



6.0 Employing and Managing People

Supervision and Appraisal

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If your Voluntary Sector organisation employs staff, this information sheet will give you guidance on how to manage staff performance, using supervision and appraisal.

Introduction

Many organisations and individuals don't always value supervision and appraisal and therefore don't give them high enough priority.

Supervision and appraisal are often viewed as taking vital time and resources away from valuable frontline work and time spent with beneficiaries.

However, effective supervision and appraisal are fundamental to the delivery of quality services.



Image: Appraisal Meeting

Providing staff with guidance, support and constructive feedback during supervision and appraisal bring several benefits, including increased motivation, higher standards of work, better internal communications, a supportive working environment and a greater sense of belonging and team work.

What is Performance Management?

Effective supervision and appraisal are fundamental to the delivery of high quality services and form an important part of an organisation's performance management process. Performance management involves setting out the standards of performance we expect from staff and enabling and managing them to achieve their work.

Performance management involves:

- Setting clear expectations – being clear about work tasks, any targets, deadlines, standards of behaviour and the outcomes expected from people's work
- Ensuring staff have the support and resources to deliver
- Problem solving and empowering staff to develop their competence, abilities and confidence
- Offering recognition for work achievements and contributions to the team and the organisation
- Focusing on individuals' learning and development needs

What is Supervision?

Supervision is given different names in different organisations. You might know it as supervision, or monthly reviews, 1:1s or catch ups, but the content, aims and objectives should remain the same.

Supervision is a time, set aside, for a regular dialogue between the worker and their supervisor. It is an opportunity to have a 1 to 1 discussion about how the worker is getting on with their work and what issues they might be facing.

Supervision is an opportunity to identify the worker's support and development needs, so they can carry out their duties effectively. Through supervision, the supervisor can provide a confidential and supportive opportunity to discuss issues.

If supervision works well, it should enable problems to be shared, explored and dealt with at the earliest opportunity. Supervision is a way of linking an organisation's 'people management' with its 'project management.'

The Aims of Supervision

In most organisations the general aims of supervision are to:

- Clarify responsibilities and work priorities
- Monitor progress and performance
- Provide an opportunity to discuss how the worker and supervisor feel about the work
- Share information about the work and the organisation
- Raise any concerns about the worker's practice and performance
- Identify areas where additional support and/or training may be needed
- Discuss how outside factors are affecting work
- Provide a framework for discussing and agreeing change

The Benefits of Good Supervision

Effective supervision:

- Offers a chance to gain clarity about the purpose and expectations of the job
- Builds the relationship between worker and manager
- Leads to shared understanding
- Is a time-out to reflect on work, including what helps and hinders, leading to better problem solving at the earliest opportunity
- Gives an opportunity to receive feedback on performance and achievements, leading to greater motivation
- Engenders feelings of being valued and supported
- Enhances confidence
- Is a time to discuss personal circumstances which may affect job performance
- Offers an opportunity to review any support or learning and development needs

Who is the Supervisor?

Whoever takes on the role of supervisor should be clear about the purpose of supervision and what is required. We know that different organisations have different structures and this will influence who has responsibility for supervision.

In most organisations, the supervisor will be the line manager or an experienced staff member who has been trained in supervision. In small organisations, without paid managers, supervision is likely to be provided by a trustee, who has experience of staff management or who has been trained in supervision.

What Does Effective Supervision Look Like?

For supervision to be valuable, it must be provided regularly and, in a space, free from interruptions, such as phone calls or interruptions from other staff or volunteers.

Frequency of supervision is likely to differ from organisation to organisation, but it is recommended that to be effective it take place at least once a quarter. Where staff are providing services directly to vulnerable beneficiaries it is recommended that supervision takes place at least every 6 weeks.

It is important for supervision to operate within a formal framework, where meeting dates are set up well in advance and notes are taken. It is recommended that a standard agenda is used to give the sessions structure and purpose.

The agenda is likely to cover at least three main areas:

- Work performance
- Staff support
- Learning and development

An example agenda could include:

