

Front Line Supervision

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Today's Objectives

- Understand what defines a supervisor
- Understand what the key measurements of effective supervision are
- Understand how to individually handle stress and conflict

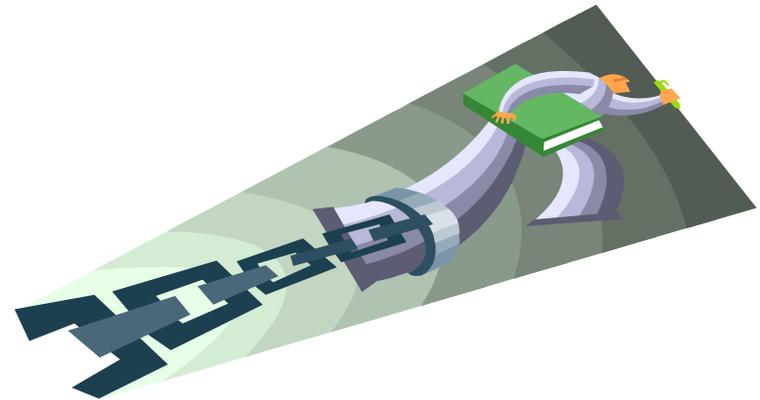
What is Supervision?

- Supervision is the first level of management in an organization
- Supervisors usually don't do operative work
 - They see that it is accomplished through the effort of others



Who Are Supervisors?

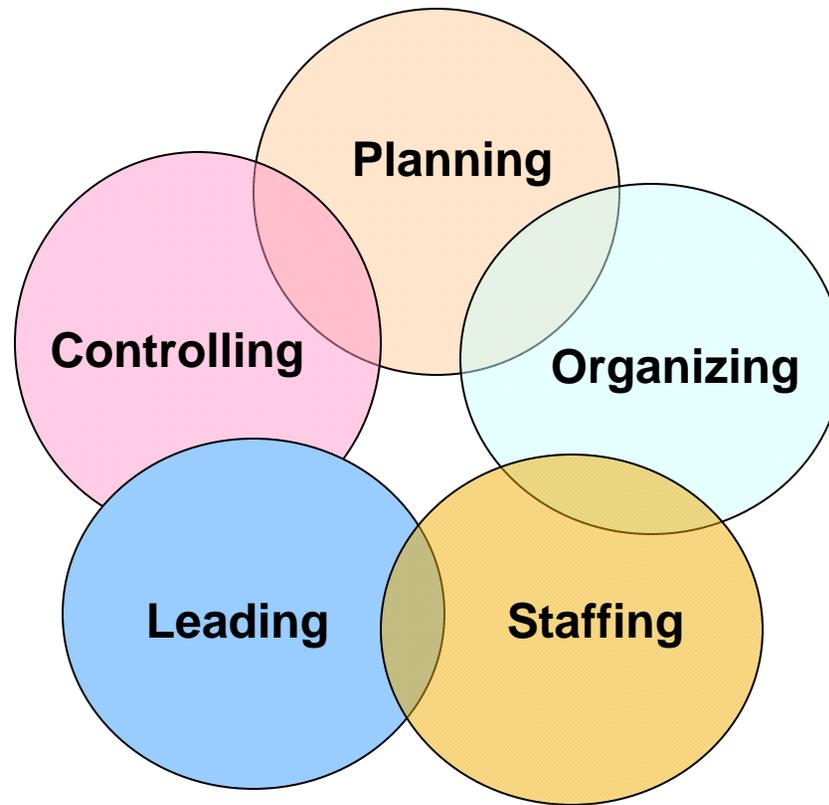
- A supervisor is a manager who serves as the link between:
 - Operative employees
 - All other managers



Basic Supervisory Tasks

- Making good decisions
- Communicating with people
- Making work assignments
- Planning & delegating
- Training & motivating
- Appraising performance
- Dealing with specialists in other departments

The Functions of Supervision



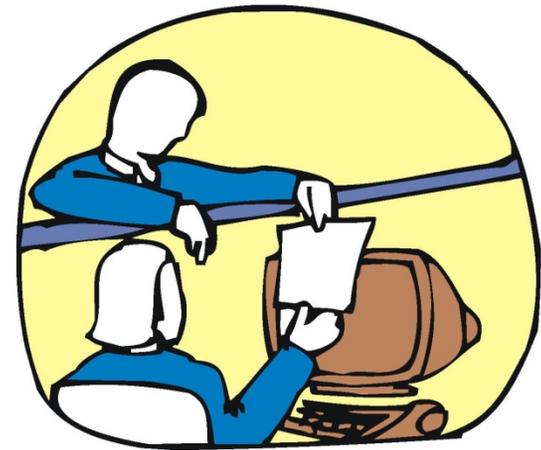
Planning

- Determining the:
 - Present situation
 - Objectives
 - Most effective way to attain the objectives
- Making plans for a group of people complicates the entire process



