

What are the main challenges that might be encountered by a newly promoted supervisor in managing a team, and what strategies might they adopt?

Challenge 1 - Pre-Existing Relationships:

As a newly promoted supervisor there are two types of relationships one may have in the team: firstly there are those who are new to working with you and secondly there are those who you previously worked with. The second group is more complicated to manage, as it represents a change in existing relationships.

The best strategy to use in these cases will depend on the personality of the team-members in question and it is key to tailor ones approach. A new supervisor should make an effort to meet all members of their team individually to help assess their specific needs, personalities and preferences (Indeed Editorial Team 2021). If there is an existing close or friendly relationship it is important to avoid drastic shifts in tone of interactions that may upset them. While it is important to establish oneself in the new role (Gervais 2023), inexperienced supervisors may be over-confident in their abilities resulting in unconsidered decision making (Hackston 2020).

Where there is a less close pre-existing relationship the team member may feel like the new supervisor should not have been promoted over them or another member of staff. Here it is important to display confidence and competency to justify the promotion. Much as in the above case however, care needs to be taken that the supervisor does not overcorrect to the extent that the team members feel dismissed, or to be overconfident in an area the supervisor is unfamiliar. As such the confidence needs to be tempered with respect for the team's experience, and making all members of the team feel listened to is of critical importance (Ash 2012; Mihai-Alexandru 2022).

Challenge 2 - Knowledge:

There is a general expectation that a supervisor should have all of the answers. This is an unhelpful belief as there will be areas where team-members have more knowledge and accuracy should not suffer just to maintain the supervisor's ego. Rather than having all the answers a newly promoted supervisor should aim to have most of the answers while deferring to more experienced team-members on their topics of their particular knowledge (Ash 2012; Byrd et al. 2013). This will make the team members feel valued, it is the supervisor's role to take charge and make a final call where there are multiple potentially valid answers.

Challenge 3 - Supervising:

Finally a new supervisor needs to establish that they are competent in the core skills of supervising, particularly management and delegation, which is not a skill easily built while in more junior positions (Ash 2012; Gervais 2023).

It will be key to gather advice and input from more experienced members of the company. This can be done informally, e.g. by reflecting on how one was managed, or more formally by taking the time to sit down with an experienced manager to discuss their experiences and ask for feedback (Indeed Editorial Team 2021; Gervais 2023).

Finally it is always key to take the time before the project to prepare and plan ones approach. Simply spending additional time thinking about potential issues and how to handle them will give a new supervisor a head start if they do happen (Byrd et al. 2013).

Word Count – 531

Bibliography

Ash, E. 2012. *Supervising Effectively*. Seven Dimensions. Available at:

<https://video.alexanderstreet.com/watch/supervising-effectively> [Accessed: 22 January 2023].

Byrd, J., Miller, K., Morrissey, L., Murphy, M., Peratino, B. and Shaneberger, K. 2013. Words of wisdom: OR leaders offer tips for new managers. *OR Manager* 28(8), pp. 1–5.

Gervais, M. 2023. 10 Ways to Survive the New Supervisor Nightmare. Available at:

<https://shiftworkplace.com/10-ways-to-survive-the-new-supervisor-nightmare/> [Accessed: 22 January 2023].

Hackston, J. 2020. The Danger of the Overconfident Leader. Available at:

<https://www.themyersbriggs.com/en-US/Company/News/The-Danger-of-the-Overconfident-Leader> [Accessed: 22 January 2023].

Indeed Editorial Team 2021. 9 Tips for New Supervisors: How to Succeed. Available at:

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/starting-new-job/tips-for-new-supervisors> [Accessed: 21 January 2023].

Mihai-Alexandru, C. 2022. 7 Traits of Effective Communication in the Workplace. Available at:

<https://business-review.eu/business/human-resources/7-traits-of-effective-communication-in-the-workplace-227290> [Accessed: 12 December 2022].