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## *chapter three*

# Leadership, Supervision, and Command Presence

Leadership may be defined as the art of influencing, directing, guiding, and controlling others in such a way as to obtain their willing obedience, confidence, respect, and loyal cooperation in the accomplishment of an objective. It is the human factor which binds a group together and motivates it toward goals. Leadership is truly an art. It embodies a set of basic principles the application of which facilitates human endeavor. It involves more than just a grant of authority. Parker and Kleemeier<sup>1</sup> make the distinction when they state:

When men obey another because of fear, they are *yielding*. Their obedience is given grudgingly. There is little loyalty or teamwork, and no desire to give their all for a common cause. But when men *follow*, they do so willingly—because they *want to do* what a leader wishes. Herein lies the distinction between being an authority and being a leader. The leader stimulates, motivates, and inspires the group to follow willingly, even eagerly. The authority pushes and drives his men, who yield and obey because they fear the consequences of disobedience.

<sup>1</sup>Willard E. Parker and Robert W. Kleemeier, *Human Relations in Supervision: Leadership in Management* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1951), pp. 411-12.

There are as many levels of leadership proficiency as there are leaders. At different times and for different tasks, the degree of supervisory skills called for will vary. Yet there is a close, positive correlation between organizational effectiveness and the abilities of supervisors to skillfully apply those proven principles of leadership that have evolved from the experiences of industry and the military, from the social sciences, and from other disciplines. The supervisor who has managed to learn and apply these principles will find his job easier and the productivity of his subordinates greater. Their apprehension of authority will be lessened, and their respect for their leaders will increase. The result will be better understanding and fewer conflicts of purpose between those who direct and control and those who constitute the working force of the organization.

### ■ RESISTANCE TO LEADERSHIP TRAINING

That considerable resistance to leadership training exists cannot be denied. This resistance is usually the result of the inability of some supervisors to adopt and apply realistically the principles of leadership to their own particular assignments. They perform their leadership tasks in the traditional, stereotyped fashion. They look back at the brand of supervision they have received and reflect, "If it was good enough for me, it should be good enough for my subordinates." They are apt to supervise as they have been supervised. They find this attitude difficult to change. Often, those who most need to change are those who resist change most because they believe they are already good leaders and cannot recognize the symptoms that they are not.

Some supervisors resist adopting more refined supervisory practices because many of these are intangible and require more effort than those to which they have been accustomed. They may resist because of the military connotation supervision implies in the quasi-military law enforcement; that is, I lead, you follow.

The application of many proven principles of supervision may initially require more energy than do some of the hard, driving tactics to which they have become accustomed. The scientific methods usually become easier than the old, unscientific approach. However, more often than not, the new principles are more effective in the long run and produce better results. Becoming skillful in applying sound leadership techniques requires diligence, but every supervisor worthy of the name must recognize the need for performing his tasks in such a way as to sustain a high organizational spirit and, at the same time, achieve maximum productivity.

## ■ DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP ABILITY

Leadership ability is not inherited. There are no born leaders. Undoubtedly there are some natural endowments which affect the relative abilities of individuals to become good leaders. Some physical traits, aptitudes, intelligence, and temperament characteristics are examples.

Any reasonably intelligent person with enough forcefulness to develop his ability to inspire others to follow him can earn leadership status. He may never be recognized on the organization charts, he may never be awarded stripes or bars, but he nevertheless is a leader if others are desirous of following him. The true leader—the ideal for the organization—is the leader recognized as such formally *and* granted leadership authority not only by his organization but by his subordinates. The grant of authority by the latter is the only *real* source of authority.

The granting of formal authority does not ipso facto make a person a leader. Leadership status must be earned. The necessary qualities may be developed by training and self-discipline. When necessary, habits can be changed and emotions controlled. Mannerisms, speech, manual and mental skills, and attitudes can be altered by training calculated to develop or improve leadership ability, but this requires diligent effort. If leadership ability is learned slowly through trial and error, morale and performance are likely to suffer in the process because of the errors that are bound to creep into the supervisor's underdeveloped judgment.

The best leaders make their jobs appear easy because they have the fewest problems. They learn to recognize symptoms that problems are developing and have the fortitude to take timely preventive action before the problems become unmanageable. Those who avoid problems by sidestepping issues that should be treated forthrightly may continue to hold their positions but are bound to fail as leaders.

## ■ TYPES OF LEADERS

Many types of people make good leaders. There is no single leader type. Most can be classified according to their individual approach to leadership under one of the following categories.

### The Autocrat

The autocratic leader is highly authoritative. He makes decisions without allowing subordinates to participate. They are often made to feel that they are not part of the team because they are not allowed a voice in the decision-making

process. They do, however, know where they stand because he goes by the book. He is the martinet who directs, commands, and controls his subordinates in such a manner that no one ever forgets who is the boss. He rules through fear, intimidation, and threat. He is a driver who uses his authority lavishly, demanding complete and unquestioning obedience from his inferiors. He is often thought of as the tyrant among supervisors. He is primarily leader centered, having little concern for others but considerable interest in his own supervisory status; but this approach does not work well for long. Employees will start to resist. They will sabotage the work effort in many ways to show their displeasure.

When conditions are unstable during periods of stress or emergency, when initiative and decisiveness are needed, when there is usually no time for permissive leadership and no time for discussion with subordinates before each decision is made, and when bold, rapid action is indicated, the autocratic leader is most likely to succeed,<sup>2</sup> provided that he has the capacity to make sound, workable decisions. If he is unable to do that, style alone will not help him to obtain good results for long.

### The Democratic Leader

The supervisor who leads democratically, seeking ideas and suggestions from his subordinates and allowing them to participate in decision making that affects them, by and large secures the best results as a leader.<sup>3</sup> He uses little authority because he encourages his employees to participate with him in getting the job done. He treats them as associates in a joint venture and thereby increases their feelings of responsibility, their sense of achievement, recognition, and personal growth; but most important, he increases their commitment to the goals of the organization. This is the essence of participative management, which works well when circumstances permit employees to participate in the decision-making process.

At times, however, such as in emergent or unusual situations, purely democratic leadership will work poorly. In these cases, the most effective leaders will blend into their style more forceful measures which will produce the quick, decisive action needed. In such situations, the stronger leaders make it understood that participative management means, "I manage, you participate."

The democratic leader is keenly aware of the human factor in managing others. As an employee-oriented leader, he secures better performance from his subordinates, motivates them better, and enables them to derive greater satisfaction from their efforts. Most probably, he will not only be a popular leader but

<sup>2</sup>Bernard M. Bass, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973), pp. 438-40.

<sup>3</sup>Keith Davis, *Human Relations at Work*, 6th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981), p. 157; Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *The Change Masters* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), pp. 242-43.

will be respected by his group. Popularity and respect need not be mutually exclusive.

