the style that you think is most likely to work in the situation
- monitor staff performance and staffs' and boss's satisfaction to assure that your style is working; if not, re-analyze and possibly change your style

Finally the trainer will sum up key factors in first-level supervisory leadership:

- supervisors lead in changing environments and circumstances
- leadership objectives (get work done, keep staff relatively happy) are consistent
- leadership styles need to change to meet different circumstances
- supervisors need to use various styles and become comfortable with them

LEADERSHIP MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL C-1

LEADERSHIP

In this course we defined leadership as the ability to influence the behavior, thinking, and attitudes of your staff. Let's take these one by one:

- **Influence behavior:** get staff to do what you want them to do through orders, persuasion, etc., the most basic attribute.
- **Influence thinking:** clarify to staff what is (and isn't) acceptable behavior, production, etc.; whether or not they agree with your expectations.
- **Influence attitudes:** persuade staff to adopt your way of operation; an intellectual and emotional commitment to your goals and style; the highest attribute.

WHAT DO LEADERS DO?

- establish, communicate, clarify goals
- secure commitment to goals
- define and negotiate roles
- secure commitment to roles assigned
- plan the whole activity to achieve a specific goal
- set performance standards
- give feedback to subordinates as a group and as individuals
- provide coaching and supervision
- provide enthusiasm and example
- control the climate and group process

LEADERSHIP MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL C-2

LEADERSHIP STYLES

Basis for Leadership

All leadership is based on **authority**. Your authority as a supervisor comes from two primary sources;

- **received** from upper management (along with the supervisory title comes a certain amount of authority; however, the exact amount of authority depends on the leadership style of those above you)
- **earned** by the supervisor through his/her leadership (the supervisory title allows you to influence your staff's behavior- to boss them - but only over time with some consistent goals and through a variety of methods will you be able to influence their thinking and attitudes)

The *goals* of your supervisory leadership are consistent. They are:

- **get the work done** (staff produce the optimal quantity and quality of work, are ready to take on new tasks)
- **keep staff satisfied** (staff are relatively committed to objectives, motivated, happy on the job)

Style of Leadership

The **style** of your supervisory leadership should **not** be consistent but **vary** according to the situations and environments which are always changing. The style you utilize also may vary by individual workers.

You probably have a leadership style with which you're comfortable. It's not enough. You need to **develop** a number of styles, **assess** your situation, and **utilize** the most appropriate style.

Let's talk of four different leadership styles:

In the **authoritarian style**, the supervisor sets the objectives and tells staff what to do and how to do it. You give staff detailed specifications for the work, monitor them closely, and correct them if they don't do it your way. This directive style can be applied in a hard (ordering) or soft (directing) manner. In either

case, you are using your authority and taking complete responsibility for the work you're ordered.

In the **consulting style**, the supervisor sets objectives and ultimately decides on how to achieve those objectives. However, before deciding, you get input from staff (ideas, experiences, and feelings about how things should be done). The consulting style involves persuading or selling staff on a particular course of action. To a small degree, you share with staff the responsibility and authority for the work.

The **participatory style** takes consultation a step further. The supervisor sets objectives but shares with staff decisions on how to achieve these objectives. You and staff decide on the specifics of the work and how and when to do it. The course of action decided upon is basically acceptable to you and staff. In the participatory style, you are sharing with staff the authority and to a lesser degree, the responsibility for a task.

In the **delegating style**, the supervisor still sets the objectives but, within limits, leaves it up to staff as to how to achieve them. You are defining the work for staff but they decide how, when, and perhaps within what deadline to do it. After defining the work (setting a framework), you may or may not consult further with staff. Within the limits of your tasks, staff is given authority and to some degree responsibility.

Which Style to Use

What style do you use and when? That is a supervisor's decision. But before making it, you should assess your supervisory environment and the specific situation you're facing. The following questions may be of assistance.

Who has the facts? Do you or your staff have more information on a particular situation? If you know the most, an authoritarian style may be appropriate. If staff has more information, consider a consulting or participatory style. That way you can at least learn what staff knows.

Who has the knowledge/experience? If you as a supervisor are most experienced in an area, you may simply tell staff what to do. If staff has more experience, a delegating approach should be considered. If neither

you nor staff are knowledgeable (in a new situation for example), consider a consulting or participatory style.

How creative can we be? If the task leaves little room for imagination, a soft version of the authoritarian approach may be best. If there's room for staff suggestions, a consulting or participatory approach may work.

How much resistance is there? More often than not, staff resist change. If ordered to make change, they may sabotage them. If there is resistance, a consulting style will allow staff to express their feelings, and allow you to explain the change.

How soon does the work have to get done? Emergencies and rush orders leave little time for discussion. An authoritarian style may be best. However, if your staff are able and motivated, a delegating style should be considered.

How important is the task? Some jobs are crucial, both to the organization and to your career as a supervisor. In these situations, you've got the responsibility and don't want to give up the authority. Use the authoritarian or consulting approach.

What does your boss expect? Your boss may expect you to keep complete control over certain tasks. He/she may have problems with giving authority to you and more problems with you giving it to staff. Your boss, also, may be more interested in ends (production) than means (supervisory style). This gives you more discretion in your approach to leadership.

Process of Choosing

The process of choosing a leadership style is relatively simply. It has three steps:

- Analyze the situation
- Choose the leadership style that best meets the situation
- Monitor workers' performance and satisfaction to make sure the style is working. If not, re-analyze the situation and possibly change your style.

The last step is of particular importance. ***If your style is not working, change it. In fact, in some***

situations it is wise to have a fall-back style ready if your first choice fails.

To Sum Up

In summary, there are several important things to remember about supervisory leadership:

- Supervisors lead in changing environments and circumstances
- Leadership objectives are consistent
- Leadership styles must change to meet different circumstances
- Supervisors need to use various styles if they are to become comfortable with them

Good luck! Now go out there and lead!

Partially from:

Christina Christenson, Thomas W. Johnson, John E. Stinson, Supervising. (Reading, Mass: Addison Wesley Publishing Co., 1982)

LEADERSHIP MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL C-3

LEADERSHIP SELF-ASSESSMENT

This assessment is for you as a first-level supervisor. You should be honest and candid in scoring yourself. You need not share your scores with anyone.

Rate yourself against each of the following descriptions in a scale from 1 (that is not like me at all) to 10 (that is exactly like me).

1. I provide phone numbers when I leave the office so that I can be reached if my staff need me. RATING _____

2. I like some of my staff more than others but I am not extreme in my feelings and show little favoritism. RATING _____

3. I rarely advertise my unit's work as mine, but instead stress to the world that my staff did the work. RATING _____

4. When something goes wrong in my unit, I see a problem that I need to work on (and may have caused) rather than labeling it a screw-up by one of my staff. RATING _____

5. I have little difficulty admitting to others in the workplace that something is my fault. RATING _____

6. I pay attention to how I talk and dress because it affects staff's image of me and of themselves. RATING _____

7. I have patience when people tell me about their "new ideas" that I thought of two years ago, or when people at meetings consume time debating what, to me, are trivial issues. RATING _____

8. My first reaction - and it is a strong one - is to defend my staff if anyone criticizes them. RATING _____

9. I would rather make a decision, be wrong, and scramble to fix things, than to put off a decision until my plan has a 100% chance of success. RATING _____

10. I realize that certain of my staff might feel cheated by their co-workers' (and superiors') salaries, office space, or promotions.

RATING _____

LEADERSHIP FACTORS INDICATED BY QUESTIONS

- Question #1: Availability
- Question #2: Fairness
- Question #3: Credit Sharing
- Question #4: Problem Solving
- Question #5: Acceptance of Responsibility
- Question #6: Image-Consciousness
- Question #7: Tact/Patience
- Question #8: Protectiveness
- Question #9: Decisiveness
- Question #10: Equitability

LEADERSHIP MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL C-4

LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

The following items describe aspects of leadership behavior. Respond to each item according to the way you would be most likely to act *if you were the leader of a work group*. Circle whether you would be likely to behave in the described way:

(A) Always; (F) Frequently; (S) Seldom; (N) Never

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------|
| 1. | I would most likely act as the spokesman for a group. | A F S N |
| 2. | I would encourage the use of uniform procedure. | A F S N |
| 3. | I would settle conflicts when they occur in the group. | A F S N |
| 4. | I would schedule the work to be done. | A F S N |
| 5. | I would decide what will be done and how it will be done. | A F S N |
| 6. | I would persuade others that my ideas are to their advantage. | A F S N |
| 7. | I would be reluctant to allow members any freedom of action. | A F S N |
| 8. | I would refuse to explain my actions. | A F S N |
| 9. | I would be willing to make changes. | A F S N |
| 10. | I would permit to set its own pace. | A F S N |
| 11. | I would let the members do their work in the way think best. | A F S N |
| 12. | I would turn the members loose on a job and let them go to it. | A F S N |
| 13. | I would permit the members to use their own judgment in solving a problem. | A F S N |
| 14. | I would allow members complete freedom in their work | A F S N |
| 15. | I would keep the work moving at a rapid pace. | A F S N |

16. I would assign group members to particular tasks. **A F S N**
17. I would needle members for greater effort. **A F S N**
18. I would push for increased production. **A F S N**

- A. On items 1 through 8 put an "X" next to the items to which you responded **S (Seldom)** or **N (Never)**.
- B. On items 9 through 18 put an "X" next to the items to which you responded **A (Always)** or **F (Frequently)**.
- C. **Circle** the X's you have written in front of items 7 through 14.
- D. Count the circled X's. This is your score for concern for people. Record the score in the blank following the letter "P" at the end of these instructions.
- E. Count the uncircled X's. This is your score for concern for production. Record this score in the blank following the letter "T" (tasks) at the end of these instructions.

P _____ T _____

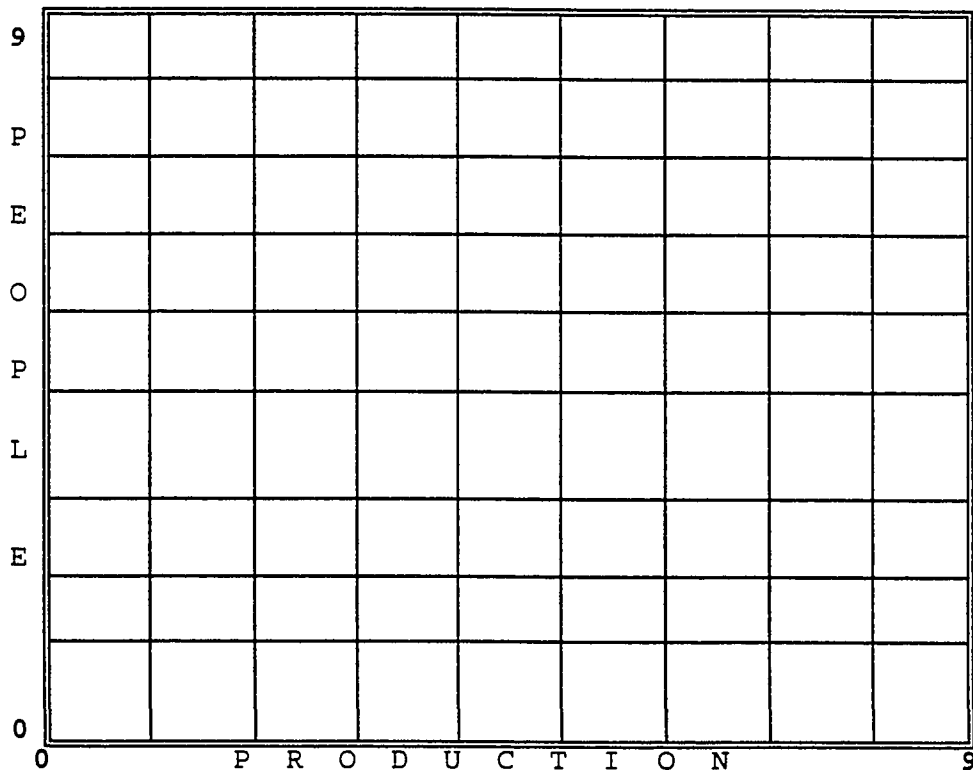
MANAGERIAL GRID

Name

Group

Locating Oneself on the Grid:

Directions: In order to locate oneself on the Managerial Grid below, find your score for **Concern for Production** (previous page) on the horizontal axis of the grid. Next, move up the column corresponding to your Production score to the point of intersection with your **Concern for People** score. Place an "X" at the intersection that represents your two scores.



From: Robert Blake, Jane Mouton, The New Managerial Grid.
 (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Publishing, 1978)

APPENDIX D - CONFLICT MANAGEMENT/PROCEDURAL MODULE**Research Background**

The Conflict Management/Procedural module combines two logically related categories. In large bureaucracies many procedures are designed to manage conflict and are implemented when other methods of conflict management have failed. The aspects in the Conflict Management category (Dealing with conflict (with staff, superiors), Distinguishing between discipline and other problems, Handling staff complaints) stress how to avoid utilizing many of the aspects in the Procedural category (How to apply HRA's disciplinary procedures, Documenting staff behavior, Grounds for grievances, Management rights, How to administer personnel policies (absences, vacations, etc.)). If conflict management measures do not work, procedures offer a step-by-step course towards problem resolution.

On the Training Need Assessment for First-Level Supervisors respondents gave both the Conflict Management and Procedural categories relatively low knowledge ratings. With an overall 3.1 average score* and 63% of respondents reporting low-medium knowledge scores, the Procedural category has the

* on a scale of 1-5

lowest knowledge rating. Three of its aspects have the lowest knowledge ratings and highest percentage of low-medium knowledge scores overall. The Conflict Management category (3.5 average score, 49% low-medium scores) also is below average. Considering the importance of each category, respondents gave Procedural the third highest rating of any category (4.4 average score, only 13% low-medium importance scores) but ranked the Conflict Management near the bottom in importance (4.0 average score, 21% low-medium scores). The difference in the importance ratings is interesting and problematic. It might be explained by supposing that supervisors regard aspects in the Procedural category as more concrete and those in the Conflict Management category as more relational. Procedural aspects involve written rules and regulations. It's difficult to deny their importance. Conflict Management aspects involve relations among individuals. They are less defined, more focussed on one-on-one relationships, and harder to operationalize. Supervisors may believe that knowing and applying the rules is enough. They may not see that managing conflict can help them avoid utilizing rules and regulations.

When asked about their most serious problem, twelve of sixty five respondents noting problems mentioned problem staff - an area involving both conflict management and knowledge of procedures. Further, they gave this problem the second high-

est severity rating (3.7). Respondents surveyed spent an average of three hours per week** on personnel issues, almost all respondents spent at least some time on this activity and 16% said that it was their most difficult activity.

To summarize, first-level supervisors believe that they do not know enough about procedures, see them as important, and spend time on procedural matters. They rank their knowledge of conflict management as fairly low but do not see the area as very important despite the fact that problem staff are one of their major concerns. How do these findings translate into issues to be considered in developing a Conflict Management/Procedural training module?

Objectives

As noted, procedures are utilized when preventive measures have not worked. Public social service agencies often react to social circumstances rather than preventing/modifying them. Income support is offered after jobs are lost; protective services are activated after children are abused. This philosophy often carries over into supervisor-staff relations. Problems with staff are identified and dealt with (or not dealt with) rather than prevented. Procedures for deal-

** based on a 35-hour week

ing with staff problems are codified and cover almost every conceivable situation. There are no procedures for handling conflict and complaints, for deciding when to discipline. It may seem easier to ignore problems in the hope they will go away and in the knowledge that if they do not, there is a structured way to handle them.

Managing and preventing conflict may involve disputes between supervisors and staff, between supervisors and bosses, among units, or among staff. In all of these cases the supervisor is a participant or referee. Managing and preventing conflict takes constant work, often with unpleasant people. Some supervisors may argue that conflict should not exist in a well run office and, if it does, they should not have to handle it. To quote one first-level supervisor, "I was hired as a supervisor, not some sort of counselor or hand holder." Other supervisors will deny the potential for or existence of conflict. Still others will resign themselves to conflict as a given of the office environment that cannot be changed.

In managing conflict the roles of first-level supervisors are unclear. There are few written guidelines on how supervisors handle conflict with and among their staff, on how and how much they can monitor staff, on how they decide if discipline is necessary. This lack of role clarity becomes

even more of a problem in a union environment where many supervisors see attempts to defuse conflicts or to document behavior as placing them at risk of grievances.

Supervisors may not be skilled in distinguishing among staff complaints as to their seriousness or propensity for solutions. With no way to classify complaints they may ignore serious but solvable complaints while spending too much time on trivial or unsolvable matters.

Finally supervisors may feel powerless in working with staff conflicts and trying to resolve staff complaints. They fear that efforts to resolve staff complaints will hurt their relations with superiors. They often see efforts to deal with conflict and complaints as doomed to failure and diminishing their reputation with staff.

First-level supervisors may feel that it is necessary to learn procedures but it is not an area that makes their hearts beat faster. Procedures are methodical, step-by-step guides with all the allure of an insurance policy. Supervisors may see them as boring and mechanical without any real interest or connection to their day-to-day work. They need to understand how and when procedures can (and cannot) be used. They should be convinced that procedures, especially

regarding discipline and grievances, offer them a greater number of options for dealing with difficult situations.

Procedures also are like insurance policies in that they relate to circumstances that supervisors rather would not think about - taking disciplinary action against staff, having grievances filed against them. The distastefulness of these subjects has several aspects.

Like most individuals, first-level supervisors think of themselves as "nice guy/gals". Taking disciplinary actions against staff means stepping out of that role. Grievances against them imply that staff see them in a negative light.

First-level supervisors often believe that involvement in discipline or grievances may raise questions as to their supervisory abilities. They fear the reaction of their superiors to such actions.

Discipline and grievances are infrequent occurrences. Not wanting them to happen, supervisors may convince themselves that these misfortunes will not affect them. As one supervisor noted, "Why should I spend my time thinking about what probably never will happen anyhow?".

Many supervisors do not comprehend the cumulative nature of discipline and grievance actions. They do not see discipline and grievances as resulting, at least to some degree, from their own action or lack of action. They do not have a preventive mindset - the understanding that through their own behavior they can prevent discipline or grievance actions or at least put themselves in a better position to handle them.

Many first-level supervisors see discipline and grievance procedures as lockstep processes with one action following another towards a generally bad end. They need to understand that these processes start informally and only late in the game do they become formal and structured; that procedural action can stop at any number of points; and that alternatives to discipline and grievances can be explored even after the procedures are activated.

Many supervisors are unclear or unrealistic as to the objectives or discipline and grievance procedures. They see discipline as ending only in the punishment of staff and grievances resulting only in the restraint of superiors. They need to clarify their expectations of these procedures and to adapt their expectations to different situations.

Finally, like many employees of large bureaucracies, supervisors may be cynical as to whether procedures on discipline, grievances, or even time and leave really work and really are useful to them. Any discussion of discipline will elicit examples of dysfunctional employees who remain on the job despite efforts to discipline them. Exploration of grievances will bring up examples of how the procedures did not work or were used unjustly.

To train in Conflict Management and Procedures, the connection between the two must be established. Participants must be persuaded that their actions in managing conflict, handling staff complaints, and assessing whether or not disciplinary actions are needed will influence whether they need to utilize discipline or grievance procedures.

A reasonable trainer will concede that dealing with complaints, conflict, and dysfunctional staff are distasteful activities at best. However if they are ignored, the result is likely to be the even more distasteful imposition of grievance or discipline procedures. Supervisors need to be convinced that it is their responsibility to manage conflict. No one else will do it and conflict will damage them more than anyone else.

How supervisors can create an environment where conflict and complaints are reduced should be stressed. What they should and should not do in managing conflict and complaints needs to be emphasized.

Most large public social service agencies are union shops where the rights of staff are emphasized. Training for supervisors should cover generic rights of staff and management as well as the more personal level of what they can expect in their relations with staff.

Training on discipline and grievance procedures must explore the emotions of supervisors re these options. These include:

- a reluctance to be the "heavy" in disciplinary situations
- fear of condemnation from staff in grievance or disciplinary procedures
- a fear of the unknown in utilizing these procedures
- the desire to punish dysfunctional staff

Clarity of objectives in grievance and disciplinary procedures will be covered. While the trainer will walk through each step in procedures, he/she will stress the options available at each step - what can be done to stop or divert the action.

In discipline and grievance procedures one "goes by the book". Participants need copies of the actual updated procedures to learn the specific things they must, can, and cannot do. They need to be aware of the rights and obligations of all parties involved. This training module, while targeted on HRA, is generic enough to be used in other public social service agencies. It does not include specific procedures but trainers utilizing it should incorporate those procedures.

Procedures are implemented in office environments. Referring back to the Environment module, the circumstances and personalities influencing implementation of discipline and grievance procedures will be stressed.

Conflict Management

The trainer will start the discussion of conflict management by defining conflict. Two of the dictionary definitions¹ will be offered:

- a state of disagreement, disharmony
- in psychology, the simultaneous functioning of mutually exclusive impulses, desires, tendencies

1. Webster's II, New Riverside University Dictionary (New York, The Riverside Publishing Company, 1988), p. 297.

He/she will argue that both definitions apply to the conflicts faced by first-level supervisors. They face with disharmony and conflict with staff, superiors, other units. Their feelings about conflict may include desires to avoid and resolve, realistic facing up to conflict and wishful think that it will go away, and senses of both power and powerless to resolve conflict.

The specific types of conflict with which a supervisor may be dealing should be listed on the board:

- conflict among staff
- conflict between the supervisor and his/her staff
- conflict between the supervisor and his/her superior
- conflict between units/offices

The trainer will note that almost all people would rather avoid conflict if they could. He/she asks participants why a supervisor would want to avoid conflict if possible, listing reasons on the board. What probably will result is a combination of reasons to avoid conflict and rationalizations against dealing with conflict even if it is acknowledged. The reasons to avoid dealing with conflict should include:

- conflict involves people acting unreasonably, I do not like dealing with them

- if I deal with conflict the hostile behavior of others may be directed against me
- if I fail in dealing with conflict it will be a blow to my ego, to other's view of me
- I don't know how to handle conflicts
- I don't have the power to resolve conflicts

The rationales for these reasons may include:

- I never win in conflicts anyhow
- conflicts will resolve themselves if left alone
- people should be reasonable and resolve their problems themselves
- it's not my job

At this point the trainer needs to do a fairly hard sell as to why supervisors must try to resolve conflicts that affect their work and careers. He/she may want to divide the arguments into four facets.

Overall reasons for supervisors to try to resolve conflicts involving their unit include:

- your job is to get work from staff, dealing with (rather than resolving) conflict takes time and energy from that objective

- dealing with conflicts means less time to devote to keeping staff happy, thus raising levels of dissatisfaction; get them resolved
- if you don't try to resolve conflict things probably will get worse (discipline, grievances, continued and heightened conflict)

Reasons for supervisors to try to resolve conflicts between them and staff/bosses include:

- conflict between you and some staff means that other staff take sides, dividing the unit
- conflict with bosses can undermine your relations with staff
- conflict with bosses can hurt your career

Reasons to try to resolve conflict among staff include:

- staff members in conflict will try to get you on their side, resent you if you don't take sides
- conflict among staff divides staff into antagonistic camps

Reasons to try to resolve conflict among units/offices include:

- failure to cooperate means that work is not done which may reflect on you as a supervisor
- you want to avoid "blame games" with other units/offices

The trainer will note that no matter how individuals feel about conflict, as supervisors they will have to deal with and try to resolve it. Dealing with conflict does not mean completely or permanently resolving it. This may be impossible. The objectives of a supervisor in dealing with conflict include:

- reducing conflict to the point where it does not affect staff work
- reducing conflict to the point where it does not affect staff morale
- developing rules for resolving (or at least attempting to resolve) conflict
- reducing areas/situations where conflict may occur
- gaining credit from staff/bosses for trying to resolve conflict
- eliminating specific conflicts

When a supervisor begins to deal with a specific conflict it may be unclear which goal is realistic. He/she should aim at

the goal of resolving conflict but have back-up goals in mind.

