

Needs Assessment Focus Group Discussion Questions

Instructions: Use this sheet to prepare for the focus group discussion. Write your first thoughts in response to each question. You may make any changes you wish to your responses during this focus group session. *Do not write your name on this sheet.* The facilitator will collect this sheet at the end of the session.

1. When you first became a supervisor, what did you need to learn right away?

2. What unexpected challenges have you faced?

3. What are you doing particularly well as a supervisor?

4. What do you think is the toughest part of being a supervisor?

5. In what areas do you need help as you learn how to be a better supervisor?

6. How receptive would you be to receiving training in the skills you hope to develop as a supervisor?

7. How receptive would you be to one-on-one coaching to build up your supervisory skills?

8. What training format do you prefer? *(Circle one letter.)*
 - a. Group sessions lasting two days
 - b. One-day group sessions
 - c. Half-day group sessions
 - d. Private, individual instruction
 - e. No preference

Thank you for your cooperation with this needs assessment.

Instrument 11-1

Trainer Competencies

Instructions: If you are using this instrument as a self-assessment, write an **X** in the box to the right of each of the 12 trainer competencies that best describes your level of skill. If you are using this form to give feedback to a trainer, place the **X** in the box that best fits his or her level of competence in each area.

COMPETENCY	ALMOST NONE IN THIS AREA	LITTLE IN THIS AREA	SOME IN THIS AREA	ADEQUATE IN THIS AREA	EXPERT IN THIS AREA
1. <i>Facilitation:</i> Leads group discussion without directing the outcome; creates an environment of openness and trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. <i>Communication:</i> Speaks clearly and expresses self well in public settings; conveys ideas in terms the listener can understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. <i>Listening:</i> Demonstrates attentive listening and conveys understanding of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. <i>Coaching:</i> Assesses strengths and weaknesses of others; gives timely, specific, and constructive feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. <i>Sensitivity to others:</i> Recognizes feelings, attitudes, and concerns of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. <i>Conflict management:</i> Identifies sources of conflict; uses conflict as a constructive process to exchange ideas; keeps energy focused on desired outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. <i>Influence:</i> Persuades others to consider a desired point of view; gains support and commitment from others; effects change in behavior of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. <i>Time management:</i> Sets efficient work priorities; balances importance and urgency of tasks; can work on many tasks simultaneously	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. <i>Motivation channeling:</i> Creates enthusiasm and commitment in others; encourages others to achieve desired goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. <i>Teamwork:</i> Cooperates with others to achieve a common purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. <i>Planning and organizing:</i> Takes a well-ordered and logical approach to organizing work and completing tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. <i>Attention to detail:</i> Makes sure work is done correctly and completely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Instrument 11-2****Structured Interview Protocol for Assessing the Learning Needs of New Supervisors***

Instructions: Use this form for taking notes during interviews with newly appointed supervisors to assess their developmental needs. Be certain that you understand the person's response to each question before writing a summary of what he or she says. Assure the interviewee that the responses will be anonymous and confidential.

1. How did you become a supervisor?
2. What competencies did management see in you before appointing you as a supervisor?
3. What concerns (if any) did management tell you about when you became a supervisor?
4. With your new responsibilities, what day-to-day concerns occupy your time?
5. What do you especially like about being a supervisor?
6. What do you see as your primary strengths as a supervisor?
7. As a supervisor, what is your most common source of stress on the job?
8. What do you think you could improve in your work as a supervisor?

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Instrument 11-2, continued

*Structured Interview Protocol for Assessing the Learning Needs of
New Supervisors*

9. How interested are you in receiving training in how to lead your people effectively?

10. How would you describe your relationships with the people who report directly to you?

11. How well does your work unit relate to other work units in the organization?

12. What preferences do you have about the new supervisor training you may receive?

13. How might you sell your plan for development as a supervisor to your manager, in order to obtain his or her support?

14. What else can you tell me about your needs for training at this time?

15. What questions do you have about me?

End the interview by thanking the person for his or her candid responses to your questions. Reassure the supervisor that he or she will not be quoted by name, although responses will be analyzed for common themes. Explain that your upcoming training for new supervisors will reflect the priorities expressed in these interviews.