### The Free-rein Leader

The leader who plays down his role as such and exercises a minimum of control seldom gives his subordinates the attention or help they need. He does not interfere with them but permits a laissez-faire operation. His failure to maintain contact is often as harmful as an excessive amount of supervision.

This type of supervision does not work well. It is an easy course for the supervisor to follow—especially when he is more concerned about being liked by his subordinates than being respected by them; but this invariably produces a climate of permissiveness. Feelings of insecurity develop among workers because they are left without the positive direction and guidance they look for and expect from their leader. As a result, morale, discipline, efficiency, and production begin to deteriorate, and the leader loses control.

## ■ SELECTING A LEADERSHIP STYLE

There is no set of hard-and-fast rules for supervising in every work situation. Each supervisor must determine which style of leadership he thinks is best for his particular working environment. This determination must, of necessity, be based on his own personality, the personalities of his subordinates, his goals, and theirs; yet, he must avoid becoming bogged down in his supervisory style. If he does, he is likely to fail to capitalize on the inherent capabilities of his subordinates and their desire to perform well.

All types of leadership will work with varying degrees of success if the conditions are favorable and the situation permits a particular approach. The selection of the right approach for the right situation is the key to skillful leadership.<sup>4</sup>

## ■ COMMAND PRESENCE AND LEADERSHIP

Command presence to some denotes a military bearing. To others, it means a distinctive type of appearance and conduct. Others believe that command presence is comprised of the same ingredients as leadership. In reality, it is a composite of all those traits. It is the natural manner of an individual indicating a

<sup>4</sup>Arnold Brown and Edith Weiner, *Supermanaging: How to Harness Change for Personal and Organizational Success* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1984), p. 177.

cause he goes by the controls his subordinates. He rules through fear, authority lavishly, demanding of his inferiors. He is often a leader centered, having his own supervisory style. Subordinates will start to resist. Their displeasure. In an emergency, when there is no time for permission, the autocratic leader is able to make sound, workable decisions that help him to obtain

and suggestions from his subordinates. Making that affects the decision-making process. He uses little authority and a firm aim in getting the job done. This thereby increases their motivation, and personal commitment to the goals of the organization, which works well in the decision-making

process. In situations, purely demotivated and ineffective leaders will not produce the quick, effective results that leaders make it under-stand to participate."

Another factor in managing performance from his subordinates is to provide greater satisfaction. A popular leader but

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Hill Book Company, 1981),  
Luster, 1984), pp. 242-43.

complete command of his mental and physical faculties and emotions. It encompasses the qualities of dignity, self-assurance, and poise. It is that outward appearance which denotes that the person has the ability and qualifications to take command of any situation. When the leader has command presence, Pratt<sup>5</sup> observes that "nervousness and indecision are replaced by calmness and self-control for he feels himself to be master of the situation." It is often said that command presence is best reflected by the leader who looks calmer and calmer as things get worse and worse. The leader's attitude quickly permeates a group. If he displays anxiety, the group members will develop it. They will not perform well in an atmosphere of anxiety and tension. Pfiffner and Fels<sup>6</sup> summarize this condition by stating: "The supervisor absorbs heat from above instead of passing his own irritations on to his subordinates. He maintains a deportment of calmness, and evidences a high degree of emotional security, even under provocation."

## ■ ELEMENTS OF LEADERSHIP

It is impossible to draw a clear-cut line between personal qualities of leadership and the external expressions of those qualities through action. The characteristics of the leader are too closely interrelated, too interlocking, to permit complete isolation of one from another.

### Indicators of Good Leadership

A high level of discipline in its broadest sense in an organization is perhaps the best mark of good leadership. Ordinarily, if it is present, a high level of esprit de corps and morale will result together with increased efficiency.<sup>7</sup>

### Leadership Ethics

The position of true leadership places upon the leader a moral obligation to adhere strictly to the high standards of honor and integrity he expects of his subordinates and which they and his superiors have the right to expect from him. His moral code must be beyond reproach. He must not only avoid all evil, he must avoid all appearances of evil. His conduct is appraised in three frames of

<sup>5</sup>William V. Pratt, "Leadership," in *Selected Readings in Leadership*, 3rd ed., eds. Malcolm E. Wolfe and F. J. Mulholland (Annapolis, Md.: United States Naval Institute, 1965), p. 8.

<sup>6</sup>John M. Pfiffner and Marshall Fels, *The Supervision of Personnel: Human Relations in the Management of Men*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 169.

<sup>7</sup>See Chapter 11 for a discussion of the relationship between discipline, morale, and esprit de corps.

reference—what it actually is, what he thinks it is, and what it appears to be to others.

### Psychology of Leadership

The maintenance of a high level of discipline and morale requires some practical knowledge of the psychological factors which affect human behavior.<sup>8</sup> Few supervisors have an instinctive or intuitive knowledge of these factors. That comes only with training and experience.

To gain the willing support and cooperation of subordinates, the supervisor must learn those principles and techniques of leading them by sound logic and clear thinking rather than by driving them by arbitrary methods. He must recognize that few of them will respond consistently in the desired manner to the autocratic, dictatorial supervisory approach and that, if he uses good common sense in applying the basic principles, he will seldom be required to get things done by displaying his authority. He will find that best results will be obtained if he uses his authority sparingly and rarely displays it. If he demonstrates that he *is* a leader, his subordinates will recognize him as such. Since he accomplishes his objectives through the efforts of people, he must develop at least a rudimentary understanding of the things that motivate them.

## ■ MOTIVATING EMPLOYEES

All the leadership skills the supervisor manages to develop can be applied in one way or another to the motivation of his subordinates. *Motivation* involves the application of incentives which encourages a certain positive pattern of behavior and attitude and contributes to the accomplishment of organizational objectives. Unless the employee agrees with these objectives and believes they are attainable, he will not be able to commit himself to them. If he can't, he won't be motivated.

The effective supervisor will recognize the difference between giving employees a desire to produce well because of high job satisfaction and trying to force them to do so—deviously or otherwise. This is motivation versus manipulation.

Employees are stimulated to produce best when they are provided with *positive incentives* that satisfy individual needs. This satisfaction leads to pleasurable experiences. Incentives such as recognition by supervisors and peers, praise, opportunity for development, an interesting and challenging job, increased responsibility, advancement, and fair treatment by supervisors are

<sup>8</sup>See Chapter 8 for a further discussion of the psychology of behavior.

strong forces in motivating people and can usually be directly controlled by supervisors. When incentives are properly applied, they result in satisfaction and pleasure. People tend to repeat behavior that produces these sensations and discontinue behavior that does not.

Supervisors should be constantly aware that what motivates one person may fail entirely to motivate another because of individual differences. What might be a strong motivator at one time may lose its effect after awhile.

