

Unit 302: Supervise and monitor own section

Handout 5: Supervisory skills

All supervisors within the kitchen have to display a wide set of supervisory skills:



- **Leadership** – this happens at all levels of the organisation. Whilst managerial leadership sets the overall goals and targets, leadership can be shown at operational level also, even if it is only a matter of ensuring that the desired standards are achieved. Aligning organisational and individual goals requires planning and management but can greatly benefit the bottom line. Leadership will also include skills such as being approachable, supporting the team, problem solving and conflict management.
- **Teamwork** – the complexities of a kitchen are best dealt within a team approach. Encouraging the team to work together not only in the kitchen but also with service provides a higher likelihood of positive outcomes for the customers.
- **Communication** – open communication channels and clear communication ensures that the overall message is understood and there is no ambiguity. Clarity of communication has to address perceptions that people may have. Communication includes all verbal, non-verbal as well as written formats. Clearly documented processes and policies can avoid many misunderstandings.
- **Interpersonal skills** – are required to communicate and interact with other people on a daily basis. They include a wide range of skills apart from communication and teamworking skills, that enable a supervisor to support the team. Examples of these skills include:
 - Emotional intelligence – being able to understand and manage your own and others' emotions
 - Negotiation, persuasion and influencing skills – working with others to find a mutually agreeable outcome
 - Conflict resolution – working with others to resolve disagreements in a positive way
 - Problem solving/decision making – to identify, define and solve problems or make decisions on the best course of action.

- **Motivation** – people are motivated **intrinsically** and **extrinsically**. Extrinsic factors are linked to rewards that are given to a person such as pay or any bonuses. Extrinsic factors only work for a certain amount of time and then performance actually drops. Intrinsic motivation is linked to personal achievement and the satisfaction derived from a task or job that is done well. Most successful organisations try to achieve a high degree of intrinsic motivation for their staff because it contributes to a positive frame of mind and improves workplace culture. Simple motivational tools such as a thank you, a card or staff award can mean more than an extra money in the pay packet per week.
- **Time management** – this is a crucial factor for any worker. Good time management will enable you to achieve more tasks at a reduced stress level. If you take stock of your daily work duties you find that they are made up of a large number of small jobs. Quite often people say, “well I have only 20 minutes left it is not worth it to start this job”, but most duties take only between 5–10 minutes. Check your work habits. Do you arrive and have a “cuppa” first and then get into it? By the time you start 30 minutes may be gone...
- **Planning**– plan your day and you may find that you have spare time on your hand. It really helps to write down the tasks that you have to complete. This way you are not constantly thinking what you have to do. If you organise your tasks through the day and before you leave you will not ponder on work once you left. Many software programs are available to help you with your organisation. Good organisers start the day by compiling a list of the tasks to complete, then place priorities on them. Get the jobs with the high priorities out of the way and then spend time on the minor items. Many young chefs face ‘burn out’ as they try to cope with managing other people and the responsibilities to the employer. The duties of the chef are quite varied and shift from just cooking to a managerial role as their career progresses.
- **Resource supervision** – this includes the budget plus managing all physical and human resources effectively. Establishing strong systems such as regular stock takes, systems for delivery, production and service, rosters and monitoring of performance of staff against key performance indicators are essential management tools
- **Practical trade skills** – being a supervisor means you must be able to show other staff the correct way of doing things. This means your practical skill level must be higher overall than the staff that you manage. Staff will not show respect if the skill level or knowledge base is insufficient. On the other hand, remember that some staff may have higher specialist skills e.g. chocolate work or desserts. Acknowledge their skills and tap into their knowledge and you expand your own skills base and motivate the staff member.
- **Training** – up-skilling team members will benefit not only the organisation but make everyone's job easier. Both **formal** and **informal** training should be used depending on

the skills sets required. Formal training may be conducted in a specific structured way particularly if needed for compliance. Informal training is often referred to as buddy training as team members with the necessary skills or knowledge can show other staff what to do. Evaluation of training is a key step to ensure that relevant outcomes are achieved.

- **Quality assurance** – controlling the quality of product during production and service requires good systems. Setting up standard measures such as standard recipe cards with photos, clear production lists, peer checking of production, checking of products before service and finally checking each item as it goes on the pass before sending it out are key control mechanisms employed in the industry. Any problem can then be analysed and a remedy found. Is it a training issue, is the product faulty, does the team member need more skills, is the process faulty? Don't blame people for the mistakes – fix the **source** of the problem.
- **Hazard and risk analysis** – assessing hazards and associated risks against the degree of severity is a key management tool. SOPs, protective clothing and commitment to necessary training are important to control possible dangers. Staff are often best equipped to highlight dangers and engineering risk minimisation approaches assists in curbing injury rates.
- **Establishing processes** – supervisors are responsible for the documentation of all policies and procedures. Negligence is still a legal offence and cannot be used as an excuse.