Work Performance

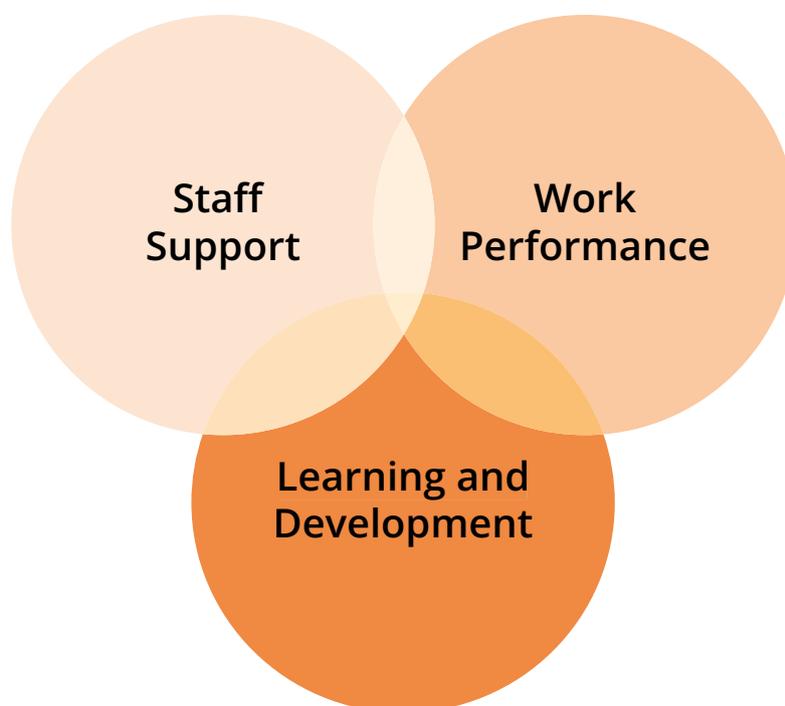
- Report on work since last supervision
- Planning for the next period of work
- Details of any problems with time to problem solve and work on solutions. This might involve an action plan with clear time scales

Staff Support

- Workload
- HR matters such as agreeing annual leave, TOIL
- Personal issues affecting work

Learning and Development

- Identification of training and support needs
- Agreements on implementing learning
- Coaching



It is important to make workers aware when they start work with your organisation that they are expected to commit positively participate in supervision sessions and that it is not optional.

Notes should be taken of the supervision session; these don't need to be detailed but should include any agreed actions with clear time scales. Copies of the notes should be agreed and kept by both the manager and worker. It is up to each organisation to decide if they want the notes signed by the manager and the worker.

What is Appraisal?

Appraisals are an integral part of effective management. Most often appraisals are a one to one annual meeting between a worker and their manager. Some organisations run appraisals every six months. During supervision we deal with month to month matters whilst appraisals take a longer term view.

The Aims of Appraisal

In most organisations the purposes of appraisal are to:

- Provide a link clear between the organisation's strategic goals with individual worker's roles and their work objectives
- Give formal feedback on progress and performance
- Discuss and agree next year's work objectives
- Provide a formal structure to discuss with the worker how they feel about their job and their responsibilities
- Identify training needs and agree their learning and development plan
- Check that the worker is confident about applying the organisation's policies and procedures

Other areas for discussion could include:

- **Review and updating the job description** - levels of responsibility and content
- Updates to new policies and procedures and areas where there might be any problems with how they are followed and implemented
- **Team work** - how effective it is and ideas for improvements and developments
- **Supervision and line management** - what's working well and are there any concerns?

The Benefits of Effective Appraisal

Effective appraisal can lead to:

- Greater clarity of how the job links to the strategic goals, ensuring everyone is pulling in the same direction
- Better cohesion and team working across the organisation
- An opportunity to receive acknowledgement and feedback leading to greater motivation
- Feelings of being listened to, valued and supported
- An opportunity to review learning and discuss and meet future training and development needs

Skills for Effective Supervisions and Appraisals

So, what skills do we need to be effective supervisors and appraisers? It is important to:

Build Trust and Rapport

Behaviours that build trust:

- Be confident in your management competence, skills and confidence
- Act with integrity
- Show that you care about your workers
- Be reliable and follow up with actions

Active and Reflective Listening

- Listen well!
- Give your undivided attention and listening with empathy and without judgement
- Be aware of non-verbal communication
- Listen for facts and feelings
- Paraphrase and reflect-back what you have heard

Ask the Right Questions

Excellent questions encourage a two-way conversation and promote reflection, encourage empowerment and enable the worker to learn from their experience. Questions support problem solving and commitment to take follow-on actions.