Money and other material incentives are vastly overrated as positive motivational influences because they become weaker and weaker as physical human needs are progressively satisfied. The employee hungry for the satisfaction derived from such motivators as praise, recognition, and the like, is usually a good producer; but when he becomes disinterested in his job and the satisfactions available from it, he sometimes loses his drive to produce.

Motivation through the process of inspiration is unquestionably the most difficult, yet the most powerful and lasting force in forming attitudes which will induce workers to make fuller use of their potential.<sup>9</sup>

Recognition is a strong motivating force in people. The supervisor can make good use of this force by giving employees credit for their accomplishments as a means of satisfying their drive for recognition. People obtain satisfaction from doing a job well and knowing that others—especially their superiors—have noticed their efforts. The supervisor can give this recognition if he understands the principles of objective personnel evaluations and applies them. In addition to providing recognition for deserving personnel, merit ratings will force him to appraise his subordinates periodically in relation to each other and rate them according to their value to the organization.

The supervisor should utilize every positive motivator at his disposal to stimulate his subordinates toward the highest productivity their capabilities will permit. He can assist them by establishing an atmosphere of cooperation in which each member of the organization strives on his own volition to assist others in achieving organizational objectives. He can push his subordinates or he can motivate them so that they will react favorably on their own to achieve these goals.

The supervisor can keep the productivity of his subordinates at a high level if he lets them know just what he expects of them, then provides positive incentives for excellence of performance. His subordinates will ordinarily strive to do a good job. He can make it easier for them to do so by providing recognition for their efforts and by helping them to correct their mistakes by training or positive discipline. By avoiding inconsistent and arbitrary supervisory practices, he

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<sup>9</sup>Charles A. Hanson and Donna K. Hanson, "Motivation: Are the Old Theories Still True?" *Supervisory Management*, 23, No. 6 (June, 1978), pp. 9-11.

can gain their confidence and respect, which are vital in the process of motivation.<sup>10</sup>

*Negative* motivators such as fear, coercion, intimidation, and punishment should be avoided except when more constructive, positive means have been tried and have failed. Negative motivators tend to cause employees to develop rather sophisticated and undesirable avoidance techniques; they soon learn how to avoid being discovered when they commit acts which may lead to unpleasant responses by their superiors.

Fear, as a negative motivator, involves threat, direct or implied, and a degree of intimidation; but, because human beings can shield themselves by developing a tolerance toward stress, fear soon loses its value as a motivating force. The employee will soon become hostile or the organization will lose him.<sup>11</sup> Although the proper use of punishment as a negative motivator has withstood the test of time, it must be used reasonably, fairly, and consistently or it will produce resentment, frustration, hostility, bitterness, and marginal performance with the low morale that accompanies these reactions.

The supervisor cannot hope to eliminate *all* practices that act as motivation barriers; but, he can concentrate his efforts toward eliminating many of them. He can avoid those heavy-handed practices that impose unfair or unreasonable demands upon his subordinates. He can improve his communications with them so that they will clearly understand his directives, his goals, and the objectives of the organization. He will make that little added effort needed to increase the esprit de corps in his unit that will have such a great effect upon the morale of his subordinates. He will avoid those courses of action that cause strife, confusion, anxiety, insecurity, or mistrust within the organization. He will engender in them a feeling of trust, knowing that he will support them whenever the just need arises. He will foster and encourage initiative among employees and reward them for their excellence of performance. He will provide training that will help them develop the competence required for their jobs. He will not just fill the position of a leader, but will be one.

Material factors in the job environment, such as fringe benefits, physical working conditions, pay, security, commendations, and formal promotions, do not necessarily guarantee improvements in performance and attitudes, but they often do and tend to prevent morale and effective performance from deteriorating. Although the supervisor at the lower levels of the hierarchy often has no direct control over such aspects of a job, he should be aware that they may affect employee efficiency adversely. When they do, he should make timely recommendations for whatever corrective action is indicated.

<sup>10</sup>Jard DeVile, "Successful Leaders Are Successful Motivators," *Supervisory Management*, 18, No. 7 (July, 1973), pp. 25-28.

<sup>11</sup>Hanson and Hanson, "Motivation: Are the Old Theories Still True?" p. 11.

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## ■ SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS AND SELF-APPRAISAL

The supervisor should constantly evaluate his leadership qualities in an objective manner so that he might gain some insight into his strengths and weaknesses. Does he consistently act as a leader should? How has he reacted to stressful problems? Has his behavior resulted in the most productive solution?

Honest self-appraisal is difficult because one often interprets what he does in accord with his own motives and not in accord with others' interpretations of what was done. When the supervisor recognizes his own deficiencies, he can usually correct them by systematically setting out to learn all he can about supervisory skills. The biggest problem is in honestly admitting to himself that his techniques might be wrong from time to time.

Supervisory incidents might well be reconstructed to determine if sound leadership principles were followed, if proven techniques were utilized, and if the supervisory action taken was objective, without the interference of emotion or prejudice. This does not suggest, however, that blind adherence to a mechanistic approach should be followed. Reliance on such an approach may cause supervisors to concentrate on the more superficial aspects of their relationships with employees rather than to try to gain a genuine understanding of them. Thinking, feeling people, unlike things, cannot be treated as figures in a formula. Mechanistic supervision will quickly be recognized and may become the source of resentment and dissatisfaction. Subordinates may inwardly or outwardly accuse the supervisor of insincerity. A loss of confidence and respect is the likely product. Lowered morale and productivity usually follow.

## ■ LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

The traits commonly found in superior leaders would probably be found in most lists of desirable leadership characteristics. Possession of particular traits certainly does not assure that a person is a good leader. He may be a gentle, kind, and friendly supervisor or a strict, decisive, and knowledgeable one. Neither may be a good leader because he lacks certain indefinable qualities that comprise good leadership.

Ideally, every leader should possess the following traits:<sup>12</sup>

1. Friendliness, sincerity, affection for others, and personal warmth. A long face should be seldom, if ever, the face of the leader. Neither should he have a pessimistic or negative attitude. A sincere expression of pleasure

<sup>12</sup>See Pratt, "Leadership," pp. 2-8. See also Bass, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior*, pp. 166-67, 451; Ordway Tead, *Administration: Its Purpose and Performance* (Hamden, Conn.: The Shoe String Press, Inc., 1982), pp. 65-68.

when a greeting is indicated, especially to a subordinate, has inestimable value. A person's birthday, a promotion, his wedding, or the birth of his child is one of the big events in his life. A warm, sincere handclasp or a word of congratulation takes little time and is worth every moment it takes in these and similar cases.

