

# GUIDELINES FOR STRENGTHS-BASED SUPERVISORS

A key component to creating a strengths-based work environment is ensuring that all your supervisory staff are providing supervision based on the guidelines described below.

- 1) **Establish a Positive, Respectful Relationship** with supervisees (utilize a humanistic approach).
- 2) **Meet Regularly** and give supervisees your undivided attention (no computer or phone distractions).
- 3) Emphasize supervisee's **Skill Development- Teach, Model, Coach, and Support.**
- 4) Emphasize supervisee's **Strengths & Exceptions to Problems** (what they are doing well).
- 5) Utilize at least a **4:1 ratio of Positive Feedback** vs. constructive criticism (opportunities for growth).
- 6) Have discussions about supervisee's **Professional Development/ Career Goals.**
- 7) Attend to supervisee's **Self-Care** and strategies to **Prevent Burnout.**
- 8) Utilize **Reflective Practice** to explore thoughts, feelings, and meaning-making about Human Service challenges
- 9) **Promote Hope about Clients** we serve. Educate supervisees about the many reasons for Hope and Self-Efficacy (e.g., Maturation of the brain's prefrontal cortex; Neuroplasticity; Low lifetime prevalence rate of delinquent behaviors; Life-span wisdom model; Resiliency research; Post-traumatic growth).
- 10) **Intervene when/if supervisee's slip into negative, deficit-based orientation** and/or are experiencing learned helplessness. Heighten supervisee's awareness about how a deficit-based orientation impedes their effectiveness and increases the risk of burnout.
- 11) Educate supervisees about the job's **Foundational Principles**- Ensure that supervisees understand the "big picture" (e.g., Strengths-based, Relationship-based, Skills-based, Holistic principles).
- 12) Educate supervisees about **Character Strengths** required for effective, competent staff (e.g., Positive, Kind; Optimistic; Honest; Integrity; Interpersonally-skilled; good Emotional Regulation; strong Work Ethic; Team Player; Open to Learning from Others; Humble; Open to Learning from Own Mistakes).
- 13) Utilize a **Balanced/ Democratic/ Authoritative** supervisory style (as opposed to a Permissive or Authoritarian style). Maintain moderate to high expectations, exhibit a caring/ supportive attitude, and provide supervisee's a rationale for job expectations (explaining why it is important).
- 14) Educate supervisee's about **Key Policies and Procedures.**
- 15) Communicate **Clear and Consistent Expectations** about job performance.
- 16) Hold supervisees accountable to job expectations and **utilize Progressive Discipline to address problem behaviors. Document well** (Note: Ignoring supervisee's problem behaviors leads to bad outcomes).
- 17) Do NOT expect perfection from supervisees but **DO Expect Responsiveness to Feedback.**
- 18) Periodically conduct **Quality Assurance checks** to ensure supervisee's compliance with job duties. But do NOT micro-manage supervisees.
- 19) Use **Mistakes as 'Teachable Moments'.**
- 20) **Empower supervisees** as individuals and a team (increase their sense of belonging to the team). **Identify Interests and Skills in the workplace** that supervisees can **Champion** (opportunities to express their passion and share it).