



MANAGER'S TOOL KIT

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A SUPERVISOR

The role of the supervisor is traditionally a difficult one. You must fulfill various responsibilities to your employees, department and the college. Some of your additional responsibilities are similar to what you did before you became a supervisor, but many are very different. Up to now, you have been responsible for developing your technical skills, assuring the quality of your own work, and working well with others. From this point forward, you are faced with additional responsibilities that include:

- Coaching and motivating employees.
- Getting employees to work together as a team.
- Solving problems with others.
- Managing conflict between others.
- Counseling and disciplining.
- Managing your time as well as that of others.
- Conduct meetings.
- Dealing with stress and the stress of others.

While the Associate Vice President for Human Resources administers the overall policy and procedures outlined in [SUNY Orange's Policy Human Resources Section](#), **it is the responsibility of the individual supervisor to deal with employees on a day-to-day basis.** The Manager's Toolkit document is designed to help you deal effectively with your supervisory responsibilities at SUNY Orange. Take a few moments to review the wide array of resources available at your fingertips. Should you have any questions related to its contents, you may contact Human Resources at (845) 341-4662.



ORIENTATION OF YOUR NEW EMPLOYEE

It is critical to officially welcome and orient your new employee to SUNY Orange and your department as soon as possible. The following is the recommended path that you take through the orientation process. Your new hire will receive a Benefits Orientation packet from the Human Resources Department prior to his/her first week of work. Also, your new hire will attend a separate New Hire Orientation at a later date.

For additional tips and suggestions, utilize the following checklist to assist you in welcoming and orienting a new employee:

Supervisor Checklist

This checklist details the following:

- **Before the New Employee Arrives**
- **First Day on the Job**
- **During the First Week**
- **By the End of the Third Month of Employment**

First Impressions Count

Here are a few ways to make your new employee feel welcome and confident in his or her decision to join SUNY Orange:

- **Call new employees before their start date.** Confirm need-to-know information, such as "I'll see you on Monday at 8:00 for a short discussion," and add that you are pleased that he or she will be joining your team. Reaching out to employees before they begin conveys that you are excited about their arrival and it will give them an opportunity to ask questions.
- **Arrange for lunch with a buddy.** During the first week, set up a time when your new hire and another employee in your department can go to lunch together. It will give the new employee a second perspective (in addition to yours) for insight about the department's culture.
- **Provide resources.** Your new hire will be overwhelmed with information during his or her first few days. To ensure he or she has answers about details (such as utilizing the College's email, telephone and programs on the computer network), designate a go-to person for the new employee to access important contacts.



MANAGING EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE

Managing employees' performance is an ongoing dialogue between manager and employee that links expectations, ongoing feedback and coaching, performance evaluations, development planning and follow-up. In this section, you will find valuable information to assist you in managing your employees' performance.

If you need assistance with employee issues, please contact the Human Resources Department at 341-4661.

Set Expectations

As a best practice, we encourage supervisors to define expectations for every position. These expectations and performance measurement standards should be communicated to new employees, and reviewed at least once a year with all employees. Expectations for each position can include: purpose of the position, key objectives - both tasks and duties, conduct expectations, and performance standards, as well as, measures such as quality, quantity, timeliness, initiative, and teamwork for each key responsibility. Expectations should be set within an employee's first few weeks of hire. Remember - a twelve month probationary period exists to help ensure that the new employee is making adequate progress in learning the job.

Gather Data

Performance evaluations should not be a one time event. Supervisors are encouraged to gather data regarding employee performance in a systematic manner throughout the year. The performance appraisal record is a guide that can be used by supervisors, in addition to their own best practices, to gather data throughout the year and provide ongoing feedback to employees regarding performance. This information will then be available to supervisors when drafting the annual performance appraisal.



HANDLING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Recognize that there may be a problem from providing feedback.

Be aware of verbal and nonverbal cues. Others in the immediate area may appear uncomfortable. Remember that the problem has probably escalated since its onset.

Demonstrate empathy for the individual.

Use terms and tone of voice that indicate sensitivity to the individual's feelings. Indicate directly and sincerely that you realize what the individual is going through. Examples may be "You must be feeling very frustrated." "It must feel like no one is hearing what you say." "You must have been disappointed when . . ."

Acknowledge the difficult situation.

Don't pass the buck. This is the worst thing as a manager you can do - your individual is looking to you for help. You will do best by assisting the individual in getting the problem fixed.

Maintain a professional attitude.

Don't take it personally - the individual is angry at the situation - not at you. Don't react in a similar manner - keep your cool. Don't walk away - (unless there is extreme abuse) use your quality service skills.

Use calming and focusing techniques.

