

# **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, & 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** to constructive criticism.
- 6) Have discussions about supervisee's **Professional Development/ Career Goals.**
- 7) Attend to supervisee's **Self-Care** (strategies for preventing burnout).
- 8) Promote **Hope about the youth and families** we serve. Educate supervisees about the many reasons for hope (e.g., maturation of the brain's prefrontal cortex; neuroplasticity; low lifetime prevalence rate of delinquent behaviors; resiliency research; post-traumatic growth processes).
- 9) 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 effectiveness and increases the risk of burnout.
- 10) Educate supervisee's about **Key Policies and Procedures.**
- 11) Communicate **Clear & Consistent Expectations** about job performance.
- 12) Hold supervisees accountable to job expectations and **utilize Progressive Discipline to address problem behaviors/ actions and document well** (Note: Ignoring supervisee's problem behaviors leads to bad outcomes).
- 13) Conduct **Quality Assurance checks** to ensure compliance with job duties.
- 14) Educate supervisees about the agency's **Foundational Principles**- Ensure that supervisees understand the "big picture" (e.g., strengths-based, relationship-based, skills-based, holistic principles).
- 15) Educate about **Character Qualities** required for effective, competent supervisees/ staff (e.g., Positive, Kind; Optimistic; Honest; Integrity; Interpersonally-skilled; good Emotional Regulation; strong Work Ethic; Humble; Team Player; Open to Learning from others and learning from their own mistakes).
- 16) 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).
- 17) Empower supervisees. Identify their passions & **identify areas they can Champion.**
- 18) Do NOT micro-manage.
- 19) Do NOT expect perfection, but **DO expect responsiveness to feedback.**
- 20) Use **Mistakes as 'Teachable Moments'**