Next, the trainer suggests that participants assess how they normally cope with conflict both to see where they are starting from and to discuss various means of resolution.

Participants will be given the questionnaire and scoring instrument for the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (Training Material D1) which indicates their preferred method(s) of dealing with conflict. They and the trainer complete the questionnaire and score themselves. Any score of eight or over is an indication of a tendency to use that mode of resolving conflict.

Participants and trainer refer to and discuss the Five Conflict Handling Modes (Training Material D2) which outlines five methods of dealing with conflict. Here the trainer stresses that no matter what mode participants naturally prefer, there are situations where each of the modes will be the most appropriate. Supervisors need to diagnosis the conflict situation and decide on the mode that is best to resolve it. Situations where each mode would be appropriate will be discussed. Stressing the objective of resolving (win-win) as opposed to winning or delaying a conflict, the

trainer will sell the collaboration mode as relevant to the largest number of situations.

Trainer and participants then discuss how a supervisor might assess a conflict and how to deal with it. Participants are asked to describe one or more conflicts at their offices that affect their jobs as supervisors - either between themselves and others or between other parties. They are given copies of the Conflict Analysis Questions (Training Material D3) to use in reviewing these situations. These questions are phrased for conflicts between a supervisor and others but with a change in pronouns they can be used to dissect conflicts between others. The trainer reviews the areas that need to be covered in analyzing a conflict:

- who does the conflict affect (directly and indirectly)
- what does each party to the conflict want
- how important is the conflict to the parties involved, to others affected
- what is the history behind the conflict
- what are the conflict styles of the parties involved
- what are the desirable/undesirable outcomes that might result from the conflict
- what alternative courses of action might result from the conflict, what are the consequences of each

He/she stresses that a supervisor must step away from the conflict, view it as a third person, if the analysis is to be successful. The trainer admits that the method chosen to deal with conflict after assessing it may not be successful. However it is more likely to work than a mode resulting from instinct or natural preference alone.

Participants will be referred to Training Material D4 for three handouts:

- Resolving Your Disputes with Another Person
- Ways to Respond to a Dispute Between Others
- Managing Conflict Between Two Antagonists

The first of these is relevant to supervisors conflicts with staff, bosses, and other units. It should be gone over point by point. The other two handouts refer more to supervisors' referee roles. Participants should be given time to read these handouts and direct questions about them to the trainer.

Discipline

Training on the role of supervisors in discipline in a large social service agencies needs to cover three areas. The first of these, feelings, includes:

- the reluctance of supervisors to become involved in disciplinary actions
- their belief that the disciplinary process won't work
- clarification of supervisory objectives in disciplining

The second area, specific disciplinary procedures, will differ from one bureaucracy to another. The following delimitation will apply to disciplinary procedures in most large public social service agencies. Trainers will need to add the specific procedures of their own organizations. It includes:

- participants (person being disciplined, supervisors, superiors, upper administration, unions, etc.)
- the steps in the process (warnings, discipline, appeals, etc.)
- the penalties involved (warning, suspension, fines, dismissal, etc.) and when they are applied
- requirements for recording, advising, rights of management/the person being disciplined, etc.
- specific behavior which may result in discipline
- situations where the process may be speeded up (crime, physical violence, etc.)

- situations where the process may be shifted to other objectives - Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), psychiatric exams, etc.

Finally the third area is the process of discipline. This is the more flexible and social, less lockstep and structured side of discipline. It includes:

- distinguishing discipline from motivational or training problems
- the office environment re discipline
- the social impact of disciplinary action on others in the work unit
- the relation of the supervisor and staff member being disciplined
- the reaction of superiors to disciplinary actions
- selling and reselling superiors on discipline

At the start of the session on discipline, the trainer should ask participants to relate the first word that comes into their mind when they think of discipline. These words are written on the board. Inevitably a list including punishment, pain, anger, conflict, and similar words will result. The trainer notes that these are negative words. At best they reflect an unpleasant but necessary duty. Discipline is not a subject about which supervisors like to

think. They see it as implying the failure of other options.

It is noted that discipline in most large social service organizations:

- has two meanings:
 - adherence to rules and regulations
 - actions to ensure that rules and regulations are enforced
- is corrective in nature, aiming to correct or stop behavior rather than punish it
- is progressive with severity based on whether offenses are repeated and their seriousness
- follows due process with worker's and management's rights respected
- should not be used to deal with problems of training or motivation
- does not always result in penalties/severe penalties
- is a process that can be shifted to other alternatives (accelerated disciplinary process, EAP, mental health leave, etc.) even after it is activated

The trainer notes that even with these qualifications and explanations discipline still is not something in which supervisors are very willing to engage. Asking participants

why they might not want to discipline staff he/she lists their responses on the left hand side of the board. Once these are listed, the trainer will note that reasons for not disciplining can be matched by equally persuasive arguments for disciplining. These counter-arguments will be listed on the right hand side of the board. Arguments against and for discipline will include:

<i>AGAINST</i>	<i>FOR</i>
I will get no support from superiors	If you don't record and report disciplinary problems, you'll be blamed for them; you should be able to convince superiors to support you.
I don't know the disciplinary procedures	Learn them here for your protection.
I don't want to jeopardize a staff member's career.	They're jeopardizing your career.
Discipline will result in losing staff I can't afford to replace.	Isn't it more of a burden to work around a discipline problem than to replace them?
My relationship with the disciplined person will be strained.	If they're a discipline problem the relationship is already strained.
It's probably just the personality difference.	If a staff member breaks rules, it's not just a personality difference.
It will cause strain in the unit.	How much strain is the disciplinary problem causing in the unit already?
Discipline won't get my problem staff fired.	Some people do get fired; is your objective to fire them or straighten them out?

The trainer summarizes by stating that discipline is a hard course of action to accept and implement, but that there are times and situations where it is necessary and should not be avoided.

The next area of discussion is the objectives of discipline. Participants are asked what these objectives might be and their answers are listed on the board. The following items should be mentioned:

- the person being discipline realizes the problem and changes their objectionable behavior
- the person being disciplined realizes that the supervisor will not tolerate his/her behavior and changes it
- the true source of the disciplinary problem (emotional problems, substance abuse) is discovered and remedied
- the person being disciplined is penalized
- the person being disciplined transfers
- the person being disciplined resigns
- the person being disciplined is dismissed

A discussion of each of these options is appropriate.

It may be that a staff member does not realize the problem caused by his/her behavior and only the commencement of disciplinary action will raise awareness. Thus education and sensitizing is the first and most beneficial objective of discipline.

As noted in the Leadership module, supervisors need to define what behavior is/is not acceptable in staff. It may take a disciplinary action to draw the line, define standards with which the disciplined staff member may not agree but generally will obey.

The impact of a disciplinary charge may bring up other problems of a staff member (emotional, addictive, etc.). The discipline process may be put on hold (not dropped) to see if these problems can be resolved.

In HRA and most other public social service agencies disciplinary penalties up to but not including discharge are:

- letter of reprimand
- suspension (in HRA without pay for up to two months)
- fine (in HRA not to exceed thirty days pay)
- demotion to a lower civil service title or grade

All actions and penalties are noted in a staff member's record. All penalties can be appealed. Penalized employees continue to work. They may be transferred to another unit or office but there is no guarantee of this.

The last three objectives are more drastic and punitive in nature. They involve the removal of the staff member from the unit. In most cases they should not be the first objectives chosen.

Employees being disciplined may ask for or be offered transfers. Acceptance generally means that the disciplinary action is dropped. It also may mean that the supervisor is "peddling damaged goods" - shifting their problem worker to an unsuspecting unit. However transfers can be positive - a problem employee may blossom in another job. Before considering transfer a supervisor must make a hard headed (and hearted) assessment of whether they are solving a problem or shifting it.

If an employee being disciplined resigns the disciplinary action against them generally is dropped (however prosecution based on ethics or criminal charges may continue). If an employee wants to resign it should be clarified that they are doing so out of their own free will and not being

"forced out". This may help to defend against discrimination or wrongful dismissal suits later on.

Relatively few employees in public social service agencies are dismissed. If dismissal appears imminent, most individuals will resign instead. However in extreme cases an agency may continue a disciplinary action against an employee who resigns and, if successful, note on the former employee's records that he/she was dismissed.

It will be emphasized that it is up to the supervisor to review the possible options and set objectives - what they want a disciplinary action to do. First-level supervisors need to set these objectives because:

- they know the most about the situation leading up to the disciplinary action
- they generally are the instigators of disciplinary actions
- they prepare the case for discipline
- they are most affected by the results of any disciplinary action

Since discipline is a progressive process, supervisors will set both primary and back-up objectives - what they would like to see happen and an alternative if it doesn't. At the

beginning of a disciplinary process the objective generally is remedial in nature. It is in the supervisor's interest to save rather than lose a staff member. In many if not most discipline cases remediation works - greater introspection or self preservation change an employee's behavior. However if remediation does not work, the harsher objectives (transfer, resignation, dismissal) must be considered.

Once the supervisor has decided on objectives for discipline, he/she must sell them to superiors. These bosses probably do not have the knowledge or insight of the situation possessed by the supervisor. They need to be persuaded both to proceed with discipline and to focus on the supervisor's objectives.

The trainer then discusses the two broad categories of employee behavior that may result in disciplinary action. He/she refers participants to relevant procedures in their own organizations. The following definitions and processes are drawn from HRA procedures.² While specific to this one public bureaucracy they contain elements generally found in the discipline procedures of other public social service agencies.

2. HRA Executive Order No. 618, Feb. 7, 1992, pp. 1-7.

The first category of employee behavior that may result in disciplinary action is **incompetence**. The trainer notes that incompetence is: "a lack of adequate ability, knowledge or fitness to meet the requirements of the assigned job or work performance standards, and/or inadequate, poor or unsatisfactory work performance."³ Incompetence is evidenced over a long period of time. It may be reflected in disciplinary actions and/or evaluations. It needs to be quantified as much as possible.

The second category of employee behavior that may result in disciplinary action is **misconduct**. It includes but is not limited to:⁴

- criminal conduct
- striking or attempting to strike a supervisor, fellow employee, or client,
- making a false statement under oath
- criminal conviction
- refusing to obey a direct order, oral or written, or failing to carry out a direct order expeditiously
- directing obscene or abusive language towards any other person, staff member or client
- being discourteous in relations with the public

3. HRA Executive Order 618, Op. Cit., 1992, p.3.

4. Ibid., p. 3.

- submitting false or forged medical documentation
- creating and/or submitting false or forged documentation in connection with any agency records, operations, or activities
- gambling while on duty or on agency property
- sleeping on duty
- excessive absenteeism and/or lateness
- unauthorized absence from assigned work location
- smoking in prohibited areas
- soliciting contributions or payments or selling goods or services for private gain while on agency time or premises
- failing to properly supervise subordinates
- failing to follow agency directives issued in the course of an official disciplinary investigation or proceeding
- use of intoxicants, unless part of an approved agency event
- sale, use, or possession of illegal, non-prescription drugs or illegal drug-related paraphernalia

These are definable activities of varying degrees of seriousness. With some of them (sale of drugs) one offense might be enough for a full-blown disciplinary action. With others (smoking in unauthorized areas) a pattern of misconduct probably would be necessary to activate discipline.

The actual process of discipline is the next subject of discussion. The formal process noted here is that of HRA. However, for the most part, steps in this process are common to large public social service agencies. The trainer begins by noting highlights of the process:

- the supervisor's feelings (positive or negative) towards the staff member being disciplined cannot be allowed to influence the process
- supervisors need to assure that their problem is discipline and not training or motivation
- each office has an environment (history, administration attitude towards discipline, level of union activity) which encourages or discourages disciplinary actions
- if a number of staff members are violating rules/incompetent, there is a risk in disciplining only one (making an example) unless the behavior of that person demonstratively worse than the others
- discipline is a cumulative process beginning with the supervisors's efforts to change staff member's behavior
- supervisors need to build a case for discipline beginning with their efforts to correct and assist problem staff members before disciplining them

- supervisors must write up these efforts at correction as well as every other step in the disciplinary process
- a supervisor needs to inform the staff member being disciplined of every step in the disciplinary process
- there are many informal aspects of discipline before and concurrent with the formal process
- much of what is done in normal supervision can provide the foundation for a disciplinary action
- parallel to the interaction between a supervisor and staff member in discipline is the interaction between a supervisor and his/her superior designed to develop their support for disciplinary action and specific goals
- staff members generally are not disciplined for one offense but rather for multiple offenses after warnings
- a supervisor has to allow the person being disciplined to offer mitigating circumstances (emotional problems, familial demands, etc.) for their behavior
- if these circumstances prove valid, the disciplinary process may be put on hold (not dropped) while alternatives (EAP, psychiatric treatment) are tried to solve the problem

- the person being disciplined is allowed counsel and support in the formal disciplinary process
- each disciplinary action covers only the specific offenses delineated in that action, an employee's past history of disciplinary actions generally is not considered except in the final, appeals stage of the action
- the disciplinary process may be speeded up in cases of gross insubordination

Next is a walk through of the disciplinary process. Participants are asked for examples of long-term misconduct or incompetence among their or other staff. These should not be extreme examples (staff assaulting supervisors). Examples should be chosen for incompetence and misconduct. If no better examples are presented the following may be used.

For incompetence:

A Medicaid application verification unit is described where completing verifications accurately and on time is very important. One staff member, Richard Brotman (or another fictitious name) fails to meet the unit's standard of ten verifications per day and has fifty percent of his verifications sent back for corrections (the normal rate of returns is ten percent).

For misconduct:

In a shelter, staff are to remain in the building for the entire shift except for one meal break. One staff member, Georginia Bush (or another fictitious name) has been seen outside the building by her supervisor (not on her meal break) eight times in the last two week.

In the first step of the discipline process, the supervisor needs informally to consider how serious the situation may be. Is Brotman's failure to meet standards extreme enough to warrant charges of incompetence? At this point participants probably will note that some units do not have specific standards for work. The trainer notes that in most social service bureaucracies written standards do exist (in job descriptions, etc.). A supervisor needs to find out what they are. Less formal standards may be developed by looking at the average amount of work done by staff in a unit/office. In the same way the seriousness of Bush's offense needs to be reviewed. Does she simply step outside for a breath of air and quickly return or are her excursions longer and farther ranging?

In the second step, the supervisor needs to consider the background of the possible disciplinary case. What does Brotman's last performance evaluation say about his production and accuracy? If it is a positive evaluation, the

supervisor will need to make a stronger case for incompetence now. Do other shelter staff also leave the building at unauthorized times? If so, then Bush's behavior needs to be much more extreme (stays out longer, goes further, can't be found) than their behavior is. Otherwise she can charge that she's being scapegoated for behavior common in fellow staff.

In the third step, the supervisor and staff member have a supervisory conference re the situation. The supervisor:

- confirms that the staff member knows the rules/standards (what level of quantity and quality of work are expected, that staff can't leave the building) and, if not, informs them and/or gives them a copy
- notes that the staff member is not meeting rules/standards
- asks the staff member for an explanation, which may be lack of training (most common for incompetence) or personal problems
- if the staff member says they need training (Brotman says he missed the course on medical verification), the supervisor arranges or provides it (one time only)

- if the staff member claims that they have personal problems (Bush is severely depressed after a divorce so leaves the building so other staff won't see her crying), the supervisor suggests a referral to EAP; if the staff member takes this referral,
 - services are confidential and the supervisor cannot ask for a report on how the staff member is doing
 - the staff member is given time for appointments and transportation
 - the staff member is still expected to meet performance standards (possibly with a slight reduction for time spent at EAP), if not disciplinary action remains a possibility if behavior doesn't change
- if training and personal problems are not explanations:
 - the supervisor and Brotman work out a plan to increase the quality and quantity of work
 - the supervisor and Bush agree that she will not leave the building without authorization
 - if Brotman or Bush refuse to accept these plans the supervisor proceeds to the step in the process on conferring with his/her superior
 - the supervisor writes up the conference and plan or agreement and gives a copy to the staff member

The trainer notes that the process above may be considered as normal supervisory activity. If it works (Brotman/Bush improve) there is no need for discipline. If not, this process is the first informal step in discipline. There may be question about how long it should take to improve. This is the supervisor's decision but at least some improvement should be evident quickly.

The fourth step applies if there is no/minimal improvement in Brotman's performance/Bush's behavior. The supervisor holds a corrective conference where he/she:

- points out that the problem continues
- points out that an agreement/plan has been developed and, unless circumstances have changed, the staff member must adhere to it
- asks the staff member for any reason (personal situation) that might explain the problem
- writes up the conference and gives a copy to the staff member

The issue of motivation and discipline can be explored here. Brotman might claim that he's not doing the work because it's boring and he has no motivation. There are two levels of motivation. Motivating staff to do more than the minimum, to be innovative, to do changing work is an important job

and challenge for any supervisor. However staff are paid wages and benefits for which they are expected to do a basic job, meet minimal production standards, and obey rules. As long as they pick up their checks, they cannot blame their failure to do the minimum job required on lack of motivation.

The fifth step in the discipline process is a conference between the supervisor and his/her superior to discuss the situation and explore the possibility of discipline. The supervisor:

- points out efforts he/she has made to help, train, correct Brotman/Bush
- points out the disruptive effect of Brotman/Bush's behavior on others in the unit, on production
- notes that if there is no improvement, discipline may be necessary and waits for his/her superior's response
- if the response is negative (nothing can be done, it is a personality problem, etc.), the supervisor may covers him/herself with a memo to the superior describing the situation and decides if it is worth bringing up again, if the situation doesn't improve, he/she proceeds no further with discipline without the superior's support

- if the response is positive (continue to gather information, if the supervisor thinks discipline is necessary, the superior will support him/her), the supervisor will continue to brief the superior on the situation regularly

The trainer notes that the process is still more supervisory than disciplinary but the groundwork for a disciplinary action are being laid. Some participant may ask what to do if Brotman's performance/Bush's behavior has improved a little but not enough to meet the plan's expectations. In this case the supervisor will continue to push for improvement and lay the informal grounds for discipline. If Brotman gets his work up to expectations/Bush stops leaving the building, the problem is solved. If not, the disciplinary process should continue.

The sixth step in the disciplinary process will occur if there is no or minimal improvement in Brotman's performance Bush's behavior. The supervisor holds a warning conference with them. If possible the supervisor's boss sits in on this conference to increase its' impact. The supervisor:

- notes that if performance doesn't improve disciplinary action may be necessary
- records the conference; gives copy to staff member

- asks permission of his/her superior to prepare a formal letter of warning to the staff member if there is no improvement
- suggests that the superior report the situation to his/her superiors for clearance for a disciplinary action

This is the end of the informal stage of the disciplinary process. From this point on the supervisor's immediate superior, upper level administration, the staff member being disciplined, and union representatives or other advocates representing him/her as well as the supervisor will be involved. Total accuracy in preparation of documents is essential.

If there's is no improvement, in the seventh step the supervisor prepares and his/her immediate superior signs off on a letter of warning to Brotman/Bush. This letter contains:

- a list of specific instances when Brotman's work was not up to quantity, quality standards; all occasions when material was submitted late, dates, how late, number of errors, when returned for correction, when corrections received
- a list of specific instances, dates, times, circumstances surrounding Bush's misconduct

- how Brotman's/Bush's performance is affecting the performance, morale of the unit
- all efforts by the supervisor to help Brotman/Bush correct the problem; dates and content of conferences, referrals to EAP, training offered, given, exploration of causes of problem

The letter should be signed by the supervisor and his /her superior with a copy to upper level management. The supervisor and his/her superior will give Brotman/Bush the letter in person and request that he/she sign for receipt, If he/she refuses, the supervisor will note this on the letter and have his/her superior sign as a witness.

If Brotman's performance/Bush's behavior does not improve the supervisor takes the eighth step in the disciplinary process and prepares for his/her supervisor's signature a request for a disciplinary conference which is sent to the office/site director. This request becomes the basis for all future disciplinary action. It is drawn from all the conference recordings and the warning letter. The only additional material needed is signed statements from any witnesses to the action being disciplined. The supervisor puts this material together into a request for a disciplinary hearing which includes:

- all instances of employee misconduct or measures of incompetence on which the disciplinary charge is based*
- all efforts (conferences, plans, information given, etc.) on the part of the supervisor to remediate the behavior that caused the charge

Before the request is submitted the supervisor and his/her immediate superior consult with the office/site director so that they know what is coming.

The staff member being disciplined gets a copy of the request for a disciplinary conference once it is submitted. Once the conference is scheduled all parties are informed. The staff member being disciplined generally can have union representation at the conference.

At the disciplinary conference the office/site director reviews the request; hears testimony from the staff member being disciplined, supervisor, other witnesses; reviews evidence; and makes a recommendation for action. That recommendation may be:

- dismissal of some/all charges

* the rule of thumb is that the period written up should be no longer than nine months.

- a letter of reprimand
- suspension without pay
- a fine
- demotion to a lower civil service title or grade
- dismissal

The office/site director sends the recommendations to the personnel office of the specific department where they are reviewed by the discipline officer for the department who can accept, modify, or reject the recommendations.

At this point the staff member being disciplined is informed of the penalty. If this staff person is provisional (not civil service titled), the disciplinary action is final. If the staff member being disciplined is civil service, several options generally are available to them:

- accept the penalty
- file a grievance
- request (or automatically be assigned) an appeal of the finding

Acceptance of penalty means that, unless the staff person is being dismissed, he/she will continue to work for the organization.

Grieving the penalty is to contend that the disciplinary action was not carried out per procedure or that it violated a union contract. The trainer should refer participants to the specific appeal process for their organization. What follows is a brief outline of the process in HRA. The staff member being disciplined files a grievance, is represented by their union, and goes through all the steps of the grievance which may end in arbitration where a final decision is made. That decision may be to drop or reduce the penalty or to uphold it. However the penalty cannot be increased.

The staff member being disciplined may appeal the results of his/her disciplinary hearing to higher levels within the organization. While appeal processes vary among large public social service agencies, certain factors are common among them:

- appeal hearings are more formal and generally conducted by representatives of the Personnel section of the relevant department
- the staff member is represented by a lawyer or union representative
- no new material can be submitted beyond the material in the original request for a disciplinary conference

- the first-level supervisor may be called on to testify
- often the staff member's entire personnel record (including any past disciplinary problems) is reviewed
- the hearing's decision may be to drop or reduce the penalty, to uphold it, or to increase it
- the hearing's decision is final

There are generally three exceptions to the disciplinary process just described: gross insubordination, criminal behavior, and psychiatric problems. The trainer should give participants copies of all relevant procedures in their departments which cover these situations. HRA's process for handling these situations is fairly common. It is described below.

