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

The challenges faced by a newly appointed team supervisor can be multiple but usually revolve around the power dynamics contained within a field team, negotiating with external project stakeholders and good communication skills with the senior project management team.

We can also identify immediate practical challenges that require learning new skills, acquiring knowledge, and expanding on existing experience to challenge work expectations. Within the commercial archaeological sector, this can translate into a rapid change in job description, from the field operative to the person who is then responsible for the logistical organisation of a team on site from start to finish, and then producing a body of work in the post-excavation stage of a projects life cycle.

This requires detailed internal knowledge of company procedures for opening and closing a site, managing project resources day to day, expanding existing health and safety knowledge, developing technical GPS and GIS surveying skills, reviewing data collection in the project archive for accuracy, developing a better understanding of deep stratigraphy and expanding professional knowledge on specific material cultures such as pottery or lithic technology.

Therefore, the practical challenges of fitting into a new job role can be a huge learning curve in a short period of time for a new supervisor. An Eisenhower Matrix (Appendix 1) is a simple but valuable applied strategy to be productive, reduce stress and free up time to focus on essential team management strategies.

Career progression within the same organisation is challenging as work relationships change, and colleagues with considerable experience, knowledge, and skills can be reluctant to take new instructions. In addition, there is a need to learn how to communicate across and upwards in the structure of an organisation, which can be intimidating at first.

A practical strategy in negotiating these power dynamics is to examine the transactional relationships of individual team members and stakeholders. Based on the work of Eric Berne (Berne, 1958), people are split into three categories and adjust behaviour accordingly to get predictive or anticipated results of human behaviour (Appendix 2).

It is formulaic and unrealistic to think purely in terms of a psychological model. Good supervisory skills come from the confidence of a team's supervisor, but this conversely only develops with time and experience. Therefore, Bern's model cannot be discounted as a practical first step to understanding a team's dynamics before a new supervisor develops the softer or subtle people skills.

Structurally our model of internal organisation within commercial archaeology field units is hierarchical and therefore places significant pressure on new supervisors as a type of bulwark to perform outside the organisation, but perhaps without the requisite authority and resources to do so.

Research from other industries indicates that productivity and well-being improve with greater collective group autonomy within a team dynamic (Boxall, *et al.* 2014).

The challenges faced by a new supervisor can therefore be mitigated with a defused team structure, where a supervisor has the support to delegate increased responsibility equally within a field team structure. These methods are not new; the same approach is used in AGILE project management models (APM, 2022), which utilise trust, flexibility, empowerment, and collaboration and can still contain time, cost, and scope objectives to deliver excellent results in a project.

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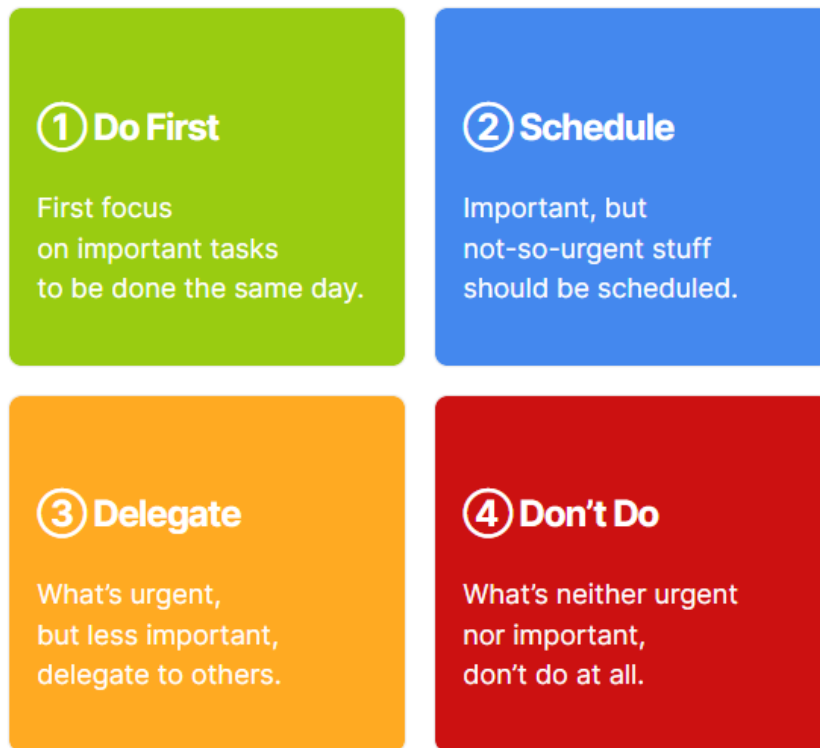
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Appendices:

1. Eisenhower Matrix Model:

Source: Eisenhower Matrix Apps <https://www.eisenhower.me/eisenhower-matrix/>



We call the first quadrant *Do first* as its tasks are important for your life and career and need to be done today or tomorrow at the latest. You could use a timer to help you concentrate while trying to get as much of them done as possible. An example of this type of task could be to review an important document for your manager.