Instrument 11-3

Self-Assessment for New Supervisors

Instructions: The purposes of this activity are to help you learn what is needed to be successful as a supervisor, and to help you create an action plan for self-improvement. Write an **X** in one of the boxes to the right of each competency, defining how you see yourself right now. Obviously, you must be honest with yourself to make this activity worthwhile. No one will see your ratings unless you share them voluntarily.

SUPERVISOR COMPETENCY	ONE OF MY STRENGTHS	DOING OK ON THIS	NEED TO DEVELOP THIS MORE	DEFINITELY NEED TO DEVELOP THIS
1. <i>Influence:</i> Persuades others to accept a desired point of view; gains support and commitment from others; effects change in others' behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. <i>Facilitation:</i> Leads meetings or group efforts without directing the outcome; creates an environment of openness and trust; leads groups to decisions in which all participants feel a sense of ownership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. <i>Planning and organizing:</i> Develops comprehensive project plans; monitors progress against goals; assigns clear responsibilities; breaks work down into manageable portions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. <i>Analysis:</i> Gathers relevant information; considers broad range of issues and factors; perceives relationships among diverse information; uses logic effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. <i>Decision making:</i> Makes timely and effective decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. <i>Delegating:</i> Effectively assigns tasks to others while maintaining responsibility for results; considers skill level of employee and challenge level of assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. <i>Follow-up and commitment:</i> Follows plans through to closure; persists despite obstacles; keeps one's word	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. <i>Communication:</i> Speaks clearly and expresses self well in groups; conveys ideas in terms the listener can understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. <i>Listening:</i> Demonstrates attentive listening; conveys understanding to others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Instrument 11-3, continued

Self-Assessment for New Supervisors

SUPERVISOR COMPETENCY	ONE OF MY STRENGTHS	DOING OK ON THIS	NEED TO DEVELOP THIS MORE	DEFINITELY NEED TO DEVELOP THIS
10. <i>Managing conflict</i> : Identifies sources of conflict; uses conflict as a constructive means to exchange ideas; keeps energy focused on desired outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. <i>Fostering teamwork</i> : Clarifies workers' roles and responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. <i>Technical and functional expertise</i> : Possesses current knowledge of profession and industry; is regarded as an expert	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. <i>Time management</i> : Sets efficient work priorities; can work on many tasks simultaneously; balances importance and urgency of tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. <i>Channeling motivation</i> : Encourages others to achieve desired results; creates enthusiasm and commitment in others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. <i>Coaching and developing</i> : Provides timely, specific, constructive feedback; gives challenging, developmental assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. <i>Providing direction</i> : Provides clear direction; sets clear priorities; fosters a common vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Instrument 11-4****Labor Law for New Supervisors***

Instructions: Circle T for true or F for false to the right of each of the following statements about labor laws.

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| 1. Federal labor law protects employees 40 years old and older. | T | F |
| 2. In the application of labor law, organizations accused of illegal labor practices are often considered “guilty until proven innocent.” | T | F |
| 3. An organization can be found guilty of allowing sexual harassment even in cases in which leaders have no previous knowledge of the offending behavior. | T | F |
| 4. After working a 40-hour week, a nonexempt employee comes into work on a weekend to finish some tasks he or she should have completed during the week. Even if the employee is willing to do this weekend work for free, and the supervisor did not authorize overtime, the employee must be paid overtime for the weekend work. | T | F |
| 5. Legally, an organization can discharge an employee at any time, for any reason. | T | F |
| 6. If a supervisor tells an employee that he or she will have a job in that organization for life, the organization is obligated to employ that individual until he or she dies. | T | F |
| 7. It’s okay for a supervisor to search or inspect an employee’s workstation (desk, cubicle, locker). | T | F |
| 8. It’s okay for a supervisor to give a bad job reference regarding a former employee if the reference can be substantiated by written performance appraisals. | T | F |
| 9. Organizations have a legal right to monitor email and Internet usage. | T | F |
| 10. At a bar after work, an employee tells his or her supervisor (and friend) in confidence about a medical problem that may make the job unsafe for him or her. The supervisor is obligated to act on this information. | T | F |
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Instrument 11-5

Coaching Skills and Practices Assessment

Instructions: A primary way in which supervisors empower their people is by working with them one-on-one to improve skills and attitudes. Use the following instrument to assess the extent to which you presently possess the 10 vital skills of coaching, and whether you engage in the behaviors that are characteristic of highly effective “people developers.”