2. Enthusiasm for the job and all it entails. Sincerity and the ability to display it are vital traits of the leader. Zeal to do the right thing and to get the job done are extremely contagious and are quickly felt by others.
3. Ambition. Within reason, ambition is desirable; however, it must be controlled or it can become a millstone around the supervisor's neck. It should never result in the taking of credit which belongs to another. Neither should selfishness and vanity be allowed to corrode the supervisor's career.
4. Physical and nervous energy and vitality. Being a leader requires much physical and nervous stamina and a high frustration tolerance. Good leadership and hard work seem to go hand in hand. Diligence and industry are essential to effective leadership.
5. Moral and physical integrity. The real leader has moral as well as physical courage. He has a sense of direction and purpose with clear goals in mind. He has personal responsibility. He knows where he wants to go and what he wants to do. He does not make promises he does not intend to keep because his word is his bond. It is more important that he be trusted and respected than liked. Subordinates expect their leaders to be honorable, to know right from wrong, justice from injustice, and to be fair with all without prejudice. A leader is expected to pursue the truth at all times. He is expected to keep his personal and professional life above reproach and, by his conduct, to be a credit to those in the organization and his profession.
6. Intelligence. It has been shown that the successful leader almost invariably has more intelligence than those he leads.<sup>13</sup> He has a sense of imagination and humor. He is capable of making objective observations. He has a questioning attitude which helps him in his search for the truth in all matters. He has vision and insight, for without them he will fail as a leader. He has a highly developed ability to see all sides of a question and draw commonsensical conclusions from the evidence at hand.
7. Technical skill. The most successful leader has a technical mastery of his job including the teaching skill which often takes the place of order giving, but leadership proficiency is not dependent on technical ability to do the job itself. The supervisor can be highly successful if he has a reasonable understanding of what the job requires and has a mastery of the leadership abilities necessary in getting it done.

<sup>13</sup>Bass, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior*, p. 46.

qualities in an objective manner, strengths and weaknesses, how he reacted to stressful situations, and what was the solution?

How does he interpret what he does? How do others' interpretations of his actions affect him? How can he learn from all he can about his own performance to himself that

How can he determine if sound decisions were utilized, and if the influence of emotion and preference to a mechanical approach may cause a breakdown of their relationships and understanding of them. How can he put figures in a formula? How can he become the source of pride or outwardly respect is the likely

How can they be found in most situations? How can particular traits certainly be a gentle, kind, and noble one. Neither may they be qualities that comprise

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How can he gain personal warmth. A long-term goal. Neither should he be a source of pleasure or a source of pleasure

*Leadership, Supervision, and Organizational Performance* (Hamden, Conn.:

8. Faith. The leader has faith and confidence in himself and his subordinates. Men will seldom have confidence in an individual who has no confidence in himself.
9. Verbal aptitude. A large amount of experimental work supports the conclusion that the most successful leaders are verbally capable.<sup>14</sup> They are persuasive and tactful. Few attributes are more important in dealing with others without generating friction.
10. Courtesy. Common courtesy demands that politeness is a civility which must be practiced at all times. The superior cannot afford to be outdone in it by his subordinates.
11. Modesty. The real leader can afford to be modest and practice humility. His accomplishments will attest to his value without his constantly reminding others of his greatness.
12. In addition, those characteristics of self-control, dependability, empathy for others short of sentimentalism, good judgment, originality, versatility, and adaptability are usually found in the most successful leaders.<sup>15</sup>

### ■ THE PERSONALITY OF A LEADER

The personality of an individual is a composite of all his personal characteristics. As such, it plays an important part in the development of a leadership style and the ability to apply it successfully in supervising. Every leader has the capacity to be a good supervisor. Personal traits of successful leaders should be observed and studied by the supervisor in refining his techniques of leadership. Those desirable traits should be adapted to his own natural style whenever possible. Those traits he has found undesirable in others should be avoided scrupulously. For example, if he has resented inconsiderate treatment by his superiors in the past, he should avoid treating his subordinates inconsiderately.

He should not assume, however, that any neatly packaged approach that treats employees as a uniformly styled population will always work. It will not. It may only compound his problem and cause him to oversupervise.

Success in supervision cannot be achieved solely by copying the style of other successful supervisors. To know what they do and how they do it does not mean that everyone can make the same approach work. The capability of the supervisor to adapt their methods to his own particular style is the keynote to supervisory success.

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<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 166.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 451.

## ■ HUMAN RELATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

The human relations aspect of supervision and leadership has developed to an inordinate degree during the last several decades. It has occupied the attention of leaders and managers to the extent that sometimes their concern for the personal welfare and happiness of the individual employee has been at the expense of the organization as a whole. That consideration for these factors is important cannot be denied; yet, some supervisors are so concerned with the principle itself that they have failed to use it with common sense. They often fail to do what must be done for fear of upsetting employees. With regard to the human relations movement, Megginson<sup>16</sup> aptly observes that it has brought about "an overconcern with the 'sweetness and light' doctrine and the 'happiness cult'." He asserts that when the supervisor interprets the human relations doctrine as meaning that he has no right to be critical and dissatisfied with inferior performance, he deprives his subordinates of a standard for determining the level of performance which can be reasonably expected of them. Just having happy employees is not enough. They need reasonable goals and a sense of achievement and personal development if they are to be satisfied and productive.

Pfiffner and Fels<sup>17</sup> said: "We need to develop a new set of social skills that will combine the new permissive and democratic approach with the continuing need to exercise authority, positive and forceful authority when called for." Supervisors who put into practice the principles of good human relations without becoming maudlin or permissive to the degree that the total organization suffers will accomplish more and will have fewer problems and conflicts than supervisors who allow themselves to become martinets, with little empathy, compassion, or understanding for others. How he handles his interpersonal relations and those indefinable, intangible social problems that arise in every organization is an indicator of the degree of his human relations ability. His problems of managing people will be lessened if he reasonably consults with them about things that affect them. This does not imply that he should take a vote before every decision is made, however.

The objective of good human relations should be the greatest production in the shortest possible time with the minimum energy and the maximum satisfaction for the producers.<sup>18</sup> This is the ideal of human efficiency. It is possible to achieve, but it seldom is achieved. It is a worthwhile goal toward which the supervisor should strive.

<sup>16</sup>Leon C. Megginson, *Personnel and Human Resources Administration*, 4th ed. (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1981), pp. 497-98.

<sup>17</sup>Pfiffner and Fels, *The Supervision of Personnel: Human Relations in the Management of Men*, p. 141.

<sup>18</sup>H. L. Hollingsworth and A. T. Poffenberger, eds., *Applied Psychology* (Darby, Pa.: Darby Books, 1983), p. 364.

## Manner of the Leader

The physical, moral, and mental attributes of the supervisor have a powerful effect upon his relations with subordinates. These traits are often reflected by his mannerisms, which afford an accurate clue to his state of mind. "Body language," such as a look, gesture, inflection in the voice, physical bearing, or an indication of tension gives away the thoughts of an individual. As has been indicated, how an act is done is often more important than the act itself. For example, the supervisor who makes an accusation to a subordinate before learning all the facts pertinent to an issue will soon lose the confidence of his subordinates. A worker castigated by his supervisor for tardiness when the supervisor has not taken the trouble to learn the reason for the apparent dereliction will be resentful. An employee criticized by one supervisor for doing what another superior had directed him to do has just cause for grievance when the criticism was made without the supervisor learning the reason for the act.