Gross insubordination involves behavior so extreme and disruptive to the normal functioning of an office that immediate action is needed. An example would be assaulting another staff member or client. In cases of violent gross insubordination security or the police are called immediately to restore order. In all cases of gross insubordination the office/site director has the option of suspending the grossly insubordinate staff member (with or without pay) for up to a month. During this month the previously described

disciplinary process goes into "fast forward" so that there can be a resolution before the month is up.

If any staff member is suspected of criminal activity or knowledge of such activity without reporting it, the supervisor should write up all allegations and refer them to the part of their department responsible for legal oversight. The staff member involved should not be informed that this referral is being made.

If a supervisor suspects that a staff member's misconduct or incompetence is due to psychiatric problems they will confer and write up the situation in the same way they would a normal disciplinary action. However, instead of proceeding to an informal hearing, the supervisor and his/her boss will (with the office/site director's approval) will refer the case (generally to the Personnel department) for a psychiatric evaluation. Personnel decides if the staff member should be called in for an interview with a psychiatrist. If the staff member refuses, the site is informed and a regular disciplinary hearing proceeds. If the staff member is interviewed and found mentally unfit he/she can be placed on medical leave while seeking treatment.

Complaint Handling/ Grievances

In discussing complaint handling, trainers will begin by noting that complaints are a fact of life - especially for supervisor who are seen by staff as the logical person to whom to complain and as someone with power to resolve complaints. Participants will be asked to write on the board complaints that they commonly hear from staff. The list probably will be long and elicit recognition and humorous comments from participants. The trainer will note that there are several ways that supervisors can classify complaints. He/she will list four continuums on the board:

real -----unreal
doable-----undoable
common-----uncommon
grievable-----ungrievable

The real-unreal continuum reflects how valid or justified a supervisor believes a complaint is based on his/her own experiences or preferences. A supervisor not overly concerned with aesthetics might not notice the color of the office walls and dismiss a staff member's complaint about this. Participants should note that no matter how unreal they consider a complaint, the complaint is valid and important to the person who makes it.

The doable-undoable continuum measures if and how easily a supervisor can do something about a complaint. The weather and a staff member's problems with his girlfriend are undoable. Staff vacation, training, and closing the window can be handled with relative ease. Complaints re merit pay, lack of equipment, and deserved promotions take a good amount of effort but probably are possible for a supervisor to deal with. Just because a complaint is undoable doesn't mean that a supervisor shouldn't listen to it. A sympathetic ear wins some points from staff. In the same way a supervisor's failed but sincere attempt to resolve a complaint wins staff respect.

How common or uncommon staff complaints are will influence if and how quickly a supervisor deals with them. A supervisor may dismiss one staff member's complaints but if several or all staff members complain about the same thing - even the color of the walls - quick action is more likely.

Finally a supervisor is more likely to respond to complaints that under an agency's union contracts can become grievances. Union contracts list certain specific grounds to which a grievance must relate. The trainer will want to give participants a list of grievable areas in their department.

Grounds for grievances generally includes:

- a violation of a collective bargaining agreement (union contract)
- a violation of department rules, regulations, or policies
- an out of title assignment
- a wrongful disciplinary action

Union contracts cover such broad areas as wages, benefits, sick and annual leave. Grievances based on violations of union contracts generally involve large numbers of staff and are filed as group grievances.

All public social service organizations have reams of rules, regulations, and procedures which describe how jobs are done and how employee benefits are allocated. As noted in the Environmental module, supervisors need to develop a collection of these rules and procedures especially as they relate to personnel matters like time and leave. A grievance based on violation of rules, regulations, and policies says that the agency is not playing by its own rules.

In a large bureaucracy all jobs have written titles and descriptions of duties. These descriptions generally allow management some leeway in the assignment of work. All staff, including first-level supervisors, occasionally work "out of title" (cover for a superior, unload boxes, etc.). However

staff who are ordered to perform work not in their job description on a consistent basis have grounds for grievances. It may be that a staff member does not want to do work below his/her job title (clean up the office, for example) or that he/she wants the title and pay that come with assignment of increased responsibility (acting as supervisor, for example).

Finally, grievances based on wrongful disciplinary action are a specialization of violation of rules, regulations, or procedures. As noted earlier in this module, such grievances generally occur late in the disciplinary process.

The trainer notes that grounds for grievances constitute one aspect of employees' rights. However management also has certain rights. Union contracts and the results of arbitration between unions and government agencies have delineated a number of broad management rights. In HRA they include:

- the right to determine the standard of services rendered
- the right to take disciplinary action
- the right to direct employees
- the right to lay off employees
- the right to determine the content of job classifications

- the right to take all necessary actions in an emergency
- the right to maintain efficiency of government operations
- the right to determine means, methods, and personnel for conducting operations
- the right to exercise complete control and description over organization and technology of performing work

Several of these rights need further explanation.

The right to direct employees gives public social service agencies the option to assign employees where and for the purposes it needs them. This right broadly interpreted may result in a grievance based on out of title work.

Re the right to take action in an emergency, the definition of an emergency and it's duration generally belong to management.

The right to determine job classifications allows management to redefine the duties of various positions. This generally involves union input but ultimately is a management right.

The next area for discussion is the roles of first-level supervisors in grievances. There are four roles.

The supervisor generally is the target of grievances. He/she directly rejects staff requests, orders out of title work, disciplines staff. Even if these actions are in response to superior's orders, the supervisor is the catalyst. If a grievance is filed, he/she probably will be named.

The first-level supervisor generally writes the rebuttal to any staff grievance. This rebuttal reflects management's view of what happened and is the basis for management's defense. The rebuttal must be based on a factual recapitulation of what happened to cause the grievance. It cannot reflect the supervisor's values or personal opinion of the grievance or grievant.

The supervisor is the record keeper, keeping a detailed version of all actions - staff's and management's - involved with the grievance.

Finally, the supervisor is the potential victim of any staff grievance. A successful grievance from staff, even if it is justified, results in a loss of supervisory power and influence.

The trainer will explain that it is best to avoid grievances if possible. He/she will note that the grievance process will be explained first but that a section on how to handle complaints (and, with luck, avoid grievances) will follow.

The trainer here should refer participants to relevant grievance procedures in their own organizations. The following definitions and processes are drawn from HRA procedures.⁵ However they are similar to procedures in other public social service agencies.

All unionized workers can grieve. Generally individual workers file grievances but it is possible for a number of workers to file a group grievance if they all are in the same situation. This is fairly common in cases of out of title work.

The grounds for grievances (violation of union contracts; violation of agency rules, regulations, procedures; out of title work; and wrongful disciplinary action) already have been discussed.

Before starting a grievance, staff members are encouraged to talk with their union representative. That union representative and the office/site director already should have al-

5. HRA Procedure 83-6, June 1983, pp. 1-4.

ready agreed upon locations and schedules for grievance discussions and individuals designated to be involved in informal and Step I grievances.

The objective of the union representative and office/site director is to handle the grievance on an informal level. In this situation the grieving staff member works with his/her supervisor and possibly one level of management higher to solve the problem. If this does not work the union representative tries to negotiate the situation with the office/site director. The next part of the informal process involves a call from the union representative to the central union office which calls HRA's Office of Labor Relations. They will consult and offer advice to the office/site director to see if the issue can be settled without going to a formal grievance. Most grievances are settled on this level. The informal process is especially useful with issues that need quick settlement (request for vacations, for example).

A formal grievance process starts with Step I where the union representative sends a memo to the office/site director outlining the grievance. The office/site director calls the Office of Labor Relations to register the grievance. They investigate and advise the office/site director how to handle the grievance when it comes up for hearing. At the hearing the office/site director (or designee if he/she

is a target of the grievance) reviews the grievance and rebuttal (generally written by the supervisor) and confers with the union representative and grieving staff member. The office/site director responds with a decision which details the reasoning behind it (based on facts, policies, procedures, practices, etc.). A copy of the decision is given to the grievant and copies of the grievance and decision are sent to the Office of Labor Relations.

If the grievant is not satisfied he/she can file an appeal for a Step II grievance within five working days. Step II hearings are held at the HRA Office of Labor Relations with a hearing officer, the union representative, and the grieving staff member (who receives time off to go to the meeting). The hearing officer hears the appeal, collects any additional information needed (possibly from the supervisor), and prepares a written decision.

If the grievant still is not satisfied he/she has five working days to file an appeal for a Step III hearing at the City Office of Labor Relations. This follows the same format as a Step II hearing.

Finally, if still not satisfied, the grievant can file for a Step IV hearing which involves binding arbitration of the grievance by a third party not in city government. With the

exception of some disciplinary matters and grievances re: pay for out of title work, few grievances go to Step IV.

In discussing how to handle complaints (and ideally avoid grievances) the trainer will stress two areas:

- creating an atmosphere where complaints can be prevented or easily resolved
- resolving complaints that arise

Some participants will argue that it is impossible to prevent complaints - that staff always complain. This is true, but there is a threshold for complaints - the point at which overall satisfaction with the job is outweighed by the severity of the complaint. This threshold reflects what staff will "put up with" before complaining. Staff relatively satisfied with their jobs/relation with their supervisor have a higher threshold, will complain less often, and about more serious matters.

To create and maintain a high threshold of complaints a supervisor has to develop some attitudes and try a number of techniques. Probably most important is to see staff as individuals - to know their strengths, weaknesses, idiosyncracies, and styles. In these particularized relations the

supervisor builds on each staff member's strengths and respects his/her personality.

The supervisor also emphasizes common goals and roles to his/her staff. The emphasis here is on what they can do together and how they can help each other over rough spots in the job.

Motivating staff as individuals and in units will be covered in detail in the Communication/Motivation module. However several aspects are particularly relevant to preventing complaints.

The first of these is recognition - for work done, improvement, knowledge utilized, etc. Recognition may be one-on-one, to staff, and/or to superiors. It can apply to individual staff members or to a unit.

The second motivator to prevent complaints is refreshment - parties, get-togethers, even shared cake and coffee. Refreshment may celebrate work done by the unit or individual staff member's birthdays, promotions, etc. Refreshment aims both at building a sense of unit identity and highlighting individual staff members.

Finally a supervisor can motivate and prevent complaints by encouraging staff to "rally round" common goals, problems, opponents, etc. He/she wants staff to identify with the unit (and the supervisor for whom they work).

Supervisors with a reputation for fairness get less complaints. Fairness includes aspects of both equality and equity. Some things generally should be equal for all staff - the number of cases assigned for example. However the greater emphasis is on equity - impartiality in assignments, rewards, punishments, etc. A reputation for fairness will not prevent some staff from feeling less well treated than others - envy is one of the seven deadly sins - but it may cause these staff to consider if their performance affects the way they are treated.

A good supervisor asks for feedback from staff before it turns into complaints. The dictionary definition of feedback is the return of information about the result of a process, as opposed to the definition of complaints as an expression of pain, dissatisfaction, or resentment. Feedback is more neutral and corrective in nature. It informs the supervisor of things going wrong before they are gone. A good supervisor constantly asks staff how he/she is doing, how work is going. He/she develops a reputation for searching out, hearing, and acting on feedback.

A supervisor can prevent or ameliorate complaints by anticipating them. He/she identifies the situation (a new procedure, asking that staff stay late) that might catalyze complaints. The supervisor develops strategies for approaching these subjects, giving directions that make them more palatable to staff.

Finally, if staff still complain, the supervisor wants to have a reputation for:

- really listening to complaints
- allowing the staff member to describe the complaint
- working with the staff member to resolve the complaint equitably

When staff do complain, the supervisor needs guidelines on how to handle them. The trainer refers participants to Tips on Complaint Handling (Training Material D4).

Supervisors should respond promptly to staff complaints. Promptly does not mean immediately. A supervisor will need time to calm down if a complaint is unjust or has been expressed with hostility. so will the complainant. The supervisor needs to analyze the complaint as to:

- what it is about

- what is the immediate impetus for it
- what is the environment in which it occurs
- what can he/she do about it

Supervisors should meet privately with complaining staff. If a staff member complains in public the supervisor sets a time and place for a one-on-one discussion. This allows the staff member to cool down takes away his/her opportunity to "play to the crowd".

Discussions should not get bogged down in personalities. If the complainant makes personal comments about the supervisor he/she needs to guide the conversation back to the complaint. The supervisor may not like the person complaining but must remain fair, accessible, and open-minded about the complaint.

The staff member should be allowed to describe the complaint. It is their perception that makes the complaint and it needs to be heard. If the staff member keeps going on and begins to repeat him/herself, the supervisor may want to summarize the complaint. However the staff member must be allowed to "get it off his/her chest".

The supervisor should paraphrase the complaint and ask the complainant for possible solutions. Some parameters may be

set around possible solutions ("let's see if we can solve your complaint but not disrupt production"), but should be used sparingly. The supervisor may raise questions to help the complaining employee clarify the solution. There is a certain mental judo in asking the complainant for a solution. Many staff members have honed their complaints but never seriously considered solutions. When asked to do so they may begin to appreciate some of the restraints on a supervisor.

Throughout the recitation of the complaint and possible solutions, the supervisor should limit comments to paraphrasing and summarizing. He/she should not interrupt with comments or opinions. This is the complainant's time. Unnecessary interruptions may end up in arguments.

The staff member's ego is important. Even if the supervisor thinks the complaint has little validity, it should not be summarily dismissed. He/she need not speculate openly about why the staff member brought up the complaint. Every complaint, no matter how seemingly facetious, should be considered seriously. The supervisor needs to consider the complaint itself, the emotions that accompany it, and the history (of relationship, other problems, etc.) that underlay it.

The supervisor should tell the complainant when to expect a response. He/she then considers:

- what, if anything, can be done
- how much energy, time, effort would be necessary to resolve the complaint
- how often this complaint has surfaced
- what other levels of administration must be consulted, sign off to resolve the complaint

The staff member is told if a solution is imminent or if further steps are needed. If the complaint cannot be resolved, reasons why are given and the staff member is treated with respect.

The trainer summarizes by noting that complaint prevention involves constant work and diligence. Handling complaints is delicate and stressful work. However the alternative, handling a grievance, is much worse.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT/PROCEDURAL MODULE

TRAINING MATERIAL D-1

CONFLICT MODE

Instructions

Consider situations in which you find your wishes differing from those of another person. How do you usually respond to such situations?

On the following pages are several pairs of statements describing possible behavioral responses. For each part, please circle the "A" or "B" statement which is most characteristic of your own behavior.

1. A. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
 B. Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things upon which we both agree.
2. A. I try to find a compromise solution.
 B. I attempt to deal with all of her/his and my concerns.
3. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
 B. I might try to sooth the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
4. A. I try to find a compromise solution.
 B. I sometimes sacrifice my own wishes for the wishes of the other person.
5. A. I consistently seek the other's help in working out a solution.
 B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
6. A. I try to avoid unpleasantness for myself.
 B. I try to will my position.
7. A. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
 B. I give up some points in exchange for others.
8. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
 B. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately put in the open.
9. A. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
 B. I make some effort to get my way.
10. A. I am firm in pursuing my goals.
 B. I try to find a compromise solution.
11. A. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
 B. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
12. A. I sometimes avoid taking positions which would create controversy.
 B. I will let the other person have some of her/his positions if s/he lets me have some of mine.
13. A. I propose a middle-ground
 B. I press to get my points made.
14. A. I tell the other person my ideas and ask for hers/his.
 B. I try to show the other person the logic and benefits of my position.

15. A. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid tensions
16. A. I try not to hurt the other's feelings.
B. I try to convince the other person of the merits of my position.
17. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
18. A. If it makes other people happy, I might let them maintain their views.
B. I will let other people have some of their positions if they let me have some of mine.
19. A. I attempts to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
B. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
20. A. I attempt to immediately work through our differences.
B. I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for both of us.
21. A. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.
B. I always lean toward a direct discussion of the problem.
22. A. I try to find a position that is intermediate between hers/his and mine.
B. I assert my wishes.
23. A. I am very often concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
B. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
24. A. If the other's position seems very important to her/him, I would try to meet her/his wishes.
B. I try to get the other person to settle for a compromise.
25. A. I try to show the other person the logic and benefits of my position.
B. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.
26. A. I propose a middle ground.
B. I am nearly always concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
27. A. I sometimes avoid taking positions that would create controversy.
B. If it makes other people happy, I might let them maintain their views.
28. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
B. I usually seek the other's help in working out a solution.
29. A. I propose a middle ground.
B. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
30. A. I try not to hurt others' feelings.
B. I always share the problem with the other person so that we can work it out.

Mark Lipton, Ph.D.
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SCORING THE THOMAS-KILMAN CONFLICT MODE INSTRUMENT

Circle the letters below which you circled on each items of the questionnaire.

	Competing (forcing)	Collaborating (problem solving)	Compromising (sharing)	Avoiding (withdrawal)	Accommodating (smoothing)
1.				A	B
2.		B	A		
3.	A				B
4.			A		B
5.		A		B	
6.	B			A	
7.			B	A	
8.	A	B			
9.	B			A	
10.	A		B		
11.		A			B
12.			B	A	
13.	B		A		
14.	B	A			
15.				B	A
16.	B				A
17.	A			B	
18.			B		A
19.		A		B	
20.		A	B		
21.		B			A
22.	B		A		
23.		A		B	
24.			B		A
25.	A				B
26.		B	A		
27.				A	B
28.	A	B			
29.			A	B	
30.		B			A

Total number of items circled in each column:

Competing	Collaborating	Compromising	Avoiding	Accommodating
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CONFLICT MANAGEMENT/PROCEDURAL MODULE

TRAINING MATERIAL D-2

THE FIVE CONFLICT HANDLING MODES

Competing is assertive and uncooperative -- an individual pursues her/his own concerns at the other person's expense. This is a power-oriented mode, in which one uses whatever power seems appropriate to win one's own position -- one's ability to argue, one's rank, economic sanctions. Competing might mean "standing up for your rights," defending a position which you believe is correct, or simply trying to win.

Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative -- the opposite of competing. When accommodating, an individual neglects her/his own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode. Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when one would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.

Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative -- the individual does not immediately pursue her/his own concerns or those of the other person. S/he does not address the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.

Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative -- the opposite of avoiding. Collaborating involves an attempt to work with the other person to find some solution which fully satisfies the concerns of both persons. It means digging into an issue to identify the underlying concerns. Collaborating between two persons might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from each other's insights, concluding to resolve some condition which would otherwise have them competing for resources, or confronting and trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem.

Compromising is intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution which partially satisfies both parties. It falls on a middle ground between competing and accommodating. Compromising gives up more than competing but less than accommodating. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding, but doesn't explore it in as much depth as collaborating. Compromising might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground position.

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CONFLICT MANAGEMENT/PROCEDURAL MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL D-3

13. What undesirable outcomes might result from this conflict?

14. List at least three alternative courses of action and the probably consequences of each.

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CONFLICT MANAGEMENT/PROCEDURAL MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL D-4

RESOLVING YOUR DISAGREEMENT WITH ANOTHER PERSON

1. **Listen to the other person's assertions.**
You don't have to accept what is being said, but do listen to it. You will learn more about the other person and what it will take to resolve the conflict. Besides, your antagonist will feel better about you. Paraphrase and summarize occasionally to show interest and to confirm you are listening.
2. **Ask plenty of questions.**
Don't ask confrontational questions, such as those beginning with "How could you...?" Ask clarifying questions that help you to understand the other person's position. **Listen** to the answers and ask follow-up questions as needed. Don't accuse the other person of not answering your question, just keep asking until you get answers.
3. **Don't get angry.**
Remain calm, no matter how insensitive the other person may be. Remember that everyone feels justification for their position. Don't waste time and frustrate yourself by thinking, "How could he be so stubborn?" Accept this person's right to disagree with you.
4. **Communicate your position clearly and thoroughly.**
Let the other person go first; it will put you at an advantage to speak second. As you state your position, look for evidence that you are being listened to and are understood. If the other person isn't listening, ask for the same courtesy you showed.
5. **Focus on issues and behaviors rather than on emotions and personalities.**
Direct attention to what can be observed as opposed to what you surmise or infer. Don't attribute motives; they will simply be denied. Avoid personal affronts; they tend to be vicious, politically harmful, and counterproductive in resolving conflict. The most difficult and most important breakthrough in interpersonal conflict occurs when both sides realize their disagreement is a mutual problem to solve rather than each seeing the other as the problem.
6. **Discuss the present.**
Don't harp on the past or harbor old resentments. Saying something like, "A statement like that makes me doubt your motives" is better than, "I've never been able to trust you."

7. **Focus on the future.**
The objective of this confrontation is to create a solution for your future relationships. Hence it is more fruitful to ask, "How can we keep this from happening again" than "Why did this happen?"
8. **Take responsibility for your role in the conflict.**
It takes two people to create and sustain interpersonal conflict. Set an example by making a small admission of your role, and see if the other person will do the same. A few reciprocal admissions of blame will sometimes end hostilities on the spot.
9. **Summarize the apparent needs and desires of both parties.**
These are the most important issues to get out on the table, and are the outcome of the first eight steps on this list. You can now focus your negotiations on meeting as many of those needs as possible. Be creative in exploring options and in finding an equitable solution.
10. **Keep the lines of communication open.**
Plan to meet again soon to monitor how well solutions are working. Agree to talk about problems more openly in the future.

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MANAGING CONFLICT BETWEEN TWO ANTAGONISTS

1. **Listen to both people to understand their feelings, assumptions, and assertions.**
You may wish to do this one-on-one or with both people together. In the former case, be sure the antagonists know that nothing can be held in confidence from the other person.
2. **In a meeting with both antagonists, get each to listen to the other.**
Allow each person to speak only after paraphrasing what the other person has said, to that person's satisfaction. This technique effectively reduces anger.
3. **Point out where you believe they misunderstand one another.**
Don't ascribe any blame to the misunderstanding. Just show it to them. "I don't think you're disagreeing at all on this point. The problem appears to be using different terms to mean the same thing. Let me show you what I mean..."
4. **Check your perceptions of the issues between them.**
Ask questions. Move beyond assertions to the reasons for the assertions.
5. **Ask them if either can suggest a solution that all three of you can live with.**
This is preferable to the solution coming from you.
6. **Decide whether a solution—including one you might recommend—is feasible.**
7. **Select the solution that does the best job of lowering tension and restoring performance.**
8. **Monitor the success of the chosen solution.**
If it's not working, find out why, and get the antagonists back together again.

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WAYS TO RESPOND TO A DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN OTHERS

1. **Avoid the disagreement.**
Don't get dragged into disagreements that are insoluble, not worth confronting, or self-solving. However, don't back away from conflict that must be resolved.
2. **Bring in a third-party mediator or negotiator.**
This could be a higher-up in the organization or someone both antagonists trust. Such a person might also act as an intermediary between them whenever they cannot communicate sensibly face-to-face.
3. **Remove the condition creating the conflict.**
It may be an unnecessary rule or some other organizational factor whose elimination will be less costly than the disagreement it is causing.
4. **Smooth over the differences.**
Get parties to realize that their differences are not that great. Find ways to appease each person and make each less insistent on his or her position.
5. **Focus the parties on a superordinate goal.**
Point out how a solution will serve their mutual interests. Draw their attention to the common stakes they have in finding an end to the conflict.
6. **Focus the parties on the issues.**
Get them away from personalities and onto the substance of their disagreement. Concentrate their attention on the needs each of them brings to the table. Often, this confrontation of issues forces an end to a confrontation of personalities.
7. **Point out misunderstandings.**
Gently show them how unwarranted inferences or lack of clear definition in terms are at the root of their dispute.
8. **Deflate the "fact" myth.**
Don't allow parties to say, "It is a fact that....," unless it really *is*, which is almost never. Expose the impact that their values and prejudices are having on their positions.

