



SEVEN DEADLY SINS OF SUPERVISION

Every industrial organization relies on its supervisors for moving forward. World-class organizations work hard at avoiding these seven major problems. Fixing these errors requires recognition of the problem plus corrective action for the root causes.

1. Snap judgment selection of employees-

Supervisors sometimes go wrong from the beginning of a relationship. Misfits occur when supervisors do a poor job of sizing-up new applicants. Poor employee selection causes years of unhappiness and conflict with fellow employees and supervisors. Be selective in choosing new employees. Make good hiring decisions. Use open ended interview questions. Avoid answers reflecting what you want to hear from the candidate--let them talk in their own words and analyze their words and gestures.

2. Letting the job grow like Topsy-

Careless supervisors let overly ambitious or lazy employees shape their own jobs. This causes chaos. Careless supervisors dump work on overly ambitious employees who can squeeze extra work into their jobs without concern for long term work group harmony in sharing loads. Lazy employees, working under careless supervisors, shrug off unpleasant, demanding, or boring duties and carry less than a fair load. Good supervisors carefully structure job assignments by design, rather than by default, so teamwork and productivity grows.

3. Failure to make assignments clear-

Vague instructions produce ineffective results. "Let's get cracking" or "Will somebody handle this problem" are examples of vague instructions. Supervisors must make specific, detailed

assignments, giving subordinates the authority for completing their assignments. Employees can't complete a job without adequate authority. Divided responsibility from vague assignments causes misunderstandings, conflicts, and low productivity.

4. Being a boss rather than a leader-

Watch for supervisors who "know it all" and don't allow interference. Bosses, rather than leaders, handle problems without considering alternatives and disadvantages. Commands such as "I give orders around here, I want them obeyed" creates disasters and loss of teamwork. Bosses lack respect and loyalty for effectively completing jobs. Visible leaders set examples of their leadership by inspiring "can-do" spirits needed for handling big, tough jobs productively with a minimum of problems. "Let's put our heads and hands together for solving the problem" is more productive than "Do this my way or hit the highway".

5. Indifference toward discipline and recognition-

Supervisors who ignore problems and accomplishments make employees indifferent toward discipline and achievements. Display your care and concern. Show your leadership rather than issuing orders without personal and timely follow-up. Supervisors generate high morale and high productivity by demanding good quality work and recognizing accomplishments. Deliver discipline

promptly, when required, with fairness in consideration of the circumstances. Give verbal praise, letters and notes of appreciation, certificates, medals, or cash awards for recognizing achievement--not activity, but achievement. The important concept is openly giving recognition and openly acknowledging significant achievements.

6. Too busy to train-

Supervisors who are "too busy" getting out their own production to train other employees aren't doing a good job. Too busy supervisors can never be away from their own jobs. Too busy supervisors fail to train others for covering jobs during absences, illness, and vacations. Proper training makes it easier to reach production goals.

7. Playing everything close to the chest-

Poor supervisors are poor communicators. They keep all information to themselves without passing the word so everyone knows where they stand. Poor communicators usually give curt and incomplete instructions. Poor communicators frown on questions from subordinates or peers. Poor communicators also keep their superior in the dark. Poor communicators have unexpected problems which frequently occur concerning turnover, overloads, slow-downs, and other morale problems. Good supervisors are open, friendly, effective communicators who generate an atmosphere for teamwork.