The supervisor will find that a calm, controlled manner will be helpful to him in maintaining the confidence and respect of his subordinates. Frequent irritation, petulance, and emotional displays—especially of temper or anger—are indicators that he lacks that self-control desirable in a leader. An outward appearance of impassiveness or calmness may be overdone, however. Sometimes a sincere showing of emotion such as pleasure or a sincere showing of appreciation for a tribute rendered by subordinates is perfectly in order. Indifference is often as out of place as emotionalism.

## Language of the Leader

Another outward mark by which a leader can be judged is the language he uses. What he says and the manner in which he conveys his thoughts give a clue to his mental state and the attitude behind it. They also indicate the possession or lack of good taste and breeding. His speech should be unaffected, positive, and direct, not uncertain, indecisive, negative, or apologetic.

Immoderate language habitually used in the presence of others invariably produces unfavorable results. Not only order giving but all communications should be devoid of vulgar, profane, or indecent speech, or the sharp-edged tool of sarcastic language. Blunt contradictions serve no useful purpose, nor do inflammatory remarks, name calling, or labeling. Language implying or expressing finality as in ultimatums should be reserved until no other recourse seems available to gain compliance, and then should be used only if the supervisor has the tools to carry out his ultimatum. Special care should be exercised to avoid talking down to others or talking over their heads for to do so will give the impression of affectation or paternalism. Either may be resented or cause subordinates to accuse him overtly or covertly of insincerity.

## ■ COMMENDING AND PRAISING OTHERS

The desire of individuals for recognition is a force the supervisor should utilize to increase his effectiveness substantially. A few words of commendation and praise, sincerely given when merited, will do much to induce continued good performance. There are much more effective tools of leadership than condemnation, criticism, or punitive action. The supervisor should follow the adage, "commend in public but criticize in private." Criticism, like commendation, should not be neglected when it is indicated. It can be constructive or destructive, depending on the manner employed in dispensing it. Supervisors are often so busy seeing that the job is done that they fail to see who does it and give credit when it is deserved.

One of the most frequent complaints of workers is that criticism comes readily but praise seldom.<sup>19</sup> Complimenting or giving praise when it is not merited, however, soon dilutes its value and is seldom effective. Likewise, insincere commendation soon loses its motivating effect. Dale Carnegie used the approach with great success that honest, sincere praise, "wins friends and influences people" but that insincere flattery will backfire and make enemies. The most skillful supervisor will strike a reasonable balance between constructive criticism when it is needed and praise when it is earned.

## ■ REPRIMANDING AND CRITICIZING

The average supervisor all too often does not face up to his responsibilities of giving forthright criticism when it is due. He is often afraid of the repercussions from the social group if he does so. He is afraid to tell employees what they must and must not do. His subordinates must come to understand that when he says something regarding his work expectations, he really means it.<sup>20</sup> If they are not made to understand this, he loses his position of leadership by default.

The supervisor should never lose his temper and become angry or hostile when reprimanding subordinates, nor should he exaggerate and overstate the reason for the criticism. He should face the issue squarely and inform the employee in private of his unacceptable behavior without equivocation, apology, or sarcasm. The employee should be given an opportunity to make a positive response concerning the issue and to save face. The response should be so structured by the supervisor that it contains some plan for improvement.<sup>21</sup> A

<sup>19</sup>Thomas J. Baker, "Designing the Job to Motivate," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, 45, No. 11 (November, 1976).

<sup>20</sup>Elaina Zuker, *Mastering Assertiveness Skills: Power and Positive Influence at Work* (New York: American Management Association, 1983), pp. 130-32.

<sup>21</sup>John R. Heron, "Thoughts on Criticism," *Supervisory Management*, 2, No. 4 (April, 1977).

"soft," intelligent approach rather than a "hard" one tends to reduce antagonism and resistance to criticism, the object of which is to bring about improvement, not to produce resentment and hostility.

### ■ KNOWLEDGE OF SUBORDINATES

Every supervisor should learn as much as he can about his subordinates, individually and collectively. He should become familiar with each individual's background, experience, education, family relationships, sickness patterns, performance, and any other data that may give him insight into the subordinate's qualifications, aptitudes, potential, and motives. The process of learning about his subordinates is a continuing one. He may find that his first impressions have been fashioned on incomplete or inaccurate information and have been erroneous. As he gains more information through inspection of personnel records, observation, and personal contacts, he will develop a more accurate picture of the individual. He will learn that the personal and performance problems of subordinates may be identified with the brand of supervision they have received in the past. He will learn that he can assist them in resolving most of these preconceived notions.

Once the supervisor has gained the confidence of his subordinates, he will find that they will often come to him for help. He must carefully avoid meddling into their personal lives as long as their work and the organization are not involved. He will only become involved then if he is asked to be. By becoming familiar with their drives and motives, he will gain some clues to their reactions as individuals and as a group.

Private information learned about a subordinate which adversely affects his personal or job welfare should remain private unless organizational interests demand its revelation. It should never be allowed to become a basis for unfounded rumor or unjust innuendo.

### ■ THE MARGINAL EMPLOYEE

The marginal employee, who will do just that amount and quality of work that will not give the organization a cause of action against him, often is the cause of considerable concern to the supervisor. Such employees are invariably the source of much dissatisfaction within their peer group, which they often contaminate with their antiorganization attitude. Production and morale eventually suffer. Such persons may be or may think they are overqualified for the job they are performing and believe themselves suited for a better position which may or may not be available. They may, however, be underqualified and consequently become frustrated when they cannot achieve the goals they have set for themselves; or they may be disgruntled, frustrated, or emotionally troubled.

Supervisors often tend to ignore such problems or try to rid themselves of the employee who is, to them, a source of irritation. They can transfer him, retain him and tolerate his attitude, retain him and attempt to correct his deficiencies, or collect evidence that will support his termination.

Transfer only shifts the problem to someone else, although at times a person performing poorly in one assignment will make remarkable improvement elsewhere because he is better matched with his new job. Retention in his present position may require that he be given special attention, depending upon what is causing the marginal performance. If he is unqualified, additional training, education, and guidance supplemented at times with counseling may help. The disgruntled employee with a grievance should be given an opportunity to express the cause for his complaint. Imagined grievances are usually corrected easily by encouraging the employee to examine the real facts or by providing the facts he does not have. The disgruntled employee who has been a disciplinary problem in the past is often an extremely difficult and distressing problem to the supervisor. Special counseling and recognition for his strong characteristics will sometimes motivate him to better efforts. There are times, however, despite the best efforts of the superior, when nothing short of transfer or termination will rectify the problem.

