

10 Practical and Transformational Components when Practicing Supervisory Skills*

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This past January, I had the immense privilege of sharing some practical supervisory and effective coaching skills with a group of landscapers at the annual Trade Show and Conference of the Nevada Landscape Association in Reno, Nevada.

Over the years I have come to realize that one of our most important jobs, as supervisors or team leads in our industry, is to create an environment of “effective communication” for our crews, so we can motivate, instill passion, clarify every single job expectation, and increase productivity. Below are 10 practical components that you, as a caring supervisor or crew leader, can practice day-in and day-out to transform your workplace.

1. Know and understand your organization

Firmly grasp the culture of the organization. Study what matters the most to your company; mainly in our industry is “exceptional service provided to clients.” Become proficient on the expectations and standards of your organization, and then excel in the application of what matters the most. “It is that simple.”

2. Communicate Job Expectations in an Environment of Mutual Respect

A crucial leadership skill is the capacity to communicate through images and practical examples. Every day, show respect by acknowledging and speaking with every crew member in order to support what he or she does. Encourage every co-worker to support an environment that is “employee friendly and fun,” productive, clean, and safe.

3. Everyone is Welcome

This simply is asking you to be responsible and accountable for helping create a workplace where every person, no matter who they are or come from, feels welcome and included.

4. Respect Every Single Person

Respecting and valuing workplace diversity is very important for many reasons; however remember some key reasons:

It serves to attract and retain the best talent, and it helps reduce the high cost of turnover, as well as absenteeism and low productivity.

5. Recognize the work and efforts of your co-workers

Pay close attention to the daily contributions of your co-workers. Take the time to praise each effort and recognize the importance of each important action.

6. Organize yourself, be visible and trusted

When given any task, organize your time and resources to do whatever is necessary to accomplish the objective. Also, remember that “outstanding communicators” conduct staff meetings regularly. They give team members specific directions and clear

objectives. They delegate and share responsibility. Practice being visible and approachable.

7. Be Process and Data-Oriented

Management focuses on data. Clearly understand production charts, safety charts, etc. “To be data-oriented means to bring evidence into decision-making.” Ask someone to help you interpret and reinterpret reports and data.

8. Practice Coaching Every Single Day

My business partner and insightful wife always communicates the following: “successful supervisors and managers increasingly use **coaching** to help employees improve performance, develop skills, and advance their careers in the workplace.” Embrace coaching as a way to transform the way you work and communicate on the job.

9. Practice Team Building Principles

Help create a culture that thrives on team engagement by valuing actions such as: enthusiastic cooperation, responsibility, accountability, unlimited capacity to be helpful and productive, and so forth. Learn practical skills needed for team development and optimal functioning.

10. Practice Having Fun

Yes!!! Every person can do better when he or she works in a respectful, relaxed, and enjoyable work environment. Be approachable and enthusiastic about each team member so you can influence behaviors, beliefs, and strengthen your company’s focus on collaboration and productivity.

* Inspired by an article on “A Lesson in Leadership” – Ell Townsend, Green Bay Packaging, Inc.