COACHING SKILL AND PRACTICE	ONE OF MY STRENGTHS	DOING OK ON THIS	NEED TO DEVELOP THIS MORE	DEFINITELY NEED TO DEVELOP THIS
1. <i>Delegating tasks:</i> Effectively assigns tasks to others while maintaining responsibility for results; considers skill level of employee and challenge level of assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. <i>Communicating instructions:</i> Shows the employee how to accomplish the task; clarifies when, where, how much, and to what standard the task should be done	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. <i>Setting task-performance goals:</i> Collaborates with employees to establish immediate and long-term goals for performance on particular tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. <i>Providing task-relevant feedback:</i> Carefully observes the employee's performance of individual tasks; shares those observations in a nonthreatening manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. <i>Rewarding improvement:</i> Uses formal and informal means to compliment and reward employees who make progress toward the accomplishment of critical tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. <i>Dealing with failure:</i> Works with and encourages employees when they do not meet expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. <i>Working with personal problems:</i> Listens with empathy and without judgment; offers appropriate emotional support regarding personal difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. <i>Confronting difficult situations:</i> In one-on-one meetings with employees, brings up potentially uncomfortable issues that are affecting the work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. <i>Responding to requests:</i> Consults with employees when needed; makes win-win decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. <i>Following through:</i> Monitors the outcomes of coaching; provides additional assistance when necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Instrument 11-6

Supervisor Training Follow-Up Assessment

Supervisor Code: _____

Instructions: This form focuses on the outcomes of the training in which your supervisor recently participated. Please give your anonymous, open, and honest assessment of your supervisor's *current* level of functioning. Based on the scale below, write a number from 1 to 6 to rate your supervisor on each of the 16 aspects of supervision.

6 = HIGHLY EFFECTIVE	3 = A BIT INEFFECTIVE
5 = EFFECTIVE	2 = INEFFECTIVE
4 = SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE	1 = HIGHLY INEFFECTIVE

- _____ 1. *Influence:* Persuades others to accept a desired point of view; gains support and commitment from others; effects change in behavior of others
- _____ 2. *Facilitation:* Leads meetings or group efforts without directing the outcome; creates an environment of openness and trust; leads groups to decisions in which all participants feel a sense of ownership
- _____ 3. *Planning and organizing:* Develops comprehensive project plans; monitors progress against goals; assigns clear responsibilities; breaks work down into manageable portions
- _____ 4. *Analysis:* Gathers relevant information; considers broad range of issues and factors; perceives relationships among diverse information; uses logic effectively
- _____ 5. *Decision making:* Makes timely and effective decisions
- _____ 6. *Delegating:* Effectively assigns tasks to others while maintaining responsibility for results; considers skill level of employee and challenge level of assignment
- _____ 7. *Follow-up and commitment:* Follows plans through to closure; persists despite obstacles; keeps one's word.
- _____ 8. *Communication:* Speaks clearly and expresses self well in groups; conveys ideas in terms the listener can understand
- _____ 9. *Listening:* Demonstrates attention to others and conveys understanding
- _____ 10. *Managing conflict:* Identifies sources of conflict; uses conflict as a constructive means to exchange ideas; keeps energy focused on desired outcomes
- _____ 11. *Fostering teamwork:* Clarifies workers' roles and responsibilities
- _____ 12. *Technical and functional expertise:* Possesses current knowledge of profession and industry; is regarded as an expert

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*Instrument 11-6, continued****Supervisor Training Follow-Up Assessment***

- _____ 13. *Time management*: Sets efficient work priorities; can work on many tasks simultaneously; balances importance and urgency of tasks
 - _____ 14. *Channeling motivation*: Encourages others to achieve desired results; creates enthusiasm and commitment in others
 - _____ 15. *Coaching and developing*: Provides timely, specific, constructive feedback; gives challenging developmental assignments
 - _____ 16. *Providing direction*: Offers clear direction and sets clear priorities; fosters a common vision
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