The frustrated employee and the troubled one may require special attention. Counseling or referral may help correct their problems, as described in Chapters 5 and 8.

## ■ GIVING ORDERS

Ideally, order giving involves the complex process of communicating ideas in such a manner that the recipient interprets what he hears in the way the communicator intends. Each order is susceptible to three interpretations—what the person actually says, what he thinks he has said, and what the recipient thinks he said.

Indistinct speech, poor selection of words, the giving of orders in a disordered or haphazard manner, the giving of too many orders at one time or too much detail in one order (assuming that the receiver understands clearly what is expected of him), and neglecting to follow up are some of the most prevalent reasons for failures in order giving.<sup>22</sup>

Employees are more likely to resent the way an unpopular order is given than the order itself. Persuasion is much more effective than coercion in obtaining acceptance by those workers affected. The supervisor should consider the time and place in addition to the manner in which orders are given to obtain

<sup>22</sup>See Chapter 6 for a detailed discussion of interpersonal communications. Barriers to effective communications and means of overcoming such barriers are discussed at length.

best results. They may be direct commands, they may be framed as requests, they may be implied or suggestive, or they may consist of requests for volunteers.

The supervisor should designate one person to direct a task requiring group effort. This will provide for unity of command within the group and accountability for results. Obviously, sufficient authority must be given the person held accountable to enable him to accomplish the assignment as directed. In deciding the type of approach that should be used in giving orders, making assignments, and delegating appropriate authority in a given situation, the supervisor should consider such basics as the personality of the subordinate, how much close direction he needs to do the job, his competency, and his initiative.

### **Direct Commands**

Orders may best be given by command when emergent conditions require direct, prompt action. This method of giving orders may be indicated in dealing with the lazy, careless, indifferent, or irresponsible employee or the one who refuses or neglects to obey standard operating rules or fails to respond to suggestions or implied orders. When orders are given in the form of commands, they should be simple and direct. If they are hesitatingly given, they will usually be obeyed in a like manner.

### **Requests**

Most orders should be framed as requests. Employees will often resent an authoritarian, dictatorial method. The capable, conscientious, responsible subordinate usually requires nothing more than a request. He will construe it as an order. Older employees usually respond similarly. Orders to sensitive, nervous, or easily offended persons are usually best framed as requests. Experience clearly indicates that cooperation is most readily obtained through requests rather than by commands. Cooperation cannot be demanded. It must be won. The process of achieving it by demand will likely become a frustrating experience for the supervisor because his demands will be construed as ultimatums. If he does not follow up to ensure that they are being complied with, his authority is weakened. Obviously, the supervisor should make requests to others of equal rank or status instead of making demands if he expects to gain their cooperation.

### **Implied or Suggestive Orders**

Implied or suggestive directives can be employed to good effect with the reliable employee who readily assumes responsibility for a task. They are also useful in developing the initiative of subordinates since they allow considerable latitude

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The supervisor will express the degree of confidence he has in his subordinates by the amount of control he wishes to retain over their efforts. The amount of latitude he gives them will depend upon their reliability and capabilities and upon the nature of the assignment. The amount of confidence he has in them may be indicated by his instructions to them: for example, "Do what you think needs to be done, then let me know what you did"; or "Keep me informed about what you do"; or "Let's talk about what you decide"; or "Clear with me before you do anything"; or "Don't do anything without discussing it with me beforehand"; or "I'll make the decision."

Orders to inexperienced or unreliable employees should be given in a more direct manner than by suggestion or implication. The inexperienced employee will often fail to draw the intended inference or make the proper deduction from an implied order. The unreliable employee will often draw the conclusion that is most convenient or desirable for him. Implied orders are often abstract and deprive the supervisor of a follow-up tool since, if orders are subject to more than one reasonable interpretation, they are usually unenforceable.

### Requests for Volunteers

Occasionally, a supervisor will call for volunteers to perform a dangerous or disagreeable assignment which he cannot or should not perform himself. The call for volunteers should be used with care so that it will not become a simple expedient for escaping the responsibility of making assignments or issuing orders which are in the best interests of the organization. Neither should the supervisor call for volunteers to perform a task that he himself should perform merely because he wishes to shed his responsibility, because he considers the job beneath him, or because it involves a distasteful act.

### Communicating Orders

If orders are indirectly given, they will tend to strengthen ideas already present. If they are positive, they are likely to be more effective than if made in a negative vein.<sup>23</sup> For example, "Let's increase our selective enforcement efforts" might result in a better response than "You're not being very selective in your enforcement."

*Verbal orders* are usually satisfactory for simple tasks, especially if they have been performed before, and in emergency situations. As with many communications, a verbal order can be easily misunderstood, as can the intent of the person giving it. Details can be easily forgotten. Because of these factors, it is

<sup>23</sup>Hollingsworth and Poffenberger, *Applied Psychology*, pp. 93-95.

sometimes difficult to hold anyone accountable for failures in giving or carrying out a directive.

When other than a simple order is given, the person giving it should have it "played back" so that any misunderstandings that have resulted in the communication process can be clarified. It cannot be safely assumed that the absence of questions means that understanding has taken place.

*Written orders* should be used in situations where complex operations or numerous persons are affected to assure that all receive the same message. Such orders facilitate systematic follow-up and provide a basis for attaching accountability for failures.

The employee with strong qualities of independence usually knows what his job requires and how to do it. He is likely to be more responsive if he is assigned a task in broad terms and is allowed to use his ingenuity and initiative in performing the details.

The more dependent workers are more likely to prefer and depend upon more concrete and detailed assignments rather than to decide for themselves what needs to be done and how to do it.

### Following Up Orders

The supervisor surrenders his authority little by little when he fails to follow up his orders to assure that they have been carried out. When a subordinate is directed to complete a task by a certain time, he should be required to comply as instructed. Notations regarding deadlines should be made by the supervisor on his desk calendar, pad, or notebook to remind him of the time he has designated for completion of an assigned task.

## ■ DECISION MAKING

One of the most frequent functions the supervisor is called upon to perform is that of decision making. It is imperative that he develop his ability to draw conclusions from facts at hand and stick to a decision unless, of course, it is manifestly improper. Even if he occasionally makes the wrong decision, the fact that he has taken positive action when action is indicated is usually better than if he had taken none at all. Decisiveness has a stabilizing influence upon subordinates. Indecisiveness is easily perceived. It tends to destroy confidence and lower respect. Ultimately, performance is adversely affected.