9. Reverse the roles of antagonists.

Change the perspectives of the parties by having each assume the position of the other for a specified period of time. A sample instruction might be, "Assume the other person's side for five minutes and describe to me why that person is taking such a stand."

10. Force them to end the hostilities.

Use the power of your position to issue an ultimatum to stop fighting: "If you two cannot agree on this matter by 3 p.m., I'll impose a solution that may not benefit either of you."

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APPENDIX E: COMMUNICATION/MOTIVATION MODULE**RESEARCH BACKGROUND**

On the Training Needs Assessment respondents said that they did not know much about motivation but that it was important. On the one motivation question (How to motivate staff) their knowledge score was a below average 3.5* and an above average 52% of the respondents rated their knowledge level in this area as only low to medium. Their importance rating on motivation (4.6) was above average with below average (7%) low-medium scores. Motivating staff was tied for the top problem noted by responding supervisors and had a high 3.2* severity score.

Respondents did not seem as concerned with communications. Their overall knowledge rating on communications questions (Feedback to staff, Feedback to bosses, Memo writing, Running meetings, Various styles of communications) was an above average 3.8 with only 37% low-medium scores. Importance ratings on communications (4.2 overall average with 19% low-medium importance ratings) were near average. This response became somewhat less clear when a separate group of respondent supervisors was asked how they spent their time and how difficult various tasks were. They noted 7.5 hours weekly** spent communicating with staff (re work assign-

* on a scale of five

** based on 35 hours per week

ments, completion, corrections) with 52% of respondents saying that this was their most difficult task. Supervisors responding spent an additional 2.5 hours per week communicating with superiors (re work assigned, plans, personnel issues) with 14% reporting that this was their most difficult task.

OBJECTIVES

There will be no problem convincing supervisors that motivation is important and that they need to know more about it. Communications may be a harder area to sell. Supervisors seem to feel that they know how to communicate and that is enough. However they note problems in communicating with staff and bosses. Supervisors need to be convinced that effectiveness of communications is most important and that if people are not doing what they want, then their communications are not effective. They need to learn about different styles of communications and in what circumstances to use them. Finally, they need insight into differences in communicating "up" and "down" and in the environments of communications.

MOTIVATION

The trainer begins the session on motivation by exploring how participants themselves are motivated. He/she asks

participants what would motivate them to do a better job.

Answers are listed on the board. They should include:

- good work companions
- have a good boss
- use of knowledge and skills
- receive recognition for contributions
- receive a good salary
- opportunity for advancement
- a position with responsibility
- job security
- good working conditions
- challenging work
- liberal fringe benefits
- opportunity for self-growth

The trainer asks participants to turn to Training Material E1 where they will find identical lists of motivators for themselves and for their staff. They are asked to list the top four items that would motivate them in their positions as supervisors. The trainer lists on the board the number of times each item was noted in participants' top four. Participants then turn to the next page where they are asked to list the top four items that would motivate their staff. The number of times each item is mentioned as a top motivator for staff also is listed on the board in a column next to

that of top motivators for participants. The two columns are examined for similarities and differences.

Participants are queried as to whether what motivates them has changed over time. Most participants will agree that as first-level supervisors grow into their jobs and as other parts of their lives change, what motivates them will change. The trainer stresses an important principle of motivation:

- motivators have a short life span; staff members become used to and come to expect a motivator used repeatedly; as they change (on the job and in the rest of their lives) what motivates them changes

Participants also are asked how they know what motivates their staff. Some will reply that they have overheard staff or know instinctively. The trainer will note another principle of motivation:

- supervisors can discover what motivates their staff only by asking them; having discovered what motivates individual staff, supervisors must monitor how well motivators are working by observing and seeking out staff reaction

Participants are asked to complete the Motivation: Supervisor/ Manager Self Assessment found at the beginning of Training Material E2. He/she should note that unless participants have answered "always" to each statement, they need some help on motivation. It also should be noted that each statement on the assessment relates to a different aspect of motivation.

Somewhere in the discussion of motivation a participant will argue that the best and most consistent motivation for staff is more money. The trainer should note that while more money is an appropriate motivator for some objectives and in some situations, it is no more effective than other motivators. The trainer will ask for a volunteer from among participants. He/she will offer the volunteer a dollar and ask all participants to pretend that it is a ten thousand dollar raise. This raise is to increase the productivity of the volunteer. The trainer asks the volunteer if he/she deserves the raise for the work they currently are doing. His/her answer inevitably will be yes. The trainer asks the volunteer if he/she can reasonably be expected to do any more than he/she currently is doing. His/her answer probably will be no. The trainer notes that the volunteer:

- believes he/she deserves the raise for what he/she currently is doing

- has not been convinced that he/she could do more

The trainer notes that most large social service agencies give at least small raises every year. He/she asks participants if these raises have lead to any increase in productivity.

Some participant will note that these raises, given to everybody, provide no incentive for individuals to perform better. He/she will raise the idea of merit pay given to individual staff who perform well above average. Someone else (or the trainer) will note two problems with merit raises. First, if a raise becomes part of a staff member's salary base, it loses whatever incentive it has. Second, it always is difficult for management to determine who does (and does not) deserve merit raises. Whatever they decide will be disputed by some staff.

The trainer brings up the idea of annual bonuses - extra money given to an employee for one year only based on achievement of certain objectives. This method strengthens the impact of monetary incentives. However there are limits. A staff member looking at what is necessary to get a bonus may decide to live on his/her base salary. Also the problem of determining who deserves and gets bonuses remains.

The discussion continues when participants are asked why they want to motivate staff - what are their objectives for motivation. The trainer lists objectives on the board. Participants are referred to Training Material E2 (second page) for a complete list of objectives for motivation including:

- to complete assigned tasks
- to do extra work
- to do higher quality work
- to come up with new innovations
- to be more independent (require less supervision)
- to improve attitudes (feel better about the job)
- to work better with each other

Any objective not mentioned by participants is added to the list on the board. The trainer stresses that:

- there are many objectives for motivating staff
- different objectives are relevant for different staff
- different objectives are relevant at different points in a staff member's career

Participants are referred to the Staff Motivation Plan (Training Material E3). This plan, covering each staff member, individualizes them by:

- motivational objectives
- motivational limitations
- motivational tools to utilize
- a follow-up on how these tools are working

Participants are advised to think through a motivational plan for each staff member. They are to start immediately by listing their staff and noting present motivational objectives for each one.

The trainer then asks if there are any limits on how far people can be motivated. There may be some initial debate on this since most people have read more self-improvement books than is good for them. However there are limits and a supervisor has to consider the limits on each staff member and what (if anything) he/she can do about them. Participants note limitations on motivation which the trainer lists on the board. These limitations, found in Training Material E2, second page, include:

- basic ability in an area

- need for training
- need for supplies/equipment
- norms and values
- informal expectations of an organization
- competing demands from other parts of life (other jobs, family, interests, etc.)

Each of these items is discussed.

Everyone's basic abilities (mental, physical, emotional) limit what they can do. If staff are not trained and re-trained they cannot improve their performance. Such training may cover generic aspects of the job or specialized skills. Without sufficient and appropriate supplies and equipment staffs' performance is limited.

As noted in the Environmental module, units of staff are likely to have their own norms and values. These often reflect how much/how well work is done. If one staff member is motivated to do more/better work than others, he/she may feel peer pressure not to "rock the boat", raise expectations for others.

Every organization has informal standards of the quantity and quality of work to be done. A supervisor who motivates his/her staff to exceed these standards may:

- be recognized and rewarded
- be given extra work to cover for units not doing as well
- be considered a threat for doing things too well:
 - reflecting that other units are deficient
 - raising expectations for the entire organization

Finally, work is only part of a staff member's life. Other demands and interests will limit how far an individual can be motivated at work. Participants are asked to raise their hand if their job with the organization is the most important thing in their lives. Few, if any, will. When asked what is most important, participants will note family, spouses, hobbies, parties, etc. The trainer notes that these take away from the time and interest they devote to the jobs.

Some of the limitations on motivation are relatively easy for a first-level supervisor to overcome. Staff can be trained or referred for training. Supplies can be obtained.

Other limitations can be surmounted but only with a supervisor's best persuasive and political skills. He/she will either have to change staff norms or convince some staff to ignore the low standards of others. He/she has to persuade superiors that above average performance raises the

reputation of the whole office and should not be rewarded by heaping more work on the best performing units.

Finally basic physical, mental, and emotional limitations of staff cannot be overcome. Staff's priorities (work vs. other issues) will be extremely hard to overcome.

Participants are referred back to the Staff Motivational Guide (Training Material E3) to complete the column on motivational limitations on each of their staff members.

Before discussing positive motivators several other issues need to be discussed. The first of these is negative motivators or KITA (Kick In The A__). This involves threats (realized or not) to staff that they will be punished if work does not improve. This may work in the short run, especially if the threats are carried out. But if threats are not carried out staff may begin to feel that they can ignore their supervisor. Any success of KITA is short run. In the long run the best staff will find a way to leave rather than put up with threats and punishment. The remaining staff will do what their supervisor wants but no more. Further they will work without imagination with no attempts to spot or correct mistakes.

While KITA generally does not work, an increased level of discomfort for non-performing staff just might. Staff not performing as well as they might should not be allowed to be comfortable in their performance. Their deficiencies should be pointed out. The improvement of other staff and the motivators they receive for it should be made clear. The low performing staff member may complain that other staff members are being treated more favorably. The supervisor should be able to defend him/herself by pointing out that everybody is treated with a basic level of respect but that staff members who do more, get more. It is stressed that the low performing staff member has the same options for motivation as others. The supervisor has an obligation to point out strengths and weaknesses in staff members and push for remediation in the latter.

The second issue is to define when staff should be motivated. First-level supervisors should assume that staff members will meet the minimum quantity and quality standards of their positions. They should assure that staff have the supervision, training, support, and equipment to do their jobs. However motivation is to push staff beyond the basic requirements of their positions. If they consistently fail to meet minimum expectations the result should be discipline, not motivation.

Participants probably have noted that positive motivational tools are limited in large social service bureaucracies. Monetary rewards are restricted, if they exist at all, and probably are given across the board. Promotions are based more on civil service test scores than on what a supervisor recommends. Time off and flextime are limited by labor-management agreements. The trainer refers participants to Training Material E2 (third page) for the list of motivators generally available to first-level supervisors in large, public social service organizations.

- Recognition (for good work; individually or to a group: noted to staff or bosses, verbally or in writing; from other staff as well as from their supervisor)
- Responsibility/Authority (utilize the talents and interests of staff, delegate tasks, special projects; give the authority to carry out these tasks)
- Receptivity (welcome input, diverse opinions; listen to feedback including complaints)
- Rise Up (fair and consistent performance appraisals; commend subordinates to superiors; keep them informed of promotional opportunities; promote training, education, conference attendance)
- Recreation (parties for personal celebrations, work done, to promote team spirit)

- Rally Round (stress accomplishments of whole unit, team spirit; note common obstacles to success, perhaps even common adversaries)
- Relief (relieving staff of some of the more boring, repetitious parts of the job)
- Enrichment (provide work which requires a higher level of knowledge, promotes personal growth; allow time and resources for such growth)
- Information (help staff to see the big picture; keep them informed about things that affect their jobs; be open and candid)
- Involvement (whenever possible bring staff into goal setting, planning, decision making, developing their job enrichment and enlargement)
- Interesting Work (job enlargement, offer opportunities to change jobs, add variety to duties)
- Individual Needs (if staff, note personal needs such as flextime to accommodate child care for example; explore whether it is possible to meet these needs)
- Interaction (have staff represent you at meetings with other departments, organizations, etc. or take them along)

In describing motivators several factors need to be stressed. Some motivators (Recreation, Rally Round) are

more relevant to staff as a unit. Others (Individual Needs, Rise Up) work better with individuals. Many work with both units and individuals.

Whether or not to use a motivator depends on a staff member's needs, abilities, and ambitions. Staff members may or may not:

- be satisfied doing what they presently do
- have the ability to do any more than the basic job
- look for recognition
- want more say in how they do their job
- have personal needs than a supervisor can satisfy
- be sociable creatures
- have any interest in what is happening in the rest of the organization

Some motivators (Responsibility/Authority, a chance to Rise Up) may result in losing good staff to promotion. However failure to use these motivators may embitter ambitious staff.

Motivators that involve satisfying a staff member's Individual Needs are particularly tricky to use. All of us have such needs. Supervisors have limited options to meet such needs. How to utilize these options will depend on:

- the seriousness of a staff member's need (leave early for child care vs. for a bowling league)
- how often the need occurs (come in late because of occasional child care problems vs. come in late every day)
- how available these options are (for example, a supervisor probably cannot give flextime to everyone and maintain coverage)
- whether identifying and trying to meet individual needs will serve as a motivator

The issue of *when* to offer motivators also needs to be explored. For the most part motivators should be seen as a staff member's rewards for achievements, not given in anticipation of such achievements. Motivators are offered during or after improvement. Supervisors only promise those motivators that they can deliver.

With some motivators (promotion for example) supervisors can promise to use their influence but cannot promise results. Providing motivators in anticipation of better work takes away their motivating power. At least some staff, once rewarded, will see no reason to improve. Other staff, who have worked hard for their rewards, will wonder why they did so.

Deciding which motivator to use when and for what staff member is the next area of discussion. Participants are referred back to Training Material E2 (fourth page) for a guide on how to choose motivators for individual staff members. Each item is discussed.

The simplest way to find out what motivates staff is to ask them. As part of general discussions or when developing a plan for each staff member (often at the time they are evaluated) the supervisor can discuss what the staff member is looking for on the job. They should ask what is liked and disliked about the job, what the staff member wants from the job, how it might be better, what they see as their future.

Supervisors probably will not ask staff directly about their personal lives but over time, by listening and observing, they should be able to get a good idea of what is important in each staff member's non-work life.

Simply by observing staff at work a supervisor can pick up information on their priorities and possible motivators.

Finally once a supervisor offers a motivator he/she needs to monitor its' impact closely, how long it lasts, whether and when it needs to be changed.

The last area for discussion is the process of motivation - how does the first-level supervisor connect the staff member, motivator, and motivational objectives together. Participants are referred to the last pages of Training Material E2 and walked through the process of motivation.

- the supervisor clearly defines to staff what they want (more work, higher quality, etc.)
- he/she makes sure the staff member can (is interested in) achieving this objective
- after discussion/observation/learning the staff member the supervisor decides on the motivator(s) to use
- the supervisor decides how closely to tie performance and motivator together
- the supervisor rewards staff while they are doing well or as soon as possible afterwards
- the supervisor monitors whether the motivator works, continues to work, needs change, needs reinforcement

Participants are told to complete their Staff Motivation Plan (Training Material E3) after talking with staff members and see how it works.

Communications

The trainer begins by noting that ninety percent of a supervisor's time is spent in communications. Participants are asked to note on-the-job situations where they communicate which are listed on the board. They should include:

- instructing staff re new rules/procedures
- assigning work to staff
- following up to assure that work is done, done correctly
- training staff
- correcting staff member's behavior
- commending staff
- holding staff meetings:
- completing reports for superiors re: production
- completing reports for superiors re: specific situations
- conferences with superiors:
 - re: good news
 - re: bad news
 - re: need for assistance
- communications with other units, departments, organizations
 - correspondence
 - telephone calls
 - conversations

- meetings

Participants are asked to think of a part of the supervisor's job that does not involve preparing to communicate, communicating, or reacting to communications. They should find it hard to do so.

A dictionary definition of communications is written on the board:

- to express oneself in a way that one is readily and clearly understood

However **effective** communications has one additional component:

- comprehension that results in positive action according to the needs of the situation

The trainer takes as an example his/her communication to the participants regarding what time to arrive for training sessions. He/she is the *sender/transmitter* conveying an idea or thought. The idea/thought is *encoded*. That encoding includes not only information but also the sender's background, attitudes, education, physical appearance, and personality. The sender chooses one or more *mediums* for the communication:

verbal, written, printed (posters), gestures, etc. The choice of medium and how it is used are affected by the sender's background and attitudes. Participants are asked to think of bosses they have had who preferred to communicate verbally, in writing, abruptly, with explanations, etc. The communication from trainer to participants is sent in a certain *direction* - downward in this case from a trainer with more power to participants with less. Communications from a supervisor to his/her staff also flows downward. The direction of communication may be horizontal (between more or less equally powerful staff, units, agencies) or upward (from lesser to greater powers - supervisors to their bosses for example). When participants receive the communication (on the time classes start) from the trainer, they *decode* it. This involves analyzing the communication's:

- *relevance* to the receiver's work, habits, etc. (an executive memo banning smoking anywhere in the office is more relevant than an executive memo advising staff who spend vacations camping to avoid setting forest fires).
- *source* from individuals/organizations of greater, the same, or lesser power, who will/will not use the power they have.
- *benefits*: what's in it for me if I comply?

- *consequences*: what penalties, punishments, etc. are noted for non-compliance, what are the odds that they will be carried out?
- *reasonableness*: how much effort is necessary to do what is requested, is there a good reason to do it?
- *clarity*: is the communication clear, understandable, do various aspects of encoding match or send different messages (for example, a supervisor who verbally informs staff of a new regulation but by his/her demeanor, tone, facial expressions sends the message that it can be ignored)?
- *intent* is there a hidden meaning - to assert power, show support, etc., does the sender expect the communication to be implemented?

The participants who are the *receivers* of the communication decode it and decide what to do. One of their options is *feedback* - the same process of encoding, medium, direction, decoding back to the original sender. The feedback may be:

- reaction to what is requested, information given
- clarification requested because the message is unclear
- specific information requested because it was lacking in the original communication

The sender of the communication may:

- want feedback, from a boss on his/her vacation request for example
- tolerate feedback, from staff complaining about a new procedure for example
- not want feedback from staff who have just been told how they must handle an emergency assignment for example

The trainer asks participants how to tell if his/her communication on when to show up for class is effective. They should remember that communications is successful only if it results in necessary action - showing up on time. It is stressed that **results are essential**. It is not enough that participants understand the concept of reporting on time or become committed to that goal. **They must show up on time**. Above all, supervisors communicate to get things done. Only if what they want is done are their communications successful.

The example of when participants should arrive for training is used to outline communication barriers. The trainer notes that this is a relatively simple communication between him/her and the participants. Yet even this communication can be problematic if done the wrong way.

Participants are referred to the memo in Training Material E4 (To Trainees Being Trained) - an example of pure bureaucratic blanderdash. The trainer requests that a participant ask him/her what time training begins. The trainer responds by referring the participant to the memo which he/she then rapidly reads to participants in a monotone. If participants' attention wanders or they make incredulous remarks on the content of the memo (this will happen) the trainer insults them in sarcastic tones and tells them to pay attention. At the end of the recitation the trainer notes that the memo provides all needed information about attendance, there is no need for questions or feedback, and he/she now will move on to more important subjects.

Participants are asked what was wrong with this communication, what barriers might keep participants from understanding and adhering to hours of attendance. They are referred to the last part of Training Material E4 (Communication Barriers) and asked to apply what is listed there to the attendance memo. Problems they identify should include:

- length/verbosity
- avoiding the issue
- too much information
- tone
- abruptness

- talking too much
- jargon
- inflexibility
- talking down to people
- lack of needed information
- unrealistic threats
- sarcasm

As participants mention these items they are asked if they might ever have the same problem in their communications. These are not uncommon problems. They often happen without the communicator being aware of them. The trainer emphasizes that only by reviewing and analyzing his/her communications regularly can a supervisor keep from slipping into the abovementioned problems.

Next to be discussed are some of the more difficult areas of supervisory communication - the giving of good news and of bad news to bosses and to staff.

Good news is defined as:

- praise/commendations to staff
- reports of a supervisor's own competence, of staffs' competence to bosses

Participants may argue that they have no problem in giving good news to staff. The trainer notes that praise to staff - verbal or written - for good work, initiative, independence, etc. is essential, however unfocussed praise can be detrimental:

- it will not have the impact of praise aimed at specific performance
- it can give a staff member the impression that he/she can do no wrong, making it difficult to correct him/her later on

Focussed praise stresses a staff member's specific activities - what they did, with whom, when, how well, how innovatively. It may be combined with suggestions on how to improve performance further.

For a supervisor to report his/her own competence of that of staff to a superior always is tricky. Participants may note that superiors should note above average supervisory performance on their own. The trainer will argue that bosses notice and spend more time thinking about non-performing supervisors. Good staff/supervisory performance is noted only if a supervisor actively promotes him/herself.

Supervisors must highlight their (and their staff's) superior performance for several reasons:

- to sell their staff for promotions, new assignments, other advancements (a significant factor in motivation)
- to build up good will with bosses to use for special requests, when giving bad news, etc. (refer back to the Goodwill Bank concept covered in the Environmental module)

However obvious self promotion is distasteful to most supervisors and likely to be counterproductive with their bosses. How can supervisors promote themselves and their staff to bosses in a subtle manner?

Supervisors generally send regular reports to their bosses re: work done, statistics on services, etc. If they do not, they can find an excuse to send reports. In cover memos for such reports they can highlight their accomplishments, those of individual staff, or those of staff as a whole:

- reports/ assignments are on time or early
- problems previously noted have been solved
- staff (with supervisory help) have improved, kept up high standards

- new procedures, systems, etc. have been implemented successfully

As noted in the Environmental module, supervisors need to seek out their bosses for regular formal and informal contacts. During these meetings, both relating to specific projects and on a for-your-information basis, supervisors can promote themselves and staff.

Supervisors also can use special memos to inform bosses if staff have improved in areas where they have been deficient or done more than expected.

Supervisors also have to give their staff bad news:

- the performance of a staff member is not satisfactory
- a staff member's specific actions/behavior is objectionable
- a personal request has been denied
- additional work is necessary

For now the trainer will focus on the first two items which can be defined as feedback - our reaction to the behavior or actions of someone else. Here feedback of a corrective nature is being considered. This feedback:

- is aimed at communicating how a staff member's actions/behavior affect the supervisor and others
- is designed to help the receiver change behavior and/or improve performance
- is often hard to give because:
 - no one likes to give bad news
 - the supervisor is afraid that it will harm his/her relation with the receiving staff member

Participants are encouraged to describe their experiences, successful or not, in giving corrective feedback. They are referred to the handout on Corrective Feedback (Training Material E5).

In giving corrective feedback a supervisor must **describe** the problematic behavior **specifically** and **promptly**. Judgmental statements ("Why are you always messing up?") should be avoided. Exactly what the staff member has done (how poorly, slowly, incompletely) or not done should be specified.

A supervisor must **explain** why the behavior is a problem. His/her own reaction should be made clear. If that reaction is anger, the supervisor should note it but in a professional manner. Anger bottled up ultimately will come out anyhow. The offending staff member's performance may be compared to the unit's standard. The impact of his/her behavior on the

unit's work, other staff, clients, other organizations, etc. should be discussed. At this point the offending staff member should be allowed some feedback and to offer any explanation for the behavior ("lost my temper", "didn't know the rules", etc.). Through feedback the supervisor also will confirm that the staff member understands his/her concern.