Organizing

- The supervisor receives work assignments from upper management, then:
 - Arranges the work
 - Distributes it among the employees

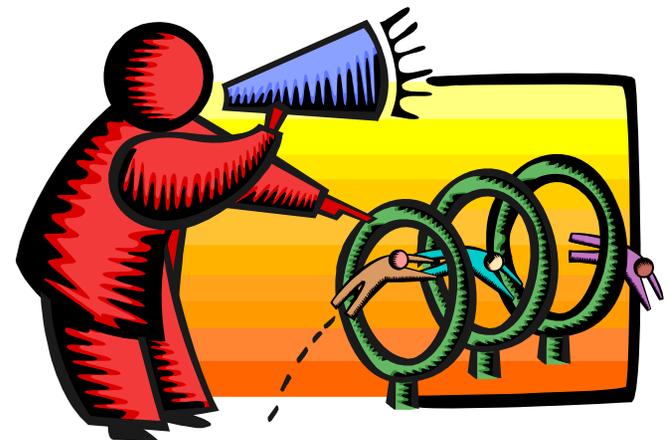


Staffing and Leading

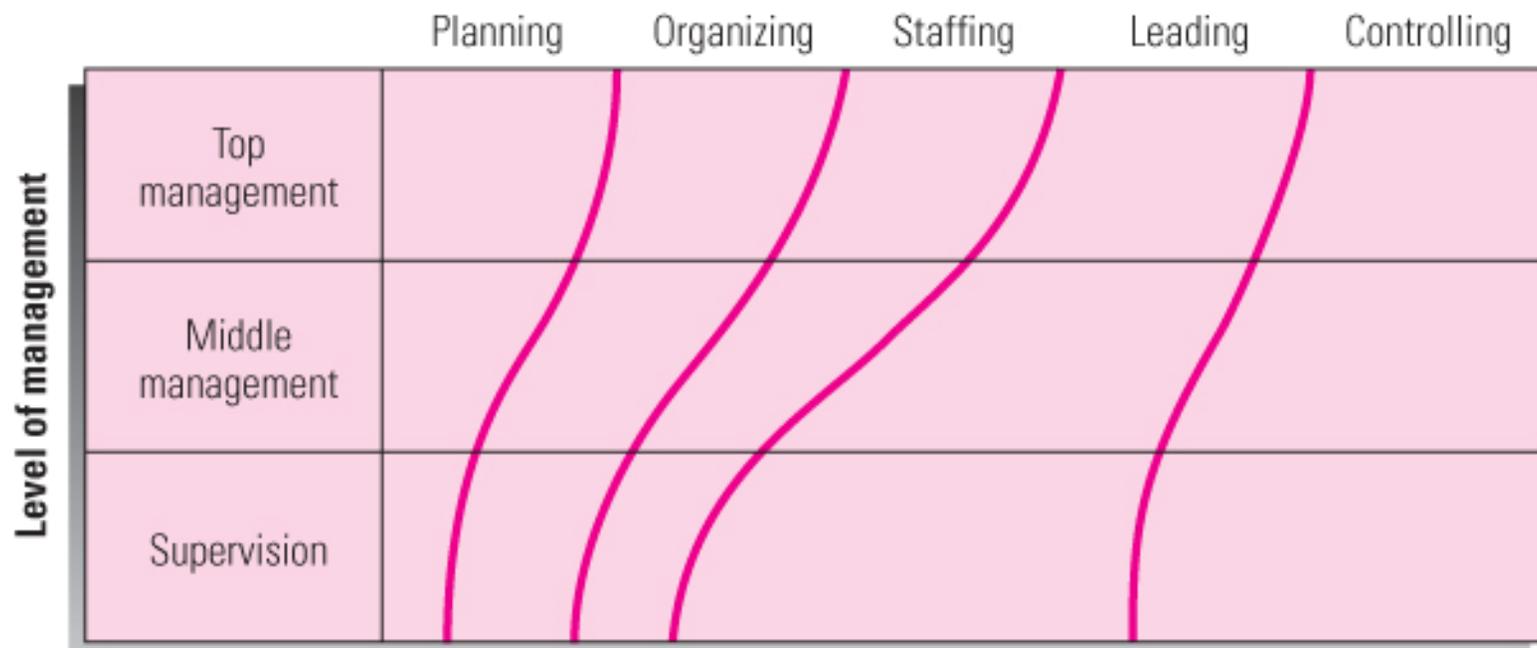
- Obtaining good people
- Developing them
- Directing their behavior toward accomplishment of work objectives
- Motivating them to accomplish objectives

Controlling

- Measuring actual performance against planned performance
- Taking any necessary corrective action