The decision-making process involves several steps. First, there must be an awareness that a real problem exists. An appreciation of its ramifications, and a recognition of a need for a decision must be present. The proper answer to the wrong question is no solution to the real problem. To deal with the apparent problem without knowing that it is merely a symptom of the real one may result in an incorrect solution to the right problem or an inappropriate solution to the

wrong one. Second, facts must be obtained. Opinions of others may be needed as supportive data when subjective decisions are involved. Third, when sufficient data have been collected, they must be evaluated and analyzed. Reliability of the source of the data must be tested just as the facts themselves. Once the real problem has been identified, concentration can be directed toward the solution. Personal bias should be eliminated in the analysis. Fourth, alternative approaches leading to a logical conclusion should be decided upon and probable consequences of each should be weighed. Possible conflicts among those who are to implement the decision must be considered. This involves insight. The effect of each alternative upon the objective should be considered in determining the best course of action indicated by the facts at hand. Fifth, a decision must be selected from the alternative solutions. This involves value judgments in selecting the one that allows action to follow in carrying out the decision. Consideration should be given to the time and the setting in which the action is to be carried out and to the long-term results from taking one alternative over another. The pros and cons should be carefully considered and weighed. Sometimes, a secondary option for carrying out the mission might be necessary as a contingency measure in the event the primary decision is found to be unworkable or cannot be followed because of unforeseen circumstances. Sixth, the decision must then be communicated to those who must carry it out.

Appropriate follow-up should take place so that results of the decision may be checked and evaluated. This procedure may indicate the effect of the decision in changing attitudes, altering performance, improving morale, or revealing training needs.

## ■ DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

The making of decisions or the drawing of conclusions should not be based on snap judgments. The supervisor who jumps to a conclusion before knowing pertinent facts will find his conclusions more often wrong than right. Judgment of even the most ordinary of supervisors should be right more often than wrong if he is to survive as a leader. For example, the supervisor observing an employee sitting at a desk, leaning back, and gazing out of the window may draw any one of a number of conclusions from this observation alone. The odds are against the drawing of the correct one without additional facts. The person might be just resting; he might be thinking or planning; he could be out of work; he might be lazy; he might be daydreaming or bored; he might be observing someone or something; or, he might simply be attempting to resolve a personal or job problem.

The wise supervisor will recognize that one cause may affect behavior in many ways.<sup>24</sup> The employee troubled and worried over a serious personal

<sup>24</sup>See Chapter 8 for a discussion of frustration and aggressive reactions.

problem may have varied reactions. He may engage in daydreaming or fanciful imagination in attempting to escape from his problem. He may neglect his work or fail to follow safety rules. The quality of his work might decline. He may become overly sensitive to supervision. He may develop disagreeable habits or his relationships with others might deteriorate. His work might suffer by excessive tardiness or absences, or he may drink to allay his worry. Any one or all of these reactions may be set in motion by one causative factor. Such problems should be approached objectively. The real reason behind the behavior may not be apparent from the reason given. The supervisor should attempt to ascertain the true explanation rather than accept the proffered one for a particular type of behavior affecting a subordinate's performance.

### ■ MODERATION IN SUPERVISION

Oversupervision is perhaps the most common failing of inexperienced supervisors. It arises from their failure to delegate tasks, either because of a lack of confidence in their subordinates or a disinclination to relinquish what they think are their supervisory prerogatives. Then they take it upon themselves to do their subordinates' work, initiative is corroded and morale invariably suffers. They do not expect him to do their work and do not respect him for it when he does.<sup>25</sup>

As the supervisor's responsibilities do not permit him to be constantly on hand to help, he must train his subordinates to do what has to be done, then rely upon them to do it. If the employee is capable of performing his assigned task, he should be allowed to do so without the supervisor standing over him checking on every detail. If he cannot be trained to do the task properly, he should be assigned to another. Oversupervision, often called "snoopervision," causes loss of respect for the supervisor, creates suspicions in the minds of employees, fosters rumors, and arouses resentment. Judicious contact between the supervisor and his subordinates is welcomed by them. His presence when he is needed and the lending of a willing ear to their problems will tend to give them a feeling of security and confidence and a sense of direction.

The effective supervisor will soon learn how much attention each employee needs and direct attention to him accordingly. Even the most efficient employees want some attention to give them some assurance that their good services are not going unnoticed. If a field sergeant rides with each of his patrol units on occasion, his subordinates will soon learn to expect it and will look forward to an opportunity to show their capabilities. They will not resent his presence if his supervision has been judicious, but they will feel neglected if others receive more attention than they do.

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<sup>25</sup>William Foote Whyte, *Men at Work* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1974), p. 387.

## ■ FRATERNIZATION

There is always room for forthright friendships between supervisors and their subordinates. The fact that one has been promoted to a higher position, especially when the organization promotes from within, should not mean that old friendships must be severed. While the new supervisor must always remember where he came from, he must recognize that he is no longer a member of his former group and that the nature of his official relationships with those who are his friends and peers has forever changed! Certainly, the friendship with subordinates will continue after the individual's promotion to supervisor, but the relationships will also be changed. The extent of this friendship will vary among individuals. Friendship alone should not be allowed to become the basis for preferential treatment, however. Formal relationships should be dignified but warm, friendly, and democratic—never boorish. Overfamiliarity and the taking of unjustified liberties by subordinates, purely because of friendship, should be discouraged because they tend to corrupt respect for authority, especially when unrestrained familiarity takes place in the presence of other subordinates. When such conduct occurs between a supervisor of one sex and a subordinate of another, the results are often particularly devastating to the supervisor's position of leadership and to the morale of the organization.

Status distinctions between the first-line supervisor and his subordinates should not be allowed to become so great that he gives them the impression that he is an entirely different species. They will resent a patronizing attitude, and it will soon cause effective communications to break down between them.<sup>26</sup>

## ■ SETTING AN EXAMPLE

The respected leader will be imitated—consciously or unconsciously—by those he leads. He will have a valuable tool at his disposal if he sets the right example by the attitude he displays, by his conduct, by the relationships he maintains with others, and by his appearance. Rigid adherence to the requirements of good taste and convention, good breeding and behavior, without pomposity, are marks of a good leader.

He will hardly be in the best position to take remedial action against others if his own conduct is not above reproach. They will look to him to set the standard of conduct by his own demeanor. Upon it will be based much of their respect and support for him.

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<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*

## ■ WOMEN EMPLOYEES

Supervisors, administrators, and organizational policy must recognize that women are legally and morally entitled to the same opportunities and considerations in the position for which they were employed as are men. Both are equally accountable for their performance and behavior. The same basic principles and techniques of supervision apply to both.

Women are being hired in increasing numbers to perform services as civilian members of the force and as sworn officers to perform field tasks. Accordingly, many women are attaining supervisory positions. Their effectiveness, like that of men, will depend upon whether they possess those characteristics leaders must have and how well they apply the tenets of leadership in their supervisory capacities.

