

Supervision Series Case Study – *National Industrial Service Company*

In today's diverse and challenging business environment, managers and team leaders must have essential skills and tools to effectively manage the workforce. The *Supervision Series* is a curriculum focused on building a participatory management culture in organizations. The premise for a participative culture is leadership, which encourages employee involvement in the decision making process. This results in greater team member ownership, job satisfaction, and productivity.

One national service organization has been using the classroom-based *Supervision Series* since 1997, forming the core for its corporate university. The company became aware of the program through a word-of-mouth referral, with an external consultant providing the initial information and train-the-trainer program roll-out.

Impact

Participants will be able to:

Deal with team members on a day-to-day basis to enhance their self-esteem.

Base discussions about performance and work habits on team member behavior rather than personalities or attitudes.

Use effective listening techniques to increase team member's motivation to perform.

Encourage team members to participate in setting goals and solving problems.

The company did not have a supervisory training program prior to the *Supervision Series* curriculum, however with 8000 supervisors nationally, the need for this training was critical.

It was important to the organization that a core curriculum would target their main objective of increasing basic communication. Since 1997, over 2000 supervisors have been trained on two to five modules of the series including: *Essential Skills of Leadership*; *Essential Skills of Communicating*; *Delegating*; *Managing Complaints* and *Improving Work Habits*.

How They Did It

The company rolled out the program with multiple train-the-trainer events. The Human Resources Representatives and Operational Managers served as trainers. The targeted level for the core training was one level above the first-level supervisors. After four years, this method is still consistent with their practices today.

Addressing Diversity

As their corporate university continues to grow and evolve, the organization continues to train the *Supervision Series*. Another facet of the university is the addition of the *Supervision Series-Spanish Edition*. This is a new and

critical element due to the fact that over 85% of this organization's workforce does not speak English as their first language. The investment in the *Supervision Series* was an important move because the English and Spanish version allows the company to deliver a consistent message to all its supervisors and management personnel regardless of their language differences.

A Model Organization for Tracking

This organization prides itself on extensive tracking and follow-up with participants. Participant feedback is collected at the end of each session. Six weeks later, the managers rate supervisors on changes demonstrated during the time period. Three months later, original participants get another feedback sheet to complete on their own performance in practice. This gives the organization continual feedback on the training and its impact on different key factors in the organization. This gives the participant a true sense of continual performance in action and how they contribute to the organization through communication and interactions with team members.

Very positive responses continue to be received from participants while the six-week follow-ups show consistent positive improvement for the organization's supervisors.

About the Program

The audience for the *Supervision Series* includes middle managers, supervisors and team leaders who interact with employees in an office or industrial environment. The courses may be targeted to individual or specific organizational needs. There are 12 separate training courses in the *Supervision Series* classroom-based version. Each may be taken independently of the others, however, it is highly recommended that *Essential Skills of Leadership* and *Essential Skills of Communicating* are taken first because they are the foundation of the other programs that address interpersonal skills and functional skills.

Because the program videos are equipped for both Office and Industrial settings, the classroom-based program is a flexible solution for many organizations. The curriculum is also available in both English and Spanish versions.

The classroom-based versions of the courses are designed to be completed in one half-day. Ten of the courses are also available on interactive CD-ROM and Online. The electronic versions take approximately 1-2 hours to complete. All versions of the courses cover the same skill points and can be used with the same participant workbook.

Implementation Options

- Deliver classroom-based courses in a series beginning with the two fundamental programs.
- Group courses into mini-series to target specific needs such as managing conflict; communication; productivity; or handling discipline.
- Deliver courses on CD-ROM as stand-alone self-study courses; or pre- or post-work to the classroom courses in order to reduce in-class time and focus on company-specific group exercises and skill practice.
- Use online courses in the same fashion as the CD-ROM in combination with the classroom-based programs.
- Online courses can be used with an instructor delivered asynchronously or synchronously using the participant workbook for reinforcement.
- Use online programs and campus chat room, discussion lounge, help desk and knowledge center for ongoing reinforcement.
- Give your English and Spanish speaking supervisors/team leaders a consistent message with one great program.
- Implement the *Vital Learning Certified Manager Program* (using the *Supervision Series* as the foundation for the program) in conjunction with the Instituted of Certified Professional Managers.