The supervisor **specifies** what the staff member's behavior **should** be. The first step in many cases is to tell people what **not** to do (yell at clients, sleep on the job, etc.). However the second step, to tell staff how they can improve, is equally important. Staff need to be instructed on how to handle the situation that got them into trouble. They should have a schedule for improvement. Doing better/faster is not enough. Staff need to know how much better and by when. They also need to buy into this plan for improvement. Without at least some staff commitment, the plan will not work.

Finally the supervisor stresses the **consequences** for the staff member if behavior doesn't change/improve. Those consequences may include:

- the low opinion of/conflict with peers, other units, etc.
- the low opinion of the supervisor reflected in evaluations, recommendations, etc.

- continued frustration on the part of the staff member (conflict with others, problems in doing work, etc.)
- disciplinary actions (to be explained step by step, in a factual manner without threats)

Supervisors may have to bring bad news to their superiors. Participants are asked if they like to hear bad news - about mistakes or problems they must solve. Chances are no one does. Someone may mention that supervisors and their bosses are paid to deal with problems. The trainer notes that in the Environmental module there was agreement that help in dealing with problems was reasonable for a supervisor to expect from his/her boss. However the fact that a boss should deal with bad news does not absolve a supervisor from communicating it the right way.

Bringing bad news to a superior may include situations where a supervisor:

- has made a mistake, failed to do something
- needs a boss's permission to do something (proceed with disciplinary action, for example)
- needs a superior's help, wisdom, influence to solve a problem

- needs to point out a situation made worse by a boss's inaction or interference

Participants are encouraged to discuss the delicacy and potential perils in bring bad news to superiors. Suggestions for dealing with such situations are noted on the board. Participants are referred to Training Material E6 (Giving Bad News to Your Boss) for a complete list:

- have a pattern of regular communication with your boss so that you don't only communicate bad news
- bring up bad news with other neutral or positive items
- before bringing a problem to your boss do everything you can to solve it yourself and be ready to outline your efforts
- have the specifics of the problem outlined (not just "Joe doesn't do his work" but how often, how little, etc.
- note the impact of the bad news on your staff, productivity, you, your boss, etc. as appropriate
- note that you have a possible solution to the problem (if you do) but ask for the boss's solution first

- if asked for your solution make your role, your superior's role, and the schedule for implementation clear
- have enough deposits in the Goodwill Bank that your boss will tolerate an occasional screw-up, candidness about his/her actions
- thank your superior for considering your problem
- even if you didn't get the answer you wanted, implement your boss's solution as long as it is legally and ethically possible to do so

Communications with bosses, subordinates, other organizations, etc. does not take place in a vacuum. The trainer notes that communications take place in an **environment** which reflects both the history and current circumstances of the sending and receiving parties.

Participants are asked to think of times when the party with whom they were communicating "just didn't understand" - when the communication was thwarted by the history of the relationship, power levels, personalities, or other factors. The trainer emphasizes that participants must consider the environment of communications to:

- make sure their communications work
- understand the communications of others

In assessing the environment of communications participants must consider:

- the history of communications between the parties, is there trust/distrust
- the power relations of the parties involved, equal levels or does one party (because of title, expertise, personality, etc.) have the upper hand
- is there a match/difference in preferred modes of communication (written, verbal, etc.) between sender and receiver
- is there a match/difference between the personalities of the parties involved (introvert-extrovert, forceful-shy, etc.)
- is there communication interference (too many other communications, other demands, etc.)
- is there cultural (language, traditions, etc.) differences between parties

It always is necessary to assess the environment of communications to:

- tailor your communications to the receiver
- clarify expectations for better communications
- interpret communications from others

- assure that your communications get people to do what you want them to do

The trainer next discusses styles of communications by noting that everyone has a preferred style of communication - the one with which they are most comfortable. We use this style until it is clear that it is not working and then often:

- try it again
- try something else without thinking about it first

In our minds we realize that our communications must be tailored to:

- the people involved (power and personalities),
- the situation involved (ordinary, emergency, etc.)

However we need to know more about various styles of communications, when to use them, how to tailor our communications and make them more effective.

Participants may question whether communicating different ways in different situations and especially to different people makes a person inconsistent and even devious. The trainer refers back to the objectives of supervision - get

work done and keep staff happy. Consistency lies in making it clear, especially to staff, that whatever style is used, a supervisor's communications are aimed at these objectives.

The trainer refers participants to Training Material E7 (Four Styles of Supervisory Communications). He/she uses the handout to go over the styles:

- developmental
- controlling
- relinquishing/accommodating
- defensive

The advantages and disadvantages of each style are stressed. The experiences of participants are utilized for examples of each style. How participants feel about using each style is explored. Generally the least objections will be made to the developmental style with increasing objections to subsequent styles. The trainer stresses the problems that can come from using an inappropriate style. As he/she explains the styles, he/she can use the following example to illustrate how inappropriate a style can be:

The trainer goes to the classroom door, pretends that he/she sees smoke, turns to the participants, and says in a clear, firm voice, "There's smoke in the hallway.

I want everyone to get up and file out of the room in an orderly manner. Turn right at the door for the fire exit. Let's go!" When participants start to get up, the trainer points out the deception. He/she then asks if, in this situation, the controlling style was the most appropriate. He/she strengthens the argument (and amuses the participants) by burlesquing the other styles and showing how inappropriate they would be in this situation.

The trainer stresses that supervisory communicative style depends much less on personal preference than on situation and personalities. The only successful style is one that results in requested action with minimal interpersonal cost.

COMMUNICATION/MOTIVATION MODULE

TRAINING MATERIAL E-1

PREFERRED JOB CHARACTERISTICS: SELF

Listed below are different characteristics that a job might have. Please check (✓) the four characteristics most important to you on a job.

Job Characteristic	Importance
Good work companions	_____
Have a good boss	_____
Use of knowledge and skills	_____
Receive recognition for contributions	_____
Receive a good salary	_____
Opportunity for advancement	_____
A position with responsibility	_____
Job security	_____
Good working conditions	_____
Challenging work	_____
Liberal fringe benefits	_____
Opportunity for self-growth	_____

PREFERRED JOB CHARACTERISTICS: STAFF MEMBERS

Listed below are different characteristics that a job might have. Please check (✓) the four characteristics most important to *your staff members* on a job.

Job Characteristic	Importance
Good work companions	_____
Have a good boss	_____
Use of knowledge and skills	_____
Receive recognition for contributions	_____
Receive a good salary	_____
Opportunity for advancement	_____
A position with responsibility	_____
Job security	_____
Good working conditions	_____
Challenging work	_____
Liberal fringe benefits	_____
Opportunity for self-growth	_____

COMMUNICATIONS/MOTIVATION MODULE

TRAINING MATERIAL E-2

MOTIVATION: SUPERVISOR/MANAGER SELF ASSESSMENT

	Never	Seldom	Frequently	Always			
I am clear as to the performance objectives towards which I want to motivate individual staff members.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I have conveyed these performance objectives to each staff member.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I know the limits as to how individual staff members can be motivated.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I have a good idea as to what motivates each of my staff.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I have asked each staff member what motivates them.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I utilize specific motivators for each of my staff.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I regularly reassess what I am using to motivate each staff member.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am always looking for new ways to motivate staff.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I reward good performance quickly.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I relate rewards to performance.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I do not let low performance staff get too comfortable.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

MOTIVATION

Why do you want to motivate staff?

Staff can be motivated towards a number of different performance objectives. These include:

- to complete their assigned tasks
- to do extra work
- to do higher quality work
- to come up with new innovations
- to be more independent (require less supervision)
- to improve their attitude (feel better about the job)
- to work better with each other

Managers and supervisors need to be clear as to why they want to motivate staff, to have an individual reason for each staff member, to reassess regularly the reasons for motivation. They then need to convey to staff what is expected of them.

What are the limits as to what staff can be motivated to do?

- their basic ability in a area
- their need for training
- their need for supplies/equipment
- staff norms and values
- the informal expectations of an organization
- competing demands from other parts of life (other jobs, family, interests, etc.)

Managers and supervisors need to realize the limits of what staff can be motivated to do. Some of these limits can be removed; others cannot. Each staff person's limits are different.

How can you motivate staff?

In organizations like HRA, supers and managers cannot give, or are very limited in their ability to give, bonuses, raises, or promotions. However, they have a variety of motivational tools at their disposal. These include:

- **Recognition** (for good work; individually or to a group, to bosses, verbally, or in writing; from other staff as well as from their supervisor)
- **Responsibility/Authority** (utilize the talents and interests of staff, delegate tasks, special projects; give the authority to carry out these tasks)
- **Receptivity** (welcome input, diverse opinions; listen to feedback, including complaints)
- **Rise up** (fair and consistent performance appraisals; commend subordinates to your superiors; keep them informed of promotional opportunities; promote training, education, conference attendance)
- **Recreation** (parties for personal celebrations, work done, to promote team spirit)
- **Rally 'round** (stress accomplishments of whole unit, team spirit, note common obstacles to success, perhaps even common adversaries)
- **Relief** (relieving staff of some of the more boring and repetitious parts of the job)
- **Enrichment** (provide work which requires a higher level of knowledge, promotes personal growth, allows time and resources for such growth)
- **Information** (help staff to see the big picture, keep them informed about things that affect their jobs, be open and candid)
- **Involvement** (whenever possible bring staff into goal setting, planning, decision making, developing their job enrichment and enlargement)
- **Interesting work** (job enlargement, offer opportunities to change jobs, add variety to duties)
- **Individual needs** (if staff note personal needs - for example, a different schedule to accommodate day care needs - explore whether you can meet these needs)

- **Interaction** (have staff represent you at meeting with other departments, organizations, etc., or take them alone)

Some of these motivators work better with individuals, others with groups. But they all are available to the average supervisor or manager in HRA.

Which motivator do you offer?

This depends on the individual and the circumstances. Each staff member has an individualized set of factors that motivates him or her. These factors may change over time. Each staff member has his/her own personal buttons that a supervisor needs to know about, and use for motivation. How does a supervisor decipher what will catalyze a staff member to a better performance?

- **Ask** (discuss with each staff member what they like and dislike about the job, what they want from it, how it might be better, what they see as their future)
- **Learn** (managers shouldn't ask staff about their personal lives and what they do outside the job, but over time staff may make known what is important in their non-work lives)
- **Observe** (in working with staff a supervisor can pick up on their priorities and motivators)
- **Test** (ask staff to complete the job characteristics test in this packer)
- **Monitor** (once a motivation is offered, assess its impact, how long it lasts, whether it needs to be changed)

The Process of Motivation

Finally, what is the process of offering motivation? How does a supervisor tie motivator and motivational goals together?

- Clearly define what you want (more work, higher quality, etc.)
- Make sure the worker can achieve (eg., is interested in) what you want

- Decide on the most appropriate motivator for the worker
- Decide how closely you want to tie performance and motivator together (do you promise rewards, mention the possibility of them, etc.)
- In general, give rewards after performance objectives have been achieved, not before.
- Reward staff as soon as possible after they have done well
- Always relate rewards to good performance
- Never let staff who aren't performing well be comfortable with their performance
- Monitor whether the motivator works, continues to work over time, needs to be changed, needs reinforcement

Now, Use Them!

The above suggestions and guidelines are only tools. It is up to managers to use these tools (and their own ideas) in the most flexible and individualized way possible to motivate their staff, and to get the work done.

COMMUNICATION/MOTIVATION MODULE

TRAINING MATERIAL E-3

STAFF MOTIVATION PLAN

STAFF MEMBER	MOTIVATIONAL OBJECTIVE	MOTIVATIONAL LIMITS	MOTIVATIONAL METHODS	DATE APPLIED WITH STAFF MEMBER	FOLLOW-UP COMMENTS

COMMUNICATION/MOTIVATION MODULE

TRAINING MATERIAL E-4

TO TRAINEES BEING TRAINED

TO: Trainees Being Trained (TBT)
FROM: Trainer Training Trainees (TTT)
DATE: February 2, 1993
RE: Hours of Attendance for Said TBT in Training

It is expected that all TBT will commence attendance at all training sessions for which they are enrolled or have been instructed by Upper Level Supervisory Staff (ULSS) to attend according to the schedule (defined here as including but not being limited to the actual times of commencement, breaks, and termination for said training) developed for said training sessions by the TTT who will develop such schedule following guidelines set forth in HRA Procedure 442-1a.

The aforementioned training schedule (TS) will include an hour of commencement (HOC). The HOC can be accessed by the TBT by direct interface with the TTT or by telephonic communications per HRA/AT7T Procedure 94945-88976bb (Let Your Fingers do The Walking).

The TS also will include break times (BT) offered within the following guidelines.

- the TS offers BT to TBTs to perform bodily functions (BF) as defined in DSS/EPA Executive Order 4999-1 (revised version), any BF not defined therein is not a BF;
- the TS offers BT to TBT in case of an earthquake (EQ) with a Richter rating at or over 9.0; TBT should not leave the room until the EQ rating is confirmed by the TTT who will set BT.

Termination time (TT) is the hour and minute that the TS ends, finishes, and/or terminates for the day on which said TT is being offered. TT can be no later than 9 PM EST/DST or concurring times in other accepted times zones.

ANY VIOLATION OF THE ABOVE RULES BY A TBT WILL BE IMMEDIATELY REPORTED TO THEIR ULSS AND MAY RESULT IN PENALTIES ASSESSED AGAINST THEM INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO SUSPENSION, FINES, AND CRIMINAL PROSECUTION.

COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

1. Ambiguity
2. Length, Verbosity
3. Writing to Impress, Rather to Inform
4. Avoiding the Issue
5. Lack of Knowledge
6. Too Much Information
7. Grammar - Semantics
8. Language- Dialect
9. Tone
10. Arguing
11. Abruptness
12. Defensiveness
13. Evasiveness
14. Talking Too Much
15. Jargon
16. Lack of Privacy
17. Inflexibility
18. Silence
19. Interruptions
20. Quick Judgements
21. Talking Down to People
22. Sarcasm
23. Fear
24. Poor Listening
25. Asking Leading Questions
26. Imposing Values
27. Preoccupation
28. Emotional Blocks
29. Personal Problems
30. Hostility
31. Past Experiences
32. Stereotyping
33. Physical Environment
34. Physical Appearance
35. Body Language

COMMUNICATION/MOTIVATION MODULE

TRAINING MATERIAL E-5

CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK

There are four key elements to the corrective feedback that Supervisors give to staff members:

Describe the offending behavior specifically and promptly.

Explain why the behavior is a problem, on what/whom it impacts. Allow the staff member to explain; ask for clarification.

Specify what must be done for improvement. Develop a schedule for improvement and seek at least some staff buy-in to the plan.

Consequences of staff behavior, if it fails to improve, should be made clear. These are not threats but rather a realistic appraisal of what will happen.

COMMUNICATION/MOTIVATION MODULE

TRAINING MATERIAL E-6

GIVING BAD NEWS TO YOUR BOSS

Sooner or later you'll have to bring some bad news to your superior. That news may involve situations where you:

- have made a mistake, failed to do something
- need your boss's permission to do something (proceed with disciplinary action, for example)
- need your boss's help, wisdom, influence to solve a problem
- needs to point out a situation made worse by your boss's inaction or interference

No one likes to hear bad news so bringing bad news to your boss may be one of your hardest jobs as a supervisor. But aren't bosses supposed to hear bad news and deal with it? Yes, but it's up to you to communicate that news the right way.

Bringing bad news becomes easier if you have laid some groundwork; if you:

- have a pattern of regular communication with your boss so that you don't only communicate bad news

- have enough deposits in the Goodwill Bank that your boss will tolerate an occasional screw-up, candidness about his/her actions
- before bringing a problem to your boss have done everything you can to solve it yourself and are ready to outline your efforts

The specifics of how you bring bad news and your follow-up are equally important:

- bring up bad news with other neutral or positive items
- have the specifics of the problem outlined (not just "Joe doesn't do his work" but how often, how little, etc.)
- note the impact of the bad news on your staff, productivity, you, your boss, etc. as appropriate
- note that you have a possible solution to the problem (if you do) but ask for the boss's solution first
- if asked for your solution, make your role, your boss's role, and the schedule for implementation clear
- thank your boss for considering your problem

- even if you didn't get the answer you wanted, implement your superior's solution as long as it is legally and ethically possible to do so

Even if your superior reacts negatively to the bad news it is better that he/she hears it from you. You can put the news in a perspective favorable to you. You also can gain credit for warning the boss about impending troubles. You gain none of these benefits if the boss hears the news from someone else or, even worse, if he/she discovers bad news that you have been hiding.

COMMUNICATION/MOTIVATION MODULE

TRAINING MATERIAL E-7

COMMUNICATION STYLES

STYLE: *Developmental* - drawing ideas from others for better solutions

Advantages: gets input from others (staff, bosses) to solve problems where the solution is not clear; politically a supervisor may want staff/boss involvement to build support/ownership for whatever solution chosen

Disadvantages: takes time; a consensus may not be reached

Variations: brainstorming, bringing out information for problem solving (example: a supervisor brings a problem to fellow supervisors for advice); seek out the opinions/emotions of others, possibly incorporate them into a final decision (example: allowing staff to ventilate, offer suggestions on implementation of an unpopular directive)

STYLE: *Controlling* - when you know what needs to be done but have to get people to do it

Advantages: gets things done fast, in an emergency;
convinces others of the right way to act

Disadvantages: may create negative opinions of you;
needs more follow-through supervision

Variations: order staff to do something based on supervisory authority (example: staff are told to stay late to handle emergency assignments); sell (persuade) others to do what you want (example: convince you boss to proceed with disciplinary proceedings against a staff member)

STYLE: *Relinquishing/Accommodating*, giving up some part of the decision making power, making accommodations to get results

Advantages: if a supervisor does not have the power to push a solution only compromising will get things done; because orders from above must be obeyed

Disadvantages: you may lose authority with staff; you may get the reputation of being a toady for your boss

Variations: request extra work, etc. from staff (for example, ask that staff take on extra assignments and

offer rewards); obey orders (for example, follow the orders of an unreasonable boss even though you disagree with them)

STYLE: *Defensive*, withdraw from problem solving, don't make a decision

Advantages: at times it's necessary for a supervisor to avoid making decisions he/she is not ready to make, has no power to enforce; staff should be told to make some decisions themselves

Disadvantages: a supervisor can look weak to staff, indecisive to bosses

Variations: explain that you won't make a decision until you have more information, until there are further developments; tell staff that they must make some decisions themselves

APPENDIX F: ENVIRONMENTAL MODULE**Research Background**

The environmental category (classified under the title "Relations with the Work Environment") includes office history, formal and informal systems of operations and power, relations with superiors and supervisors' views of what they can expect of their staff and superiors and vice versa. On the Training Needs Assessment supervisors rated their knowledge in this category in the middle range with a 3.6* average score with 41% rating their knowledge as low-medium. Knowledge scores on What supervisors needed to know about their bosses and What they could expect from their bosses were notably low. However supervisors did not think that Relations With the Work Environment was a very important area. Overall they gave it the lowest importance rating of any category (4.1* average, 21% low-medium importance scores) and What they needed to know about their bosses got the lowest importance rating of any aspect.

When asked about their most serious problem, however, supervisors frequently mentioned environmental issues. They gave problems with upper-level management a 3.5* severity rating and gave the highest severity rating (3.9*) to a lack of resources.

* on a scale of 5

Objectives

Why don't supervisors see their work environment as more important to their jobs? Informal discussions with supervisors bring up a number of reasons for this relative indifference.

Almost all supervisors have been promoted from line positions - generally production oriented with little contact with other parts of the office environment. They now are in position with broader horizons, relating to individuals on different levels with different functions. Unfortunately many supervisors have not changed their attitudes to match their positions. They still see the world from a line staff perspective and do not see or readily accept that their jobs now involve relating up, down, and sideways and using the environment to make their work easier.

Office environments are complex things. They involve formal and informal systems of power and relationships, past and present situations of superiors, subordinates, and colleagues, and the situation of the office as a whole. Office environments are changing constantly. Supervisors must re-analyze their environment constantly to keep up-to-date on players, relationships, outside influences, etc. Many supervisors see their office environments as unknowable. They are overwhelmed by the amount and complexity of information involved and its changeable nature. They have not put their office environment into any kind of defined framework. They need to identify the

parts of the environment most crucial to them and to analyze these parts in a structured way.

Supervisors may see knowledge and utilization of the office environment as "office politics" - a distasteful and dishonest game that they would rather not play. They believe that if they ignore "office politics" and do their jobs that they can get ahead on virtue alone. Those with civil service titles may see them as an excuse to neglect relations with superiors, colleagues, etc. ("They can't do anything to me, I'm a permanent").

Supervisors' relations with their superiors may be colored by their self interest which encourages them to try to understand and get along with their bosses. However their relations are as or more likely to be influenced by a condescending and even hostile attitude towards their bosses. To some degree this reflects common American attitudes towards authority but certain aspects of the environment of any large public social service organization encourage it. Supervisors often see their superiors as having "sold out" to reach their positions. They often make a "us vs. them" division with supervisors and the staff they supervise as "us" and all higher level management as "them". This division frequently is promoted by union activists. It also is encouraged by what appear to be unreasonable and unfeeling orders and guidelines from upper level management. Finally as HRA (and many other public social

services) becomes less focussed and more confusing in what it does and how it does it, staff respect towards superiors as people who know what they're doing is eroded. These negative attitudes towards superiors bring into question supervisors' efforts to get along with their superiors. Attempts at cooperation and accommodation may be seen as toadying or worse. The self interest of supervisors dictates that they get along with their bosses. They need to work on overcoming negative emotions in this area.

With the day to day demands of their jobs and the lack of insight common to many of us, supervisors probably have not thought through what they can really expect from staff and their bosses. They are even less likely to have assessed what staff and superiors realistically can expect from them. Staff and bosses are the key parts of supervisors' environments. Supervisors need to clarify what they can expect from these parties and what these parties can expect from them. Such expectations are the framework in which they relate to their staff and bosses. Once supervisors have conceptualized these expectations they need to communicate and negotiate with staff and superiors. Only then can they finalize their expectations and have a basis for supervision.

Finally all too many supervisors are passive about their office environments. They see environment like the weather - affecting them but unchangeable. They need a different level

of perception - to understand that by learning their office environments they will know what they cannot change and avoid it, know what will be difficult to change and develop plans, and know what can be changed easily and act to improve their situations.

The Environmental module should:

- allow supervisors to express their feelings about their office environments and cooperating with their superiors
- help supervisors define the parameters of their office environments (what needs to be known)
- convince supervisors of the importance of knowing working within, and, if possible, changing their office environments
- help supervisors to assess their knowledge of their office environments
- convince supervisors of the importance of accommodating their superiors, with suggestions on how to do so
- discuss and define supervisors' expectations of their staff and superiors and vice versa.

The emphasis in this module is on convincing and analyzing. The trainer needs to sell the importance of knowing the environment, working with a boss, and clarifying expectations as well as the idea of supervisory empowerment in these areas.

Like any good salesperson, he/she will hear customer objections and reservations and deal with them in the sales pitch.

One of the ideas stressed in this module - that of accommodating one's boss - goes against certain attitudes common in social work where middle and upper level administrators are seen as obstacles rather than as potential facilitators. While the idea of line staff and supervisors standing up to their bosses has a certain romantic appeal, it is not realistic. The most frequently effective way to change bureaucracies is to work within them, understanding their needs, and accommodating them whenever ethically possible.