## ■ AVOIDANCE OF GENDER BIAS—HARASSMENT

All supervisors must exercise exceptional common-sense and introspection in their relationships with subordinates, especially with those of the opposite sex. *Harassment* can take many forms and must be meticulously avoided. It is destructive of morale and needlessly embarrassing to the organization. It is perceived by those subjected to it as an act or series of acts which cause persistent mental distress or worry. Some of it is illegal and might subject the accused to both criminal and civil liability and the organization to civil litigation.

There are a multitude of acts, real or imagined, that might give rise to charges of harassment; and, in the interest of good supervisory practices, improprieties should be carefully guarded against by supervisors in their relationships with subordinates. The most common acts that are alleged as a basis for charges of harassment include:

- Unjust favoritism
- Improper advances, with sexual overtones, involving unwanted physical contact, improper verbal or body language
- Rude or discourteous language
- Deprivation of entitlements, such as in assignments, promotions, work conditions, or employee welfare
- Unfair evaluations
- Demotions
- Deprivation of merit salary increases
- Discharge
- Salary reductions
- Any acts that might be perceived as having created a hostile environment

## ■ SYMPTOMS OF LEADERSHIP FAILURE

There are many symptoms of leadership failure. The appearance of selfishness, suspicion, envy, failure to give credit, hypercriticism, and arbitrariness will usually denote weaknesses, if not downright failure, of an individual as a leader. When these characteristics are present in a marked degree in a supervisor, he is not fit to direct and control others.

Leadership fails more often because it is not provided when it is most needed than because the techniques are flawed.<sup>27</sup> If the level of discipline in an organization is low, if its standards of conduct and performance leave much to be desired, if the organization is riddled with disloyalty, mistrust, and self-interest, its leaders have failed. The failures will inevitably result in reduced productivity, low morale, and poor organizational spirit.

Such failures are often as much a direct result of a supervisor's incapacity to lead as they are a failure of management to train him once he is selected for the position. If it is the former, selection procedures have been faulty. If the latter, the organization has failed.

The mere fact that a person selected for a supervisory position has been a competent, skilled individual producer is no guarantee that he will become a successful leader. He may fail because, as a supervisor, he cannot manage people, he has trouble maintaining effective relationships with subordinates, or he has not developed an ability to delegate tasks well, coordinate the activities of those working for him, or follow up on their performance and take appropriate remedial action when they fail.

## ■ SUMMARY

Organizational effectiveness is largely dependent upon the degree to which supervisors skillfully apply sound principles of leadership to everyday operations. Some supervisors fail in their primary task of directing, leading, and controlling others because they have not been able to apply these principles to their particular position. Some have been discouraged in doing so by superiors who themselves have failed to realize that the scientific techniques of leadership and supervision are, in the long run, more effective than many of the stereotyped, ineffective practices to which they have been exposed.

True leadership status can be earned by any reasonably intelligent individual if he devotes himself to the development of the traits which a leader must have. He does not gain this status from the award of stripes or bars on his uniform. The only real authority he has is that which is granted him by his

<sup>27</sup>Philip Selznick, *Leadership in Administration: A Sociological Interpretation* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 26-27.

subordinates. The best leaders have been the best subordinates since an individual cannot order and direct others until he has learned to receive and follow orders himself.

There is no single leader type, although most have certain common traits, among which are friendliness, moral and physical courage, personal integrity and honor, insight, a strong desire for truth, a desire to teach, and the ability to listen. No one trait can be isolated from the others since they all relate to the total character of the leader and all are interrelated.

Perhaps the single function that best marks the good leader is his ability to maintain a high level of discipline, morale, and esprit de corps. These conditions are brought about by the application of common sense and an understanding of the fundamentals of good supervisory practices. These can be most effectively related to his management activities if he has some practical knowledge of the psychological factors affecting human behavior.

Nowhere are these psychological factors more important than in the giving of orders. The supervisor should recognize that the manner of giving an unpopular order is often more resented than the order itself. If it is framed as a request, it will most often be accepted and carried out without resentment. In some instances when urgent conditions exist, orders must be given as direct commands because prompt action is needed. Implied or suggestive orders may be used effectively with reliable, experienced employees. They should not ordinarily be used with the inexperienced or undependable worker. On occasion, the supervisor will call for volunteers to perform dangerous or disagreeable tasks which he cannot or should not perform himself. When he uses this form of order-giving, he must exercise care that it does not become a means of escaping a disagreeable job which is properly his.

Order-giving involves many complex communication processes. The leader's manner, his gestures and inflections, and the time and place in which the order is given will affect the reactions of his subordinates to it. He should avoid uncertain or vacillating language because uncertainty will often be interpreted as indecision.

Immoderate, vulgar, or indecent language should be scrupulously avoided, as should sarcastic remarks in dealings with subordinates. These will only alienate them and others, who are quick to interpret such conduct as rudeness and ill breeding.

A good leader will criticize when necessary but only after he has obtained all facts upon which he has based his criticism. He will do so only in private, with rare exceptions. Whenever possible, he will praise an employee publicly where credit or recognition is earned. He will do so sincerely because insincere praise or that given grudgingly is seldom appreciated.

Good human relations practices should be followed at all times; but in so doing, the supervisor must take pains to avoid becoming so concerned with the "sweetness and light" or the "kid glove" principles that he is afraid to criticize

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when he is dissatisfied with inferior performance or to punish when punitive action is necessary. He will strike a happy balance by being human and compassionate where he can and firm when he has to be.

The most effective supervisor will motivate his subordinates through a system of positive incentives which tend to satisfy their individual needs. He will provide appropriate recognition when it is deserved and praise when it is merited, an opportunity for personal development, challenging work, and fair treatment; but will avoid as far as possible those negative factors that induce performance through fear and intimidation.

The enlightened supervisor will avoid applying two different standards in supervising men and women. He must recognize that both are legally and morally entitled to the same opportunities and considerations in the positions for which they were employed and are accountable alike for their performance and behavior. He will use a high degree of common sense in his relationships with women employees because they are quick to sense when the male supervisor is showing too much personal interest in one of them. They will be quick to suspect him of ulterior motives or accuse him of partiality. Ordinarily, he will apply the same general principles of supervision to women employees as to males; but he will recognize that women are sometimes more sensitive to criticism, somewhat more inclined to become emotionally involved in their jobs, and generally more appreciative than are men of his efforts to improve the physical aspects of the job environment.

## ■ REVIEW

### *Questions*

1. Why do supervisors often resist leadership training?
2. List three types of leaders and discuss the characteristics of each.
3. Define command presence and discuss how it affects leadership.
4. Discuss the principal characteristics of good leaders.
5. What are the objectives of good human relations?
6. What are the basic principles of commending and criticizing others?
7. What are the most prevalent reasons for failures in order-giving?
8. List and discuss four methods of giving orders.
9. Discuss the steps involved in decision-making.
10. Discuss how oversupervision occurs and the hazards that result from it.
11. Explain how the supervision of women employees sometimes differs from that of male workers.