- The best type of questions are OPEN questions:
 - What?
 - How?
 - Who?
 - When?
 - Where?
 - Which?
 - To what extent?
- Ask one question at a time, be clear and concise
- Start with general questions and move to more specific inquiry
- Build up a bank of great questions
- Avoid 'why?' questions
- Ask questions that encourage the worker to think deeply
- Gather insight and understanding as well as information

Give Specific Feedback

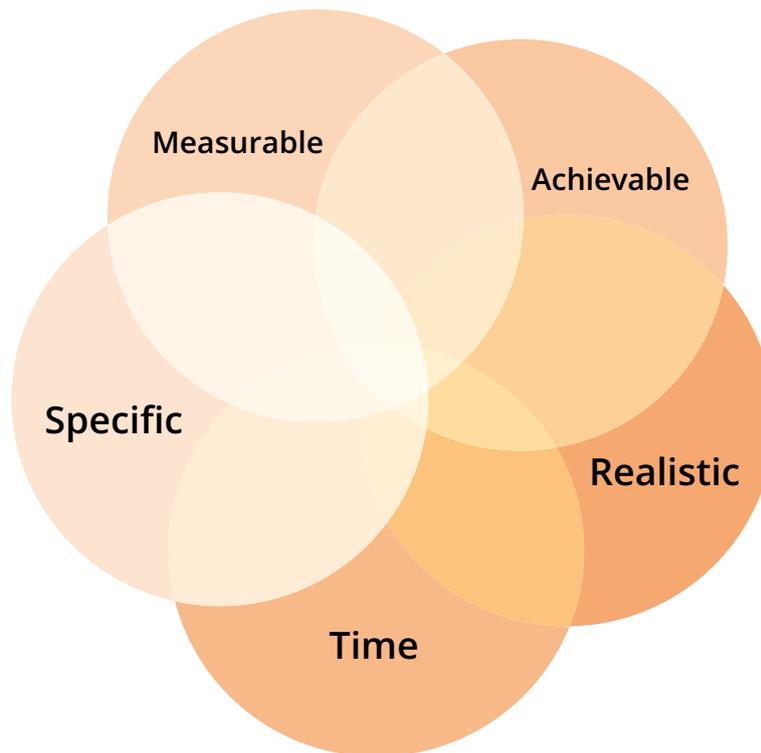
Offering regular feedback is an important part of staff management. Regular, constructive feedback supports personal and professional development. It makes people more aware of what they are doing and how they are doing it

- Check out their perspective first before giving your feedback
- Make sure all feedback whether it is positive or negative is constructive
- Make sure your feedback is specific
- Focus on what can be changed
- Respect the worker's feelings, views and opinions
- Check you have been understood
- Ask for their ideas
- Discuss and agree the way forward
- Confirm what actions will be taken and set dates

SMART Objectives

An important part of the appraisal process is agreeing next year's work objectives, so that workers know what is expected of them. To support good performance and to enable you to give effective feedback during the year, make sure objectives are :

SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound



You can make objectives measurable by including:

- A number or percentage
e.g. increase beneficiary numbers by 20%
- A measure of quality
e.g. excellent, accessible, participative, co-produced, accurate, error-free
- An indication of the results of work or what it will lead to e.g. "participate in all meetings leading to improved partnership working with all stakeholders". If you use this type of measure, then it is important you can describe what 'improved' looks like.

Be clear about the type of evidence you'll be looking for to establish that each objective has been achieved.

Dealing With Performance Issues Through Supervision

Before talking to a worker about a specific performance issue, make sure you prepare well. As part of your preparation, consider the following:

- What specifically do you want to say?
- What is the pattern?
- What is the expected performance standard?
- Have they had sufficient information, training and support?
- Can the situation be changed?
- What external or personal factors might be affecting their performance?
- What happens if they reject your view of the situation?
- What outcomes do you want to achieve?
- What support can be offered?
- If not, what do you propose to do?

How you decide to take forward the issue will depend on the nature of the performance matter and your other policies and procedures.



Information

Please refer to your policies on Capability, Disciplinary, Probation and Managing Sickness Absence for further guidance.

The earlier you raise any concerns about the worker's practice and performance, the more straightforward it will be to support them to make improvements.

Resources

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

CIPD

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/>

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) is the world's largest Chartered HR and development professional body. While membership based, they provide good online HR resources including a number of standard HR policies.

Employing People

UK Government

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/employing-people>

A UK government website with a wide variety of advice notes on aspects of employment law including contracts; dismissal; health and safety; pensions; recruitment and benefits. There is no tailored individual advice line.

ACAS

ACAS

<https://www.acas.org.uk/>

Acas gives employees and employers free, impartial advice on workplace rights, rules and best practice.



Cefnogi Trydydd
Sector **Cymru**

Third Sector
Support **Wales**

Third Sector Support Wales is a network of support organisations for the whole of the third sector in Wales.

It consists of the 19 local and regional support bodies across Wales, the County Voluntary Councils (CVCs) and the national support body, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA).

For further information contact
<https://thirdsectorsupport.wales/contact/>

Disclaimer

The information provided in this sheet is intended for guidance only. It is not a substitute for professional advice and we cannot accept any responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.