Environmental Module

The trainer will begin by encouraging participant's comments about their office environments. He/she will write on the board, "Why care about your office environment?" and list pro and con comments. The positive list should include:

- supervisors need to broaden their horizons beyond their immediate work
- if supervisors don't influence their environments they will be controlled by them
- supervisors need to deal with their environments to gain flexibility on their jobs

- supervisors need to deal with their environments to gain recognition and promotions
- supervisors need to know and understand bosses and staff to get more from them and keep them happy
- office environments can be defined in a comprehensible way
- supervisors can influence their office environments

Negative comments should include:

- supervisors should not get mixed up in office politics
- supervisors cannot change the way things are run
- supervisors have to take their staff as they find them
- supervisors should not have to "brown nose" their bosses
- office environments are too confusing anyhow

The trainer notes that we all learn about the environments in which we live. He/she confirms with participants that they know their neighborhoods - what blocks are safe, where to get good pizza, etc. The office environment is the institutions and people with whom supervisors interact and spend a substantial portion of their working lives. It is important to understand and utilize this working environment.

Referring to the Organizational Environment handout (Training Material F-1) which describes office environments from three

perspectives, the trainer asks participants to review the formal structure of authority (organizational chart, rule book, etc.). It includes:

- who has authority over whom
- job titles
- official paths of communication
- the goals and objectives of a department
- plans to achieve these goals and objectives
- official policies on discipline, productivity, etc.

The trainer concedes that the formal structure of authority is not always reflective of the way an office is run. However it is important knowledge for situations where adherence to form is important and for emergencies or situations of great change (when there is a tendency to go back to the rules).

The second part of the office environment is the informal structure of power including:

- which positions are key and which are peripheral
- who has power and how they use it
- how communications really flow
- personal relations within management and between management and staff
- who has expertise and how they use it
- the unofficial goals and objectives of a department

- how policies on discipline, productivity, etc. are implemented
- the history of a department (tasks, staff, scandals, changes, etc.)
- how that history affects current operations
- the personalities of each individual manager
- the "reach" of management (how much it involves itself in day-to-day operations)
- internal relations among various units in the department
- external relations with other departments and organizations
- relations with unions and other employee groups

The informal structure of power is the "way things really work in an office". It is personal and situational and stresses power and it's use. In the informal structure, policies are operationalized. Knowledge of this structure helps supervisors develop autonomy and establish relations to protect and promote themselves.

Finally the third part of the office environment important to a first-level supervisor is the informal organization of staff. This includes:

- norms re:
 - communications (open to closed)

- production (minimal to maximum)
- clients (hostility to support)
- innovation (conservative to imaginative)
- leadership of staff based on:
 - longevity
 - expertise
 - personality
 - values of group
- activities of informal staff leaders including:
 - guidance re the job and occasionally personal matters
 - resolving conflicts among staff
 - maintaining group norms
 - representing staff to management
- cohesion of staff based on:
 - communications
 - background
 - size
 - accomplishments
 - threats

Supervisors who understand the informal structure of their staff can lead better. They can identify the norms they will accept and those they may need to change. They can focus on some informal leaders and ignore others.

The trainer asks participants, within the three part framework, how much they know about their office environment. Participants are asked to complete the Organizational Environment: Supervisor's Knowledge Assessment (Training Material F2) which allows them to rate how much they know about their office environment. They review their answers candidly and in confidence. Discussions are encouraged re the relevance of the questions and how difficult information is to acquire. The trainer notes that knowledge in all the areas covered by the assessment is necessary for supervisors to:

- know their rights
- know the parameters in which they can operate
- gain more flexibility in how they do their work
- be recognized for what they do
- decide what is necessary to get work from staff and keep them satisfied
- decide what is necessary to get leeway from superiors, to keep superiors happy

Participants then refer back to the Organizational Environment handout (Training Material F-1) to discuss how to get information on their office environments. Ways to collect information include:

- collection of official organizational charts, goals and objectives, plans, job descriptions, etc.

- questioning of trusted secretaries, managers, etc. re department history, changes in management, objectives, to clarify relations among managers
- observing management re who has expertise, power, who relates to whom, goes to meetings, writes memos, etc.
- observing staff re: socializers, experts, informal staff spokespersons, informal norms, "tightness" of staff, etc.

Following the handout, the trainer notes that environmental assessments need updating as environments change. Changes include:

- reorganization
- changes in department goals, objectives
- changes in policies
- changes in how policies are implemented
- changes in staff
- changes in relations among staff
- changes in other departments/organizations with which a department relates
- changes in unions
- changes in clientele
- changes in management

When these changes occur, supervisors need to go back to their sources to update information.

In summary, the trainer stresses that supervisors can structure and obtain information on their office environments. Such information is necessary if they are to protect themselves, do their jobs, and promote their careers.

The trainer starts discussion on how supervisors can learn and accommodate their bosses. Some objections to the very idea of accommodation probably will be raised. Referring to the "Learning Your Boss" handout (Training Material F-3) which discusses supervisors' relations with their superiors, the trainer will discuss the advantages in accommodation:

- save time and effort in dealing with your boss
- acquire the skill of getting along with superiors (which you will need throughout your career)
- be a team player (in the same way that you want your staff to be team players)
- limit stress in your relations with your boss
- promote your career

The trainer stresses that bosses have power. At some point supervisors will need some of that power. With a volunteer participant in the boss role, the trainer performs the "Good Will Bank" exercise. Using coins to represent learning about the boss's background, accommodating to his/her style, establishing regular communications, doing favors, etc., the trainer gives the coins to the "boss" and makes deposits. The

trainer then withdraws the deposited coins as he/she asks for help in a discipline matter, announces that a deadline can't be met, asks for extra vacation. The emphasis is on a reciprocal relationship between supervisors and their superiors.

Referring back to the handout, the trainer discusses exactly what supervisors need to know about their bosses:

- the boss's environment:
 - history in the department
 - standing in the hierarchy
 - power had and utilized
 - pressure and priorities from their own bosses
- the boss's style, personal preferences re:
 - meetings (when, how often, content)
 - communications (written, verbal)
 - hours (how early does he/she come in, leave)
 - formality (in title, communications, etc.)
 - pet pleasures and peeves
- the boss's personality:
 - need to socialize
 - need for achievement
 - need for control, power
- these needs apply to both the boss's own personality and what is expected of supervisors

The trainer then outlines where supervisors can get information on their bosses:

- observe the boss
- ask the boss
- ask others (secretaries, fellow supervisors, etc.)
- follow the paper trail (memos, directives from upper level management, etc.).

It will be stressed that over time bosses change as does their environment. Information on bosses needs to be updated and re-analyzed regularly.

In describing how supervisors can use information to accommodate their bosses, the trainer needs to stress that they accommodate within a framework of what they feel is reasonable and honorable. Bosses will pick up on supervisors who mimic or bootlick them. Accommodation is more subtle and more demanding but offers greater rewards. Among ways supervisors reasonably can accommodate are:

- match the boss's style (in meetings, writing, etc.)
- always consider the boss's pet pleasures and peeves
- show friendliness and enthusiasm
- communicate that you are competent, can be trusted
- establish regular patterns of communications with your boss

- learn to give your boss both good and bad news
- socialize with your boss
- do not talk about your boss behind his/her back
- support your boss (at least in public)

At this point participants probably will ask how supervisors should act when they are smarter, know more about a subject than their boss. If not, the trainer should bring it up. Supervisors should realize that in some situations they may be better than their superiors but not in others. Even when they are more competent, knowledgeable, or appropriate than their boss, he/she still has more power and can use it against them. Supervisors need to balance their desire to excel with the need not to show up their bosses. This involves neither intimidating a boss nor constantly covering up for them. Some specific suggestions include:

- don't hide your intelligence
- don't be overly aggressive (being right is important but so is being a team player)
- don't surprise your boss or oppose him/her in public
- don't criticize your boss's sub-par work (others will recognize it)
- in some situations let your boss take credit for your work
 - you will have other chances to shine

- you take at least some of the credit for the work of your staff
- praise your boss (whenever you can do so in good conscience)
- if necessary, cover your boss's mistakes (for the good of the department, but do not make this a pattern)
- don't tell anyone you are smarter than your boss (your boss will hear about it)
- try to do some work independently (without threatening the team framework),
- if the situation becomes intolerable, leave (while you can still salvage a good reference)

The trainer should note that communicating with bosses will be covered in the Communication/Motivation module. He/she should reiterate that supervisors may not be completely comfortable in accommodating their bosses but accommodation is necessary if they are to be successful on their jobs.

The trainer starts the final section of the environmental module: Realistic Expectations. This allows participants, within the framework of a first-level supervisory position, to define what they can expect of others and what others can expect from them

- what supervisors realistically can expect from staff

- what supervisors realistically can expect from superiors
- what staff realistically can expect from supervisors
- what superiors realistically can expect from supervisors

It might be assumed that many experienced supervisors already have clarified and communicated their expectations of staff and bosses. However the pressures of the job and a lack of insight may have kept them from doing so. Any clarification that they have done probably was done in a piecemeal fashion. Even for experienced supervisors it is a good idea to review and consolidate expectations.

Some participants probably will note that it is futile to set expectations since the parties for whom they are made frequently do not live up to them. The trainer stresses that two of the sets of expectations involve supervisors deciding what is reasonable for them to do for others. He/she should note that the participants are honorable people and, of course, will live up to what they decide should be expected of them. As for supervisors' expectations re staff and bosses, it is clear that there are more likely to be problems if supervisors have no or unclear expectations. People cannot do what you want unless you tell them what you want.

Realistic expectations does not mean the way participants think things should be but rather what they believe they honestly can offer to staff and bosses and what they believe they should get in return. The trainer notes that these expectations cover both work and relations. They may change over time and be different in different situations but there is a core of expectations that are valid for relations between supervisors and superiors and supervisors and staff.

The trainer tapes four large pieces of paper with the following headings to the walls of the classroom:

- What can supervisors realistically expect from staff?
- What can staff realistically expect from supervisors?
- What can supervisors realistically expect from bosses?
- What can bosses realistically expect from supervisors?

Participants break into four groups, each assigned to list realistic expectations under one of the headings. They are told that their lists will be critiqued by the trainer and other participants and that they should be ready to explain and defend what is listed. They are encouraged to write in simple, understandable language (no "relationships", "interfacing" or other professorial phrases). The trainer circulates among the groups to encourage discussion. Occasionally a group will be stymied. This is more often the case with the second and forth headings. Supervisors spend more time thinking about

what others should do for them than on what they should do for others. If necessary, the trainer brings up ideas for expectations.

Participants should be given from ten to twenty minutes to complete their lists. They should get out (but not look at) their Realistic Expectations handout (Training Material F-4). The trainer notes that the expectations listed on this handout are a compilation of expectations most frequently noted by earlier groups of participants in supervisory training. Participants will be comparing their lists with these compilations. However what is on the handout does not overrule participants' contributions. They are primarily a guide. The Realistic Expectation handout is in continuous development. The trainer will save what these participants have contributed and consider incorporating at least parts of it.

The trainer and participants then review the list of each group. After review the group may add, subtract, or modify expectations on their list. Participants are encouraged to copy these lists. The trainer closes by suggesting that each participant should take time to make up lists to reflect what they personally see as realistic expectations for them to give and to receive from staff and bosses. How to communicate and clarify these expectations with staff and bosses will be covered in the Communication/ Motivation and Leadership modules.

ENVIRONMENTAL MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL F-1

ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Webster defines an environment as "the aggregate of all the external conditions and influences affecting the life and development of an organism." As people, we get to know certain environments very well. For example, we know our neighborhoods - which stores are least expensive, what streets are safe, where to find the best pizza. As supervisors we work in a general organizational environment (HRA) and a more specific department environment. Those environments - especially ones on the departmental level - strongly influence how supervisors lead, communicate, influence staff, discipline, train, handle complaints, etc. The department environment sets the boundaries in which supervisors operate. To survive and thrive, supervisors should understand and monitor their department environment.

The department environment can be divided into three parts:

- the formal structure of authority
- the informal structure of power
- the informal structure of staff

Supervisors need to know all of them.

The Formal Structure of Authority

The formal structure of authority is exemplified by an organizational chart and a rule book. It includes:

- who has authority over whom
- job titles
- official paths of communication
- the goals and objectives of a department
- plans to achieve these goals and objectives
- official policies on discipline, productivity, etc.

Very few organizations operate solely within their formal structure of authority. However, knowledge of that structure gives supervisors a framework of the way things are supposed to be. It will be useful in situations where adherence to form and rules are important and as a guide in times of great change and emergencies.

The Informal Structure of Power

The informal structure of power is the way things really work in a department, especially in its management. The focus of the informal structure is more personal and situational. It stresses power and its use. In the informal structure official policies are operationalized and thus changed. To chart the informal structure a supervisor needs to know:

- which positions are key and which peripheral
- who has power and how they use it
- how communications really flow
- personal relations within management and between management and staff
- who has expertise and how they use it
- the unofficial goals and objectives of a department
- how policies on discipline, productivity, etc. are implemented
- the history of a department (tasks, staff, changes, scandals, etc.)
- how that history affects current operations
- the personalities of individual managers
- the "reach" of management (how much it involves itself in supervision)
- internal relations among various units in the department
- external relations with other departments and organizations
- relations with unions or other employee groups

Knowledge of the informal structure of power will help supervisors in dealing with their superiors, in deciding how much "wiggle room" they have to do their job, in developing relations to protect and promote them, and in assessing how much backing they will have for their actions.

The Informal Organization of Staff

The informal organization of staff is the environment of staff below the supervisory level. It includes staff directly under supervisors (their main concern) and staff in other units. It

encompasses friendships, cliques, groups of staff who help each other, and social groups. The structure and rules in this environment are informal and unwritten but are extremely persuasive. Its communications (the "grapevine") and relations cut across unit and even departmental lines.

If the formal structure has policies, the informal organization has norms - staff's view of "the way we do things around here." These are not recorded but they are persuasive. Norms can be positive or negative. They include:

- communications ("we talk about our problems" vs. "keep your mouth shut")
- production ("let's get the job done" vs. "don't rush the work")
- clients ("we're here to help them" vs. "new clients just mean more work")

The leadership of the informal organization is varied and flexible. When one leader may emerge, it is more likely that there will be a number of leaders with different attributes, including:

- *longevity* (the old timer who knows the history of the organization, of staff-management relations, of what has worked and not worked)
- *expertise* (in how to do the job, deal with management, etc.)
- *personality* (the nice guy/gal who pulls people together, resolves conflicts)
- *values* (the worker who personifies the values, motives, goals of most other staff)

Informal leaders do many of the things that supervisors do. These include:

- *providing* advice and guidance about on the job problems, and occasionally, about personal problems
- *resolving* conflicts among staff
- *maintaining* the group's norms
- *representing* staff to management

The cohesion of the informal organization (and thus, its strength) will vary among departments and even units. Among the factors influencing cohesion are:

- *communications* (the more group members communicate, the greater the cohesion)
- *background* (group members with similar backgrounds and interests find it easier to communicate and stick together)
- *size* (the smaller the group, generally the more likelihood for cohesion)
- *accomplishments* (winning teams stick together as do groups that achieve their goals)
- *threats* (having an active common enemy - management, budget cuts, etc. - brings a group together)

Supervisors who know the informal organization of staff can better manage and manipulate their unit. They will understand which norms are strong and which are not; which to change and which to leave alone. They will know the informal leaders and how to deal with them. They will gauge resistance to change before making it. They'll know what rewards (and punishments) will motivate their units.

Changes in Environments

All three parts of the department environment - the formal structure of authority, the informal structure of power, and the informal structure of staff - *change*. That change may be gradual or rapid, incremental or drastic, but it is inevitable. Among the types of change are:

- reorganization of departments
- changes in official goals and objectives
- changes in plans to achieve goals and objectives
- changes in policies (discipline, productivity, etc.)
- changes in how these policies are implemented
- changes in staff
- changes in relations among staff
- changes in other departments and organizations
- changes in unions
- changes in clientele
- changes in management

These changes are interrelated. Change in one part of an environment affects other parts and other environments. Supervisors need to monitor these changes and assess their impact.

Learning About Environments

Getting information about the bureaucratic environments takes effort and persistence. As environments change the process of collecting facts and observations never really ends. Supervisors can get information in several ways:

- *collection* (of organizational charts, departmental goals and objectives, long range plans, job descriptions, instructional and assigning memos.
- *questioning* (of trusted managers, secretaries, etc. re: departmental history, changes in management, changes in objectives, to clarify relations among managers)
- *observing management* (who has expertise, power, who relates to whom, who goes to meetings, sits on committees, writes memos)
- *observing staff* (who is the socializer, expert, spokesperson; what are the informal norms, how "tight" are staff)

Supervisors should gather their information subtly - no one likes busybodies - but over time they can piece together a clear impression of their departmental environment.

Why Bother?

Supervision is a hard job and learning the environments is just one more task on top of many others. A supervisor might ask, "Why learn the environments if you can't change them?" But supervisors can change most of their environments - incrementally and subtly - but change them, nevertheless. Even if environments are unchangeable supervisors can maneuver and manipulate them. Supervisors want to do their job and maintain as much autonomy as possible. How well they do so depends upon how well they know their office environments.

Partially from: David McClelland, Power: The Inner Experience (New York: Irving Publishers, 1975).

ENVIRONMENTAL MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL F-2

I am knowledgeable about how my department relates to other parts of the organization.

Completely Basically Somewhat Not at all

I am knowledgeable about how management relates to unions in my department.

Completely Basically Somewhat Not at all

I can identify the leaders among my staff.

Completely Basically Somewhat Not at all

I can assess how cohesive the members of my staff are.

Completely Basically Somewhat Not at all

I am knowledgeable about what factors are likely to cause my staff to draw together.

Completely Basically Somewhat Not at all

I know the informal norms among my staff re: how much work is expected.

Completely Basically Somewhat Not at all

I know the informal norms among my staff re: communication with management (suggestions, complaints, etc.)

Completely Basically Somewhat Not at all

I review what I know about my department's environment regularly.

Completely Basically Somewhat Not at all

Partially from: Christina Christenson, Thomas W. Johnson, John E. Stinson, Supervising (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1992)

ENVIRONMENTAL MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL F-3

LEARNING YOUR BOSS

First, a cardinal rule:

As a supervisor it is your task to accommodate your boss, not the other way around.

This does not mean that you must be a boot-licker or brown-noser. It does mean that within reason and morality, your accommodate requests from your boss in the same way you expect staff to handle requests from you. To best accommodate your boss (and to promote yourself and keep out of trouble) you need to analyze your boss - learn what is important, and how to work with, him or her.

There are some definite advantages to figuring out your boss:

- You'll save time and effort. The more you know about your boss, the less time and motion you'll waste in pleasing him.
- You'll learn more. Your boss probably knows a lot about the organization and your job. Please him/her and he/she is more likely to teach you.
- You'll acquire a skill. Unless you end up as executive you'll always have a boss to accommodate.
- You'll pay your dues in the management club. Your boss and his/her bosses are looking at how you fit in and if you are a team player.
- You'll make deposits in the good-will account. Sooner or later you'll do something that displeases your boss. It helps if he/she can put that something in the context of all you've done to accommodate him/her.
- You'll be healthier. A smooth relationship with your boss means less stress.
- You'll go further. Bosses promote people who accommodate them.

What should you know about your boss? *Everything!* But within that unreasonable expectation you should analyze your boss from three angles: environment, style, and personality.

What is the organizational environment in which your boss operates? Where is your boss in the official hierarchy, in the informal structure of power? What is his/her history with the organization? What kind of pressures and priorities does he/she get from his/her bosses.

What are your boss' management styles? How often does he want to meet with you? Will this change as you gain more experience? What reporting format (verbal, written, some combination) does your boss prefer for various situations? Is he/she formal or casual? Is there something you should **always** do because it **pleases** your boss? Is there something you should **never** do because it **angers** him?

What do you know about your boss' personality? Psychologist David McClelland has done many studies on personalities in organizations. Basically, he believes that people are motivated primarily (but not totally; everyone has a mix) by one of three basic needs:

- The need for *affiliation/socialization*. Interaction with people, getting to know them, working towards a common goal, relaxing together. In workplace terms, the need for everybody to get along.
- The need for *creativity/achievement*. Doing work that is meaningful, developing skills and talents, inventing new things or improving old ones. In workplace terms, the need to have things done right and done well.
- The need for *power/control*. Influencing the world and people around you, arranging things the way you want them, directing others. In workplace terms, the need to have things done your way.

What is the primary motivator for your boss? How do other needs influence him/her? What is your primary (and secondary) motivator? How much are you in accordance with your boss? How can you best live with his/her personality?

You can you learn about your boss? Ask him/her, ask someone else, do some research, keep your eyes open.

Much of your analysis of your boss involves relatively neutral questions that, in the right setting, you can ask directly. Bosses generally are willing to talk about themselves, where they work, and their preferences. You may bring up these questions in casual conversation or by candidly explaining to your boss that you are looking for the best way to accommodate him/her.

Other people in the organization also have made it their business to learn about the organization and your boss' history and style. They also like to talk. Directly or indirectly, ask them! But remember that their viewpoint is subjective - it is colored by their relationship with the boss, and the organization as a whole.

Organizations and bosses leave paper trails. You can learn more about your boss by researching official documents. You're interested in past and present organizational charts, minutes of meetings (to discover what your boss did and what he/she was assigned), your boss' memos, plans for the organization, and your boss' résumé (which often accompanies a proposal).

Finally, you learn by observing. What hours does your boss work? How does he/she relate with superiors, and with subordinates? What emotions are expressed in his/her face and body language? What time of day is he/she at his/her best/worst?

You are never finished analyzing your boss. Over time, he/she changes and your relationship will change.

- The work environment in which you both operate will change. There will be shifts in management, in power, in priorities.
- Your relationship with your boss changes. Ideally, over time he/she will be satisfied and delegate more to you but if you make mistakes he/she may be more controlling. He also may become threatened by your performance.
- Your boss' own expectations and, to some degree his/her style, may change. If his/her own career is not advancing, or as he approaches retirement, he/she may become less engaged with the job. Personal demands on his/her time and energy may take away from what is put into the job.

It's not easy for a supervisor to accommodate his/her boss. You are constantly analyzing what the boss wants and how he will react to what you do and produce. Furthermore, you're assessing a person and situations over which you have little or no control. Yet for you as a supervisor, the surest way to security, support, and advancement is to analyze and accommodate your boss.

Partially from: William B. Anthony, Managing Your Boss. (New York: AMACON, 1983)

ENVIRONMENTAL MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL F-4

WHAT CAN SUPERVISORS REALISTICALLY EXPECT FROM STAFF?

- Cooperation in getting the work done
- Good and punctual attendance
- Willingness to bring problems to you rather than go to upper management
- Willingness to adhere to rules and guidelines
- Use of common sense
- Some self-sufficiency (generally attempting to solve problems before bringing them to you)
- Not to insist that you always and completely explain and rationalize your actions
- An understanding of the structural limits as to what you can do

WHAT CAN STAFF REALISTICALLY EXPECT FROM SUPERVISORS?