Listen - give the individual the opportunity to vent frustration, anger, worry, etc. - again showing the important quality of empathy for the individual. Don't focus on the frustration or anger. Instead, listen for useful information that will help you solve the problem. Remain calm - showing empathy will help you do this. Pause before responding - analyze what the individual has told you and give yourself time to think of what to say. Focus the individual's attention on the problem after they have calmed down somewhat. Express an attitude of cooperation, e.g., "Let's see what needs to be done to resolve this problem." Ask a question that will focus on the problem, e.g. "Tell me what you feel the problem is, what has happened up to this time, and what you hope the outcome will be."

Resolve the problem.

Get all the information needed. Make telephone calls if needed. Remember, your goal is to be sure that you have done your best - both from a problem resolution standpoint and from a positive communication standpoint.



PREPARING FOR A COUNSELING SESSION

The forms listed below should be used when an employee counseling session is necessary.

SUNY Orange Employee Disciplinary Report

Please note the steps below when preparing for a counseling session.

- Clarify Your Expectations
 - Specific, observable actions that can be measured - with a specific target date.
- Observe Performance
 - Be objective by focusing on behaviors that are causing the performance problem
 - Focus on specific behaviors that can be measured and changed
 - Provide specific examples
 - Take notes and keep track of what the employee is doing right and build on those strengths
 - Focus on behaviors that are important to the employee's success and work on them first.
- Analyze the Performance Concern
 - Discover the areas where the employee is meeting and exceeding expectations and those areas where they need improvement
 - Identify why the employee is not meeting your expectations
- Provide Immediate Feedback
 - Timeliness is important

The Counseling Session

- Describe the problem and your expectations
 - Focus on what you observed (i.e. speed, quantity, accuracy, thoroughness, timeliness, etc.)
- Gain agreement on the performance concern
 - Listen with an open mind
 - If you do not agree, provide more detailed feedback from your observation of their performance
 - Discuss the situation until you agree on the problem and the impact it has on the department and others



- Develop solutions together
 - Explore different solutions to solving the problem together
 - Let the employee take an active role in solving his or her own performance concern or issue
- Agree on an action plan
 - Ask them to outline a plan for putting the solution into plan
 - Confirm understanding by having them communicate the plan to you
- Determine when you will follow-up
 - Set up a date and time to discuss the progress

TIME OFF FROM WORK

The College's paid time off program is designed to give employees greater flexibility with time off and the opportunity to manage their own paid time off. The manager should decide on what appropriate the time off will be for all employees in their department without affecting staffing levels.

Supervisor's Role

A supervisor is responsible for assuring that the business of their department can be conducted at all times. Requests for vacation and personal leave are subject to the needs of the department. You should establish department procedures for scheduling vacation in your department, so that all requests are handled consistently.

Supervisors are responsible for maintaining accurate records. Completed administrative leave records and doctor's verifications are kept in the Human Resources Department.

Employees must request use of time-off from their supervisor and receive approval prior to time-off being used. The employee's wishes will be given consideration, but time-off leave shall be granted at the convenience of the department.

Time-off usage must be reported on either timesheets, the Bi-Weekly Time and Attendance System or the Monthly Administrative Leave Report.

Paid time-off will automatically be assessed to cover shortened and summer schedule workday hours.



Our leave policy will provide guidelines on definition of leave, eligibility, procedure for applying for and obtaining approval, what happens to your benefits during the leave, and what forms to be completed. For more information about the various types of leaves, please consult the appropriate employee contract book(s) i.e., Civil Service Employees' Association, Faculty Association, Staff & Chair Association, Management Confidential Benefit Booklet, Grant Benefits. If you do not have a copy of any of the above, please contact the Human Resources office.

SEPARATION PROCEDURES

Reasons for separation from SUNY Orange employment fall in one of the following categories: retirement, resignation, layoff, or involuntary termination of employment. An employee who voluntarily resigns is expected to give the College the required advance notice. The supervisor must notify Human Resources of the employee's impending resignation. Failure to provide notification may result in the employee not receiving a timely final paycheck and/or pay for unused vacation accumulation.

Prior to any suspension or termination, the supervisor must discuss the matter with the Associate Vice President for Human Resources and obtain approval.

Property Clearance

An employee separating from SUNY Orange must obtain clearance from all financial obligations and college-owned property. The manager's employee exit checklist at the link below details the steps for manager's to follow prior to the employee's last day of employment:

[Manager's Employee Exit Checklist](#)

Exit Interview

Each employee who voluntarily resigns from the college will be asked to complete and return an exit interview questionnaire to the Human Resources Department. Exiting employees can provide insights into the success of recruiting efforts, the effectiveness of college benefits, compensation and training programs, as well as information on the quality of work life and college employee relations initiatives.