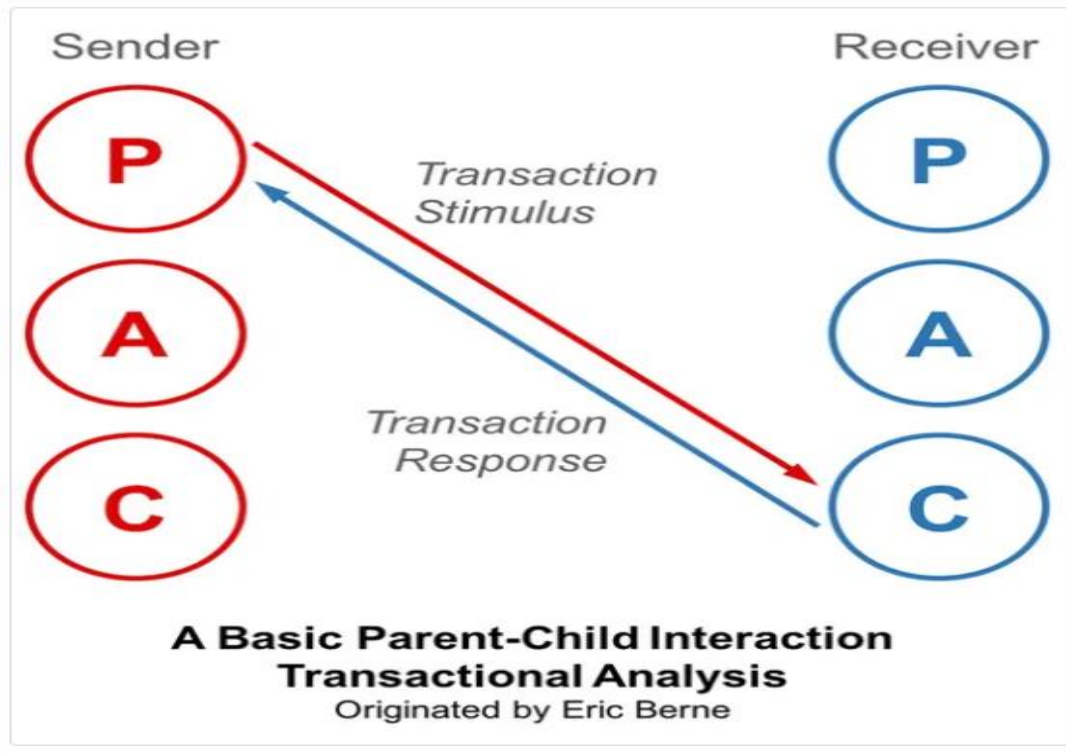
The second quadrant we call *Schedule*. Its tasks are important but less urgent. You should list tasks you need to put in your calendar here. An example of that could be a long-planned restart of your gym activity. Professional time managers leave fewer things unplanned and therefore try to manage most of their work in the second quadrant, reducing stress by terminating urgent and important to-dos to a reasonable date in the near future whenever a new task comes in.

The third quadrant is for those tasks you could *delegate* as they are less important to you than others but still pretty urgent. You should keep track of delegated tasks by e-mail, telephone or within a meeting to check back on their progress later. An example of a delegated task could be somebody calling you to ask for an urgent favour or request that you step into a meeting. You could delegate this responsibility by suggesting a better person for the job or by giving the caller the necessary information to have him deal with the matter himself.

The fourth and last quadrant is called *Don't Do* because it is there to help you sort out things you should not be doing at all. Discover and stop bad habits, like surfing the internet without a reason or gaming too long, these give you an excuse for not being able to deal with important tasks in the 1st and 2nd quadrant.

2. Bern's Transaction Analysis Model:

Source: Simple Psychology <https://www.simplypsychology.org/transactional-analysis-eric-berne.html>



Transactional analysts are trained to recognize which ego states people are transacting from and to follow the transactional sequences so they can intervene and improve the quality and effectiveness of communication.

TA believes that we have three different states or ways of being during interactions, which are the child ego state, the parent ego state, and the state of adult. Which state we are in during an interaction depends on a few factors, such as how we have been conditioned to act or react from childhood, any past traumas which now cause us to act in a certain way during particular interactions or situations, and how the other person we are interacting with is treating us/ what ego state they are in when speaking to us.

Child State: There are two subdivisions of the child state; The adapted child and the free child ego states. This is when we interact and respond to someone based on our past conditioning of internal emotions, felt in childhood, so when we revert to our thinking and feeling from when we were children. The child ego state is built on any reinforcements we were given in childhood, either positive or negative, to behave or not behave in a certain way, that still conditions and affects our interactions today. The adapted child state conforms and acts in accordance to others wishes in order to please them and be seen as good and liked, but it also has a rebellious side when faced with perceived conflict and causes responses of resistance, hostility, and emotional reactivity. The free child ego state can be creative, spontaneous, playful and pleasure seeking.

Parent State: There are two subdivisions of the parent state; The critical/ controlling parent state and the nurturing parent state. This is behavior and thinking patterns we have been taught from our past interactions with our parents and other authority figures (teachers, grandparents etc). Berne believed our experiences during our first five years of life contributed to the parent ego state. This state holds a lot of judgments on how someone or something is, i.e., it that state where we find ourselves having a lot of 'shoulds' and 'should nots' about something. People are in this state when they are reactive to a situation and act out of their conditioning, copying how their parents (or another authority figure) treated them and others, instead of analysing each situation afresh in the here and now. It is when we use are voice of authority towards

someone. The critical parent is disapproving in a harsh and possibly aggressive way, whereas the nurturing parent tries to take over a situation in more of a rescuing way, trying to sooth others which can be very inappropriate when talking to other adults rather than children.

Adult State: Unlike the other two, the adult state does not have any subdivisions. The adult state interacts with people and its environment in the here and now, not from past conditioning or how other people have told them to be. This state is more open, more rational, and less quick to make harsh judgments on a situation or person. When communication takes place from the adult state, we are more likely to be respectful, make compromises, listen fully to others, and have more healthy social interactions.