- Respect for them and their work
- If their work is good, support and advocacy with upper management
- Receptivity to feedback
- A willingness to keep them informed about other parts of the work environment
- Clarity about what is expected from them (behavior and work).
- Insulation and protection from upper management
- Guidance and training
- Fairness

WHAT CAN SUPERVISORS REALISTICALLY EXPECT FROM THEIR BOSSES?

- Respect for yourself and you work
- If your work is good, support and advocacy with upper management
- Receptivity to feedback
- A willingness to keep you informed about other parts of the work environment
- Clarity about what is expected from you (behavior, quality and quantity of work)
- Some information about the informal culture of the office ("...the way we really do things around here")
- The authority necessary to do the job (relatively little interference with your staff re: work assignments, discipline, communications)

WHAT CAN BOSSES REALISTISICALLY EXPECT FROM THEIR SUPERVISORS?

- Willingness to bring problems to them rather than go to management
- Doing all you can to solve problems before bringing the problems to them
- Not to insist that they always completely explain and rationalize their actions
- An understanding of the limits on what they can do (the structure of the organiztaion, the informal structure of power, their need to satisfy many audiences)
- No expectation that they'll mentor you (teach, guide, protect)
- An understanding that their vantage point is different, that they get information from different sources, that they may have different priorities
- An understanding of their style and mode of operation
- A realization that they worry about their career befeore yours (just as you are more concerned with your career than that of your staff)
- Public loyalty (even with private doubts)

APPENDIX G: PLANNING MODULE**Research Background**

On the Training Needs Assessment for First-Level Supervisors respondents gave their highest rating to their knowledge in the Planning area (3.8*, 35% low-medium scores). They also gave it their highest importance ranking at 4.5 with only 8% low-medium scores. The positive and substantial difference between knowledge and importance ratings (+0.7) indicates that while respondents feel knowledgeable about planning they consider it important enough to learn more.

When asked about their most serious problem, more respondents (thirteen out of seventy one) noted problems in managing time and work than noted any other problem. However they gave managing time and work a lower severity rating (2.6*) than any other problem.

Finally, surveyed as to how they spent their time, nineteen of twenty five first-level supervisors spent some time - an average of 1.5 hours** weekly - on planning. Four and a half (one person answered twice) respondents said that planning was their most difficult task. They mentioned problems with changing office priorities and finding time to plan.

* on a scale of 5

** based on a 35 hour week

Objectives

There should be little problem in convincing trainees that planning is important and that they can learn more about it. There may be some difficulty in persuading them to take time for planning and that they can plan for different circumstances.

Planning Module

In introducing the Planning Module the trainer will note that it covers four areas:

- planning for implementation
- problem solving
- time management
- delegation

He/she argues that these areas are interrelated. First-level supervisors can't plan to implement work without knowing to whom and how much to delegate. How a supervisor manages his/her time influences how work is delegated to staff. In planning for implementation of work in a unit, a supervisor must manage his/her own time to be able to assign work, set standards, and monitor performance. In planning for implementation, in time management, and in delegation a supervisor inevitably will run into both problems that need solving and those that should be avoided.

Planning for Implementation

The trainer notes that it is necessary to define what planning is for first-level supervisors. He/she emphasizes that planning on this level is:

- not on a policy making level
- not on the level of determining what will be done
- rather on the level of determining how things will be done
- in response to objectives set by superiors
- to meet standards set by superiors
- not particularly hard to do
- not particularly time consuming

Chances are that participants will agree that they have no role in planning what will be done but will complain:

- that it's impossible to plan how to do work because of changing demands
- that planning how to do work is difficult
- that they have no time to plan

In response to the first complaint the trainer should note that while organizational demands (re: quality, quantity, timeliness, type of work) may change, they do so within the parameters of the organization's mission. Protective service

staff are not asked to cook meals; stockroom clerks are not sent to be group home houseparents. Organizational demands on staff often change little over time. Income maintenance specialists are doing basically what they did twenty years ago. Finally, changing organizational demands generally can be anticipated by a supervisor in touch with his/her environment. He/she can plan for such changes.

The trainer reiterates that first-level supervisory planning is for the most part planning implementation (work assignment, standard setting, monitoring). Supervisors plan for the regular work of their units as well as for frequently occurring contingencies. This is relatively simple and not particularly time consuming.

Finally it needs to be emphasized that planning gives supervisors more control and thus independence. A supervisor who can handle regular and changing production demands with order and economy will gain respect from staff and superiors. He/she is more likely to be given "wiggle room" by superiors who are confident that his/her work will get done.

The trainer outlines the two types of work for which a supervisor needs to plan:

- regularly assigned work
- changes in that work

Regularly assigned work is what a supervisor's staff does most of the time (visit families, verify eligibility, deliver supplies, etc.). Here the supervisor needs a plan to:

- assign work
- set standards
- monitor work

Changes in a unit's regular work may involve:

- greater demands for quality, quantity
- special sensitive cases, situations
- emergency situations with tighter time frames

Changes may be long-term (a change in reporting standards on child abuse for example) or transitory (a push to clear up a backlog of cases). Planning for changes involves assignment, standard setting, and monitoring. In addition it involves:

- assessing flexibility (how much more work can a unit accommodate without affecting regular work)
- prioritizing work (what is to be dropped, postponed to accommodate changes)

The trainer begins the discussion of how supervisors can plan to assign work by asking what issues participants consider in assigning work to their staff. He/she will list these issues on the board. They should include:

- the skills and experience of individual staff members
- the willingness of individual staff members to take on additional work
- the desire to be fair and not burden any one staff member too much,
- the history of how work has been assigned in the unit/office
- whether collective bargaining agreements or procedures dictate how work is assigned, how strictly they are enforced.

Within these environmental considerations a supervisor has two broad options for assigning work. The trainer will discuss each of them.

The first option is:

- assign work by strict rotation (each staff member with an opening in his/her caseload/workload receives whatever work comes in)

- all staff members have basically equal workloads/caseloads
- new staff either take over existing workloads/caseloads or build up to an equal load
- there is a workload/caseload limit beyond which no staff member goes.

The second option honors the concepts of assignment by rotation and equality of workload/caseload but is more flexible regarding the needs of the unit and the skills/experience/ambition of individual staff members. Generally assignment is by rotation but with the following exceptions:

- staff members' special skills, education, background re:
 - language, culture
 - specific problems re the work to be assigned
 - allowing staff members under stress some respite (no new cases for a short period of time)
 - assigning new staff "more simple" work
- equalizing workloads/caseloads by difficulty factors:
 - problems involved
 - time work will take
 - number of parties involved

- acceptance that workloads/caseloads temporarily may be above/below the established limits:
 - if above limit the supervisor reviews the workload/caseload to see what can be closed, transferred to another staff member, site, etc.

The trainer notes that supervisors must "sell" this more flexible approach to both staff and superiors. They must explain that it is both more efficient and more humane. They should always be ready to explain why work was assigned the way it was.

The trainer then shifts to the role of a first-level supervisor in standard setting. Supervisors are concerned with standards for the work they do and for the work done by their staff. These standards may include any combination of four variables:

- quantity of work done (amount, number of units completed)
- quality of work done (error rates, amount of time/effort involved, completion of paperwork, results)
- timeliness of work done (meets schedules, work completed in time to have impact)

- differentiation in work done (case situations assessed individually, solutions tailored to problem/situation)

In public social services overall standards are set by:

- law, which broadly mandates services provided
- department regulations and procedures which specify standards
- in many settings, collective bargaining agreements which specify what staff can/cannot do.

These standards may be modified to fit the style and priorities of leadership of local offices. They also may be affected by circumstances (staff shortages, backlog of cases, staff resistance) peculiar to specific offices.

Finally standards are conveyed to line staff and implemented in the particular style and with the particular emphasis of the first-level supervisor.

In implementing standards a supervisor first needs to:

- assure that staff as an aggregate meet standards as set by the local administration

- assure that each individual staff member meets standards as set by the local administration.

Once this is done the supervisor can:

- work to assure that staff implement standards according to his/her emphasis, style
- identify staff members with knowledge/ability to produce work beyond normal standards
- devise plans to motivate staff to produce such work

Next the trainer discusses systems that supervisors can create to monitor the work of the unit and of individual staff. Many offices have monitoring systems/forms for first-level supervisors but a surprising number do not. If they do not have systems available participants can use the ideas expressed in this section to make up a system. The trainer outlines what needs to be included in a monitoring system:

- when the request/order is received
- from whom the request is received (superiors, clients, other organizations, etc.)
- identifying information (case name, request number, etc.)
- to whom the work is assigned and the date

- what needs to be done (this may involve more than one task, all tasks should be listed),
- by what date should each task be completed
- special circumstances involved (sensitivity of work, importance of person requesting)
- difficulties encountered in doing work

A monitoring system will work only if used. The supervisor must assure that he/she, the unit clerk or the staff member to whom work is assigned records all needed information. The supervisor must review the system regularly re:

- completion of tasks
- delays in completion:
 - due to his/her staffs' deficiencies
 - due to other individuals/organizations
 - due to other factors
- poor quality/incorrect work.

The supervisor will use the monitoring system to look for patterns in the work of the unit and of individuals within it. Do different referral sources make it easier/harder to complete tasks? Do forms/procedures hold up/facilitate completion of work? In what areas of work are staff as a whole weak/strong? Are individual staff members better/worse in certain situations?

With regard to planning for out of the ordinary work the trainer stresses that supervisors need to assess and regularly reassess the ability of their unit to absorb more/more difficult work:

- how much "give" does the unit have:
 - caseloads/workloads below maximum
 - caseloads/workloads with cases that could be closed
 - staff with ability to take on more work,
 - staff with special expertise
- how long can the unit absorb extra work:
 - without an increased error rate
 - without staff burnout

When superiors approach a supervisor with extra or special assignments he/she should be able to convey what his/her unit can and cannot accommodate.

A supervisor also should make plans to re-prioritize present work in cases of additional work or special assignments. He/she will have to ascertain:

- whether additional work or regular work is done first
- whether additional work means a lessening of:

- quantity of regular work done
- quality of regular work done
- timeliness of regular work done
- differentiation in regular work done
- whether additional work or special assignments are done at the same, higher, or lower quantity, quality, and differentiation as regular work

A supervisor must clear his/her priority planning with superiors.

The trainer will shift into a discussion of problem solving beginning with a discussion on how supervisors can triage the problems they encounter.

Problem Solving

The trainer will refer participants to Training Material G1 (Triaging Problems). He/she will explain that first-level supervisors cannot and should not solve all of the problems they face. They should focus on:

- problems they can solve
- problems that are unit based, that affect the work of the unit
- problems on individual cases/work assignments that are sensitive or at risk

Using the guide, the trainer will identify problems to avoid:

- problems involving policy and relations with other organizations
- problems of individual staff members

He/she will note who should solve these problems and the supervisor's role in identifying these problems and offering guidance towards their solution.

The trainer then will refer participants to the handout on Solving Problems (Training Material G2). He/she will go over definitions of problems and problem solving, stressing that there are good (opportunity) as well as bad problems. When participants complain that they do not have enough time for structured problem solving the trainer will stress that problem solving saves time by:

- setting precedents/guides for future problems
- defining core problems rather than problems that are the result of core problems

He/she will go through the steps in problem solving noting that going through all the steps (especially in problem definition):

- does not take much time
- is more likely to result in a solved problem

Also stressed will be the need to identify the core problem even if the supervisor cannot immediately deal with it or does not have the power to deal with it.

In discussing the collection of facts to solve problems the trainer needs to get across the contradictory messages of trying to get as much information as possible and of having to make decisions without all the necessary information. He/she will note that as many facts as possible should be collected as long as there is time after the fact gathering to make a decision and to implement it. Finally, the collection of information and the development of alternative solutions should be agnostic - as unaffected as possible by the supervisor's beliefs or habits.

In the selection of the best possible solution participants need to look not only at immediate but also at long-term benefits and costs. The solution that solves one problem may engender others.

With regard to the participation of others in problem solving the trainer will refer participants back to the Leadership Module. In solving problems supervisors generally are

looking for some level of support from staff, superiors, clients, etc. and to assure that support translates into implementation. They can do so by working with the parties involved every step of the way.

Looking at mistakes to avoid in problem solving, the trainer again will note selectivity in which problems a supervisor tries to solve. Problems with premature and delayed (half-baked and over-baked) decisions also should be covered.

Finally the advantages of problems solving are outlined.

They include:

- the problem is solved and off of the supervisor's mind
- teamwork is encouraged by involving staff in problem solving
- supervisors are developing a skill relevant in all parts of life
- supervisors are building a reputation for competence and grounds for promotion

Time Management

The trainer will begin the discussion of time management by noting that participants need a time management system that:

- is simple (and not time consuming in itself)
- helps supervisors save time on minor issues
- helps supervisors know how to use time saved

He/she refers to the handout, Managing Your Time (Training Material G3). Before going over the handout the trainee may want to address some time management problems common to first-level supervisors.

The trainer notes that many supervisors try to impress by their degree of activity. He/she emphasizes that busiest is not best. Participants are asked if they or someone they know tries to do six different things at once. In such a situation:

- the person is not disciplined enough to prioritize among his/her tasks
- at least some of the tasks aren't done well

If that same person prioritized:

- some tasks would be postponed, delegated, dropped
- the rest would be arranged in serial order
- the person would do better by devoting most of his/her time to one task at a time

The trainee also should stress that time management means that supervisors stop doing many of the things they like to do. These may be tasks from their positions as line staff or supervisory tasks that could and should be delegated. Many supervisors still try to "keep a hand in" by continuing to do some of their former work. Others want to keep simple and pleasant tasks often done by supervisors. The trainer notes that being a supervisor means giving up some enjoyable tasks and taking on others less enjoyable. Participants will agree that there is plenty for a supervisor to do. There is no time for superficial (although enjoyable) work.

Finally the trainer notes the common phenomena of supervisors supporting weak staff by doing or correcting their work for them. He/she comments that:

- supervisors doing their job and that of their staff burn out quickly
- in the long run it is better to try to correct low performance staff than to cover for them
- supervisors need to report low performance staff (who don't improve with supervisory help) to superiors
- supervisors are only paid for one job, not two

The trainer then walks participants through the handout, especially:

- the myths of time management
- setting up a time management plan
- hints for time management

Delegation

A major part of any supervisor's planning is limiting what he/she has to do - delegating work to staff. Supervisors need to delegate as much work as possible. The trainer and participants discuss reasons for delegating and write them on the board. They should include:

- concentrating on the work that only a supervisor can do (leading, motivating, planning, disciplining, etc.)
- avoiding work that staff can:
 - do better
 - do cheaper
- helping staff develop, take on greater responsibility
- freeing up time for the supervisor to promote him/herself
- taking advantage of staff interests, ambitions

- having fewer areas of immediate worry (assuming trust in the people delegated to)

Some participants will note that delegation would work in a world where all staff were competent and trustworthy but that is not reality. They may argue that there is always a risk that delegated work will not be done or done well. Some may say that they have no time to train staff to take on new jobs. Finally some participants may argue that they enjoy doing certain tasks that they do not really have to do. These are the people who want to retain the enjoyable and interesting parts of their old jobs. The trainer refers participants to Training Material G4, Inhibitors of Effective Delegation, and the three areas listed there are discussed:

- attitudes about subordinates
- personal insecurities
- personal preferences.

The trainer dissects each of these objections.

If subordinates are not competent to do the job, it is the supervisor's responsibility to train them. While some staff members may not be willing or able to accept additional responsibility, others are both willing and able. Subordi-

nates should not be involved in some tasks (personnel matters for example) but can be involved in most.

A supervisor runs a greater risk of failure and/or burn-out by not delegating. He/she can get more work and higher quality work done (and claim credit for it) by delegating. In detail oriented work a supervisor cannot and should not know everything. He/she must avoid getting bogged down in minutiae. Staff members may make mistakes but not as many as a supervisor who tries to do everything him/herself.

Supervision means taking on new responsibilities and dropping old ones. A supervisor trying to do his/her former work and to supervise is doing two jobs poorly rather than one job well. Supervisors may work harder than their staff, but by delegating they can avoid working longer. Time spent in training staff so that delegation is possible is investment time which should result in less work for the supervisor.

Participants probably will ask how to determine what to delegate. They are referred to Training Material G5 (Does the Job Permit Delegation). Participants are asked to think of two parts of their jobs that:

- they do not feel they should be doing
- take considerable time to do

They will use the questions in Does the Job Permit Delegation to decide if this work can be delegated to staff. Most participants will find at least one thing that they do that could be delegated. They will be advised to delegate that job as soon as they return to their offices.

Finally participants will review Training Material G6, The Principles of Delegation. The trainer groups these principles into categories:

- to whom is work delegated
- when is work delegated
- what work is delegated
- how much supervisory involvement in work delegated
- supervisory expectations for work delegated

The right person(s) for delegation must be selected. Some staff members have the expertise and confidence to handle assignments immediately, others will need training and persuasion. The supervisor's objective is that all staff ultimately handle some delegated work. Staff need to be involved in deciding what is delegated to them. They must have the rank, reputation, and experience to carry out delegated work. Superiors also need to be consulted (and sometimes convinced) before a supervisor delegates to staff.

Delegation should be in advance, before problems develop. It will take time before staff members can handle delegation, do jobs as well as the delegator can. Each task should have a target for completion. Extensions may be necessary but the delegating supervisor should make clear that extensions should be asked for well in advance.

Supervisors will want to delegate donkey work but also should hand out some interesting and challenging tasks. Otherwise staff will lose whatever enthusiasm they have. If possible delegate whole tasks and projects to cut down on confusion about who does what and to make the work more rewarding. If a project must be delegated to several people make sure that all areas are covered but avoid overlapping responsibilities. Some areas (discipline of staff for example) cannot be delegated but must remain the supervisor's responsibility.

A supervisor's involvement in delegation may vary. It can be:

- complete delegation (staff member is given task and date for completion, reports back when work is done)
- substantial delegation (staff member is given more detail on how task is to be done, may make progress reports before completion)

- limited delegation (staff member is given detailed instructions on how to do limited task, reports back as each part of task is completed)

In all cases the results expected must be made clear. Once the level of delegation is set, the supervisor should stick to it. He/she should not butt in.

Finally, when a supervisor delegates he/she should realize:

- that for delegation to work, staff members must be given the power/authority to do the job
- that work delegated won't be done exactly as the supervisor would have done it, but it will get done and the supervisor won't have to do it

ENVIRONMENTAL MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL G-1

TRIAGING PROBLEMS

There are plenty of problems for a first-level supervisor to solve. However there are other problems that he/she cannot and should not have to solve. What follows are some suggestions on how a supervisor can **triage** problems so that his/her energy can be devoted to the most appropriate ones.

First-level supervisors generally cannot and should not try to solve problems that involve policy and relations to other organizations. Policy problems include situations where work may be impeded by regulatory requirements, where policies re intake, qualifications for services, etc. are unclear. The rule of thumb is that policy problems affect whole offices/divisions, not just individual units. Supervisors should use their monitoring tools to collect information on the pervasiveness and seriousness of policy problems and, alone or preferably with other supervisors, report them to superiors.

Every office gets along/doesn't get along with other divisions in the organization or outside agencies. With these larger relationships every unit in an organization develops it's own relations with units in other organizations. If the problem in relations is office/organization-wide, a first-level supervisor should report it but not try to solve it. If it is a unit-to-unit problem it belongs to the supervisor.

Supervisors should not have to solve problems of individual staff members. Those problems may involve quality, quantity, timeliness of work etc. They are problems unique to individual staff members. Supervisors should point out these problems and provide training and guidance in how to solve them. However it is up to the staff member to do his/her job, to solve problems that he/she has in the workplace. Supervisors should encourage staff members to independently solve as many problems as they can. Only if the problems involve at-risk cases or particularly sensitive situations should the supervisor get involved.

Supervisors should focus on problems that are common in their units, that are unit based, and that affect how the unit works. They also should deal with problems on at-risk cases or particularly sensitive situations. These are problems that impact not just on one staff member but on several or the whole unit. Yet they are problems within the supervisor's power to solve. They also include problems on particular cases that a staff member might be able to handle

but because of risk or sensitivity factors, a supervisor should be involved.

With solving appropriate problems, with documenting and reporting policy problems to superiors, and with guiding staff in solving their problems, a supervisor's day will be filled.

Daniel Remine
June 1990

ENVIRONMENTAL MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL G-2

SOLVING PROBLEMS

Definitions and Process

All levels of supervisors confront case problems requiring effective solutions and decision making. As a first-level supervisor you are responsible for your staff's decisions. It is in your interest to play an active role in making many of these decisions. Much of a supervisor's success depends on their ability to identify problems on cases and their causes, and to develop workable solutions for them. Let's put a framework around making decisions.

What is a problem?

Any question or matter involving doubt, uncertainty or difficulty. Problems may be negative (lack/loss of service, deterioration of client, etc.) or positive (an opportunity for new service, to correct deficiencies, etc.).

What is problem solving?

The process of analyzing a situation and arriving at a workable solution.

What is decision making?

A part of problem solving; the process of selecting a course of action from among two or more alternatives (making up your mind); the riskiest part of a supervisor's job because of the impact of mistakes.

Does the supervisor always have to be involved?

No, there are many lower level decisions that competent and experienced staff can and should make; however, in problems affecting overall case planning and on at-risk case supervisors need to be involved. That is what they're paid for.

How much of my time will this take?

It depends on the complexity of the decision but good decision making will take some time. However, it will save you time in the long run by guiding and focusing your work, concentrating on key problems.

So how do I solve problems?

Any fool will solve a problem occasionally. The problem may be simple or he/she may get lucky. However, a more consistent success to problem solving involves a systematic and logical approach. What follows is an approach that is valid no matter what or where the problem is.

1. *Define the problem.* A key task here is separating the core problem from its effects; for example, a drug using client neglects her children and spends her time seeking and using drugs. The core problem is the drug use; child neglect is an effect.

This does not mean you don't have to deal with effects. It may be impossible to deal with a core problem (dementia, for example). The effects (child neglect) may be so pressing that you deal with them before the core problem. But whenever possible you should go to the core problem and deal with it. Otherwise you'll continue to deal with its effects.

Think hard about what core problems are. Go beyond your first analysis and the experience of previous cases. Look at how problems and effects interrelate and look for the core problem.

2. *Get the facts.* Get as many facts as you can about the problem and its possible solutions. Facts about a problem include its severity, history, susceptibility to solution, recent changes in the problem, and who is involved in it. Facts about solutions include resources available, their applicability and how hard it is to get them. Facts may come from your own knowledge, the client/customer, the staff member, your superiors, other agencies, etc. You never can have too many facts but you often have to make decisions without all of them.

Don't reject facts - your job here is to collect them, not to evaluate them. Realize that waiting for all the facts means that no decision ever will be made. A decision based on all presently available information is better than no decision.

3. *Interpret the facts.* Think through why the problem exists and be willing to redefine what the core problem is. Ask what priority the problem takes on the case and how it affects various parts of the case. How does the problem rank when compared with problems on other cases. What, if anything, can/should be done. How much effort will it take to find/develop resources for this problem?

Watch out for your own feelings, attitudes, perceptions and opinions in interpreting facts. Feelings include your emotional reaction towards clients/customers in general or towards certain types of clients/customers. Attitudes involve how willing you are to act on client problems. Perceptions are your immediate, intuitive judgement about a client. Finally, your opinions reflect what you think a client deserves. All of these feelings, attitudes, perceptions, and opinions - your own and those of others involved in solving problems - can color the interpretation of the facts.

4. *Develop alternative solutions.* The most common sources are your own past experiences and those of other participants in problem solving - but don't stop there. look at all possible solutions, whatever their feasibility at face value. Your job at this stage is to create solutions, not to judge them. Every problem should inspire three or four good solutions. Complex problems will catalyze more. One of these solutions is to do nothing. It always should be considered.
5. *Select the best possible solution (decision making).* Weed out the weakest alternatives but have a good argument as to why you're weeding them out. For each remaining solution list its expected benefits and costs. Make these lists realistic - you are judging all possible solutions, not selling any particular one.

Benefits and costs may be tangible or intangible. Tangible benefits can be measured directly (the start-up of a service change in a client's behavior) as can tangible costs (hours spent on a case: cost of treatment). Intangible benefits (a boost in staff morale, a greater client willingness to plan) are harder to quantify but still must be considered.

Compare the costs and benefits of each possible solution. Where costs outweigh benefits, eliminate the solution. Remember that the solution you choose must be practical, workable. It may be that the optional solution is not doable. You need a solution that can be implemented.

6. *Implement the solution.* Do so as soon as possible after you have notified and gained the support of the parties you need to implement. These parties may include clients, superiors, other agencies, customers, staff, etc. You would like their commitment and belief in what you want them to do) but you will settle for their support (willingness to do what you want them to do). If you don't have that willingness, modify the

solution to take them out of participation or come up with another solution. Once you have support, make sure that participants know what to do and follow up to assure that they do it.

7. *Evaluate the effectiveness of the solution.* Is it doing what it is supposed to do within the costs you expected. Are there unexpected costs or benefits? Are modifications necessary? If the solution isn't working you need to start the process again.

The Participation of Others

A supervisor seldom makes a decision him/herself. Generally the staff member, superior, or both are involved, as may be the client/customer and representatives of other organizations. These additional parties complicate the decision making process but enrich the decision. The process will take longer since their views have to be heard and their commitment or support of a solution secured. However, when coming up with possible solutions and choosing among them, two or three heads are better than one. Also you'll need the help, or at least acquiescence, of other parties to implement the decision. It is more likely that you'll have it if they have participated in making the decision and have some sense of ownership.

How do you maximize the positive involvement of others in the decision making process?

- Structure the process. You've started the problem solving process. Now, develop a structure for it and gently enforce that structure.
 - Set meeting objectives. Make sure that all parties know the objects of each meeting (define the problem, explore possible solutions, etc.) and its time frame.
 - Assure that all parties keep on the subject and schedule.
 - Assure that all parties know and adhere to some basic ground rules of problem solving meetings (explore all possible solutions, don't attack solutions, all parties participate, etc.)
- Facilitate group activities. As the leaders of the group, it's up to you to assure that the group keeps going, reaches a decision. Your roles include:
 - *Initiation activity.* This includes helping the group get started, proposing solutions, suggesting

new ideas, new definitions of the problem, a fresh attack on the problem, or revised organization of what has already been discussed.

- *Seeking information.* This means asking for clarification of suggestions that have been made and requesting additional information that may help.
- *Seeking opinion.* Try to help the group find out what persons think or feel about what is being discussed, seeking further clarification of the opinions offered.
- *Giving information.* Offer facts or additional useful information, relating your own experiences to group problems to illustrate a point.
- *Giving opinion.* State your own opinion of individual suggestions.
- *Elaborating.* Offer further clarification of points; try to "spell out" what other members have said and try to help the group imagine how a proposal would work if adapted.
- *Coordination.* Show relationships among different kinds of ideas or suggestions. Try to pull ideas and suggestions together so that they build on each other.
- *Summarizing.* Pull together related ideas or suggestions after the group has discussed them; try to organize the ideas so the group will know what it has said.

- *Testing workability.* Apply suggestions to real situations to test their practicality and workability. Try to help the group case a proposed decision for implementation.
- Maintain the group. Problem solving groups need tender loving care to maintain their solidarity and morale. You can help to provide it by:
 - *Encouraging.* Be friendly and responsive to others. Take an interest in the other members' suggestions and draw out those who are less forthcoming.
 - *Expressing group feelings.* Sense feelings, moods, and relationships within the groups; find out how the group feels about its progress.
 - *Harmonizing.* Attempt to reconcile disagreements and get people to explore their differences.
 - *Compromising.* When your own ideas or status are involved in a conflict, offer to compromise your position. Work to maintain group cohesion.
 - *Gate-keeping.* Attempts to keep communications channels open, facilitate the participation of others, and suggest procedures for handling group problems.
 - *Setting standards.* Set standards and apply them to evaluate the group's functions.

Mistakes to Avoid

Problem solving is not a supervisor's only job, but it is the job with the greatest consequences. Thus, it is wise to know what mistakes to avoid. Some of the more common ones are:

- *Making unnecessary decisions.* Decisions involve risk. Sometimes it is better for a supervisor not to take a risk, to "let sleeping dogs lie."
- *Making decisions on problems you should not be solving.* If staff can solve problems it is less work for the supervisor and more experience for them. If a problem involves policy level changes, a supervisor may have a solution but not be in a position to implement it.
- *Solving a problem too soon.* Wait for information and analysis contributions from others.

- *Solving a problem too late.* The opposite of the previous problem. Problems can reach a point where some solutions no longer are viable, where they already have damaged units, cases, etc. Solving problems is like eating fruit - make sure they are ripe but not too ripe.

Advantages to Problem Solving

Problem solving is hard work but there are some definite advantages to it. These include:

- the problem is solved and off of the supervisor's mind
- teamwork is encouraged by involving staff in problem solving
- supervisors are developing a skill relevant in all parts of life
- supervisors are building a reputation for competence and grounds for promotion

PLANNING MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL G-3

MANAGING YOUR TIME

First, some myths about time management:

- supervisors who are the most active get the most done (it's not how active you are but what you do with your time)
- the most efficient supervisor is the most effective (he/she can be efficiently doing the wrong, less important things)
- the harder a supervisor works, the more he/she gets done (work without planning first often is useless)
- an open door policy improves a supervisor's effectiveness with people (effectiveness will suffer if the supervisor constantly is interrupted; he/she needs time to him/herself)

Before a supervisor can manage his/her time it's necessary to assess how that time's being used now. A supervisor needs to make a list at the end of the day:

- what/how many important things were accomplished
- how much time was spent on each of them
- what other things were accomplished
- how much time was spent on each of them
- why were they done

- what were the least productive periods of the day, and why
- what was the greatest obstacle to what the supervisor was doing
- what was the longest block of uninterrupted time, how was it used
- did the supervisor accomplish what was planned for the day

This log should point out strengths and weaknesses in present time planning. It should help the supervisor in organizing his/her daily work:

- make a "to do" list
- write down everything that must be done
- take off each item that doesn't have to be done that day
- order the remaining items according to:
 - their importance
 - the availability of resources and other people who have to be involved
 - the supervisor's energy cycle
 - pressure from superiors to complete certain items
- the supervisor completes each item above and remove it from the list

- he/she adds anything that comes up and has to be done
- he/she removes anything that during the day takes a lower priority
- anything left on the list at the end of the day comes first the next day
- if there is a problem in choosing between two significant items wanted by superiors, have them choose for you

Other hints for time management for first level supervisors include:

- make phone calls in groups
- for each phone call:
 - list all questions that need to be asked
 - list all points to be discussed
 - list all the information you want to pass along
- schedule the day realistically:
 - 60% for planned tasks
 - 40% for whatever else comes up

- handle paper as little as possible:
 - if not needed, throw it out
 - deal with some paper immediately to get it out of the way
- set a time to deal with other paper
- say no:
 - to additional assignments that cannot be handled
 - to distractions that take you away from work
- only go to necessary meetings:
 - if someone else is not prepared for a meeting; postpone it until they're ready (if the meeting isn't important)
 - take the time to background them (if the subject is important)
- set aside a time when you are available to staff, and hold them to it.
- avoid:
 - unexpected visitors
 - unimportant telephone calls
- crises (unless you agree that they are real crises):
 - can they be put off
 - can someone else solve them
- preoccupation with detail
- break up your work into small enough tasks to complete easily, each with an objective (for satisfaction upon completion)

- stop when you're fatigued, but realize that every time you stop, it takes time to start again.
- take advantage of your energy cycles:
 - do simple jobs when you're not at your mental and physical peak
 - stop work when you're tired, you'll just make mistakes otherwise

FROM:

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PLANNING MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL G-4

INHIBITORS OF EFFECTIVE DELEGATION

Attitudes About Subordinates

- Subordinates are not competent enough to accomplish the work.
- Subordinates should possess the skills required by their positions, and it is not the role of the manager to train them.
- Subordinates are unwilling to accept additional responsibility.
- Subordinates are unable to accept additional responsibility.
- Subordinates should not be involved in certain kinds of tasks or decisions.

Personal Insecurities

- Managers may lose the recognition and rewards associated with accomplishing the tasks.
- Managers may lose power if they share their expertise or trade secrets with subordinates.
- Managers must know the details of all the work for which they are responsible so all uncertainty is eliminated.
- Managers have to endure too high a cost as a result of mistakes made by subordinates.

Personal Preferences

- Managers prefer to do some mundane and routine tasks.
- Managers prefer to do the tasks quickly themselves, rather than take the time to explain it to subordinates.
- Managers prefer to put in the longest hours and do the most work of anyone in the organization.

Daniel Remine
May 1991

PLANNING MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL G-5

DOES THE JOB PERMIT DELEGATION

	YES	NO
1. Is there someone who can do the task better than I can? Am I really taking advantage of the expertise and experience of my people?	_____	_____
2. Is there someone who can do the task instead of me, even though it may take him or her longer to get it done?	_____	_____
3. Is there someone who can do the task with less expense than I can?	_____	_____
4. Is there someone who can do it with better skills than I can, even though he or she might handle it different than I would?	_____	_____
5. Is this task something that could contribute to the training and development of one of my people?	_____	_____

PLANNING MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL G-6

THE PRINCIPLES OF DELEGATION

- Select the right person. Choose someone who is capable of doing the task and give that person the accountability and authority to do it.
- Delegate the good and the bad. If you just give others your dirty work and tiresome chores, you will block their motivation, commitment, and development. Delegate interesting, rewarding, challenging projects, too.
- Take your time. Your subordinate will need time, maybe a year or more, to acquire the training and expertise to handle all that you might want.
- Delegate gradually. If you have been under-delegating, don't try to transfer all that responsibility overnight. If your subordinate is new to the job, don't expect him/her to immediately assume the same amount of responsibility as others on the same level who have been with you longer.
- Delegate in advance. Try not to wait for a problem to develop before delegating a task.
- Delegate the whole. When it is possible, delegate a complete project or action to one person rather than giving away just one piece of the action. This will give your subordinate control and coordination, and cut down on confusion and errors.
- Delegate for specific results. Instead of describing to your subordinate the scope of the job, describe the specific results you expect.
- Avoid gaps and overlaps. A gap is a job for which no one has been assigned responsibility. An overlap is when two or more people have responsibility for the same job.
- Consult before you delegate. Delegation flows both ways. Let your subordinates participate in determining what is delegated to them.
- Leave the subordinate alone. Once the delegation has been made, let George do it. From now on he makes the day-to-day decisions, he gets the headaches, and he has free rein to use his own resourcefulness. Don't pester him.

APPENDIX H: TRAINING MODULE**RESEARCH BACKGROUND**

On the Training Needs Assessment for First-Level Supervisors respondents rated their knowledge about training as about average (3.6*, 41% low-medium ratings). They ranked the importance of training in that same, middle ground area (4.3, 13% low-medium ratings) As with Planning, there is a +0.7 difference between knowledge and importance scores.

Five of the seventy one responding supervisors noted their employees' need for training as the most important problem they faced. They rated the problem of untrained staff at a severity of 3.6, one of the higher severity ratings.

Of twenty five supervisors responding, fourteen noted that they spent time each week training staff. They averaged 2.0 hours per week**. No respondent said that training staff was their most difficult task.

OBJECTIVES

Two problems might be of concern to the trainer as he/she teaches the Training module. The first is an attempt on the part of many supervisors to avoid training. It is easy to say that staff should be trained when they come into a unit or

* on a scale of 5

** based on a 35 hour week

to send out for updates. The other problem is a natural tendency to blame staff who do not "get" training. It takes a certain amount of humility to admit that the problem might be with the teacher rather than the student, that every training situation is a unique experience because of what the trainee brings to it.

TRAINING MODULE

The trainer begins by outlining whom first-level supervisors might be training and under what circumstances:

- new staff coming into the unit need training re how to do their jobs, how the unit operates, supervisory expectations, the office's culture
- present staff need training re change in office procedures, rules, forms, supervisor's expectation
- present staff who have been doing their work incorrectly or poorly need training re how to do their job, priorities, behavior

Participants probably will have a number of complaints about training staff (if not, the trainer will bring them up). They will complain that some staff they train still "don't get it," even after repeated instruction they make the same mistakes. The trainer will ask if the problem is staffs' failure to comprehend or the supervisor's failure to train correctly. Admittedly some staff in large social service bureaucracies do

not have the capabilities to do their jobs. However most staff do have these capabilities and can do their jobs if properly trained.

Participants will explain that they do not have enough time to train staff, especially for one-on-one training. It should be conceded that training takes some time. However it is time invested now to avoid the much greater amount of time needed later on to correct the work of untrained/partially trained staff.

Finally someone will say that they learned the job by doing it and that is the best way to train staff. The trainer will refer to this concept as the "throw them in the pond and see if they can swim" approach. The trainer will not disagree with the principal - learn by doing. However he/she brings up several points.

Some people thrown into the pond sink. Do participants want staff who have not learned their job haunting their units?

Staffs' chances of swimming in the pond are much greater if:

- they have had some basic instruction before getting their feet wet
- they continue to be instructed and supported once they are in the pond

Some participants will ask why as first-level supervisors they should have to train staff at all. They will argue that new staff should come to them completely trained and that present staff can be pulled out of the unit for new and corrective training.

The trainer will argue that off-site training can provide basic knowledge but not how it is applied. He/she will ask participants whether what they learn in supervisory training truly is relevant until they apply it.

Participants will be referred to the Ladder of Learning hand-out (Training Material H1). It will be noted that the greatest retention rate is when people practice by doing or immediately utilize their learning. Off-site training can offer simulations of the work environment but not the real thing.

Referring to the Environmental module, the trainer will remind participants that each office has an environment that intimately affects how work is done. Supervisors have to train and orient staff in it.

Finally the trainer notes that in the Leadership and the Communication/Motivation modules participants agreed that each supervisor would want to establish his/her own standards for work, behavior, communications in his/her unit. These stan-

dards best can be conveyed to staff by the supervisor's own example and his/her training of staff.

The trainer then suggests that supervisors need to know when problems with staff are best solved by training. He/she suggests that the first step is to define whether the problem is with staff performance:

- staff don't know how to do the work (new staff, new procedures)
- staff don't do the work well enough

The next step is to assess the seriousness of the problem:

- can the unit's work be done if the problem is ignored
- what effect does the problem have on the quantity quality, timeliness of work

Is the problem one of knowledge/skills deficiencies? Is it what staff do not know, have learned wrong that is causing the problem? Are staff attitudes, personalities at the core of the problem? If the answer to this question is yes, training probably won't help.

Can the supervisor develop a plan to train the staff in areas needed? Can the supervisor develop and utilize methods to monitor staff performance to see if training has had any effect?

Before discussing the conditions necessary to train staff, the trainer puts participants through an exercise designed to highlight those conditions. The trainer refers participants to the Pedagogical Word List (Training Material H2), explaining that as part of their training participants should define these words. When asked why these words need to be defined, the trainer will say no more than that it is a requirement of the course. When asked to help with the definitions (or supply a dictionary) the trainer will note sarcastically that the words are simple and that any educated person should be able to define them. When asked about the relevancy of the exercise the trainer will note that it's not his idea but something that trainees always have had to do. As participants ventilate more frustration the trainer will question their ability and willingness to learn. He/she then will tell participants, "You people have three minutes to finish up," and leave the room. The trainer returns immediately. He/she puts down the rebellion that is brewing by explaining that he/she has violated all of the conditions necessary to train staff. Participants are referred to Training Material H3 (Conditions Necessary for On-The-Job Training). In going over the list the trainer will note that while the definition exercise was extreme, there are many situations where first-level supervisors (including participants) have neglected these conditions for on-the-job training. He/she will note that supervisors frequently:

- explain poorly how training is to be utilized

- don't ascertain how much staff members already know before they start training
- train all of their staff the same way
- do nothing to encourage staff participation in training
- do little to convince staff that training is needed and beneficial
- train without a practice component
- frequently train in areas where they are not completely informed
- show little enthusiasm for training
- do not spend time in planning and preparing for training

Participants will be reminded that as supervisors they strongly influence their unit's environment, including the environment for training.

The trainer will bring up the subject of adult learning by noting that normally we think of training and education for children or people inexperienced in the area of training and in life as a whole. However supervisors offer on-the-job training to adults who:

- have experience (positive and negative) in life
- have experience (positive and negative) in the world of work

- are being trained while they are working and dealing with the demands of their jobs

This leads to some assumptions about how staff should be trained and about how to do on-the-job training.

People are different. They have different backgrounds and experiences. Supervisors need to draw upon that job experience (in the job area and outside) to tailor training to each staff member. Staff members have different histories of success and failure in learning. Here the trainer asks a participant to tell the class about something he/she has tried to learn and failed (dancing, statistics, etc.). The trainer asks the participant if he/she would have some reluctance about further instruction in that area. The participant then is asked to mention something that he/she learned to do well. He/she is asked if that base of success would make him/her feel more confident about further learning in that area. It is stressed that supervisors must learn about their staffs' successes and failures in learning and consider them in planning training. Finally staff differ in rates of learning. Some are tortoises who pick up material slowly while others are quick learning hares.

Staff differ in their motivation to learn. New and temporary staff have a strong incentive to pick up as much knowledge as possible. With more experienced staff, especially with civil

service status, there is less incentive and some disincentive. Staff who feel secure in their positions have less desire to learn and change. Even more problematic they may have become accustomed to certain methods and practices and may resist corrective training (the "We've always done it this way..." syndrome).

For adults learning is an internal process. Knowledge is not poured into them like water into a glass. For adults learning is a process of need meeting and goal striving. It is influenced by the amount and quality of interaction between the supervisor and staff member being trained. To sum up, supervisors don't teach, staff learn. It is the job of the supervisor as a trainer to create an individualized environment in which each staff member can maximize learning.

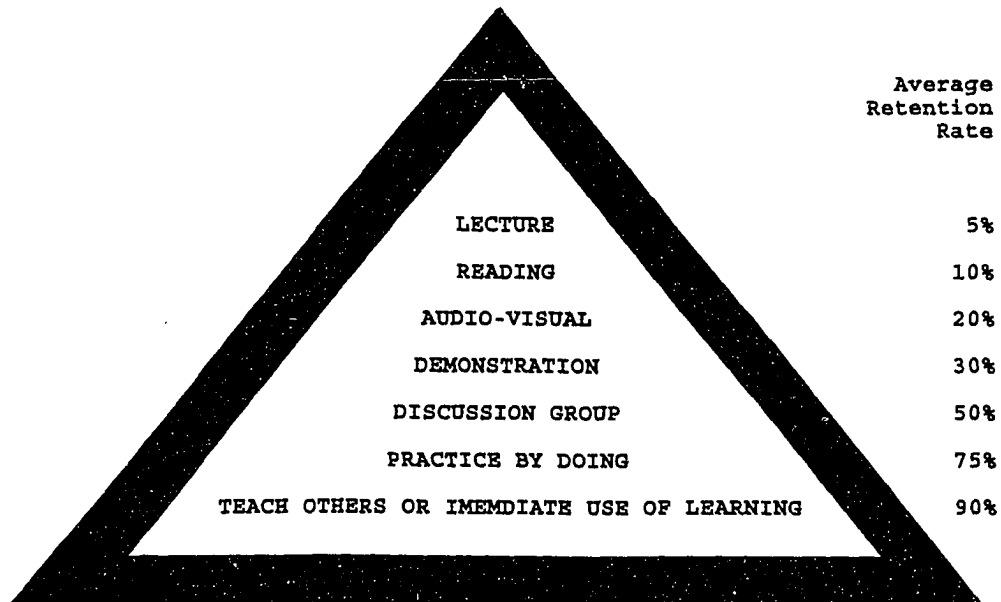
Learning must be reinforced as soon as possible. First, give staff a chance to practice and implement what they have learned. Even after a first lesson/orientation, let them do the work for which they are being trained. If they make mistakes, they make them doing, not reciting. Second, complement and reenforce appropriate actions and correct inappropriate actions.

Lastly, the trainer refers participants to Training Material H4 (Job Instruction for Supervisors) and walks through this how-to-do-it guide for first-level supervisors. He/she empha-

sizes the first step - preparation for instruction - noting that every job can be broken down into steps. Supervisors must structure training so that staff:

- learn these steps one at a time
- know the order of the steps
- know how the steps interrelate

TRAINING MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL H-1

"THE LADDER OF LEARNING"

THE "MESSAGE" OF THE LADDER IS THAT AS ADULTS BECOME MORE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE LEARNING PROCESS, THE RETENTION RATE APPRECIABLY INCREASES. THE STARTLING DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 5% RETENTION RATE ACHIEVED BY LECTURE AND 90% BY TEACHING OTHERS OR IMMEDIATE USE OF LEARNING IS A POINT TO BE WELL HEEDDED BY SUPERVISORS WHEN THEY ARE SELECTING TRAINING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES.

TRAINING MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL H-2

PEDAGOGICAL WORD LIST

As part of your supervisory training you must define the following words:

Bombardon:

Calumet:

Below:

Cate:

Detritus:

Diapason:

Edentulous:

Eclectic:

Obfuscate:

Quotidian:

Satrap:

TRAINING MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL H-3

CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

1. There must be a need to know. Trainees must know how their training can be utilized.
2. Instruction must be on the trainee's level.
3. Learning occurs when lessons are designed to begin where the trainee's knowledge ends.
4. Material must be relevant to trainees' needs, trainee oriented.
5. Trainees must be allowed to participate in their training.
6. There must be an atmosphere of trust for training to succeed.
7. Trainees should be able to put what they have learned into practice.
8. Trainees should be able to teach what they have just learned.
9. Learning occurs more rapidly when what trainees are studying builds on what they already know.
10. Learning occurs when the instructor
 - is fully informed on the subject matter
 - shows enthusiasm and interest in what he/she is doing
 - uses various methods to present the material
 - makes certain that trainees are mentally and physically ready for instruction

TRAINING MODULE
TRAINING MATERIAL H-4

JOB INSTRUCTION FOR SUPERVISORS**Step I: Prepare Yourself in Advance**

- have a timetable
- break down the job
- have everything ready

Step II: Prepare the Worker

- put him/her at ease
- find out what he/she already knows
- get him/her interested

Step III: Present the Operation

- tell, show, and question
- stress key points
- proceed from known to unknown
- from the simple to the complex

Step IV: Let Him/Her Do It

- have him/her tell you how to perform the job
- ask questions and correct errors
- continue until you know what he/she knows

Step V: Follow Up

- put him/her on his/her own
- check back frequently at first
- taper off close follow-up as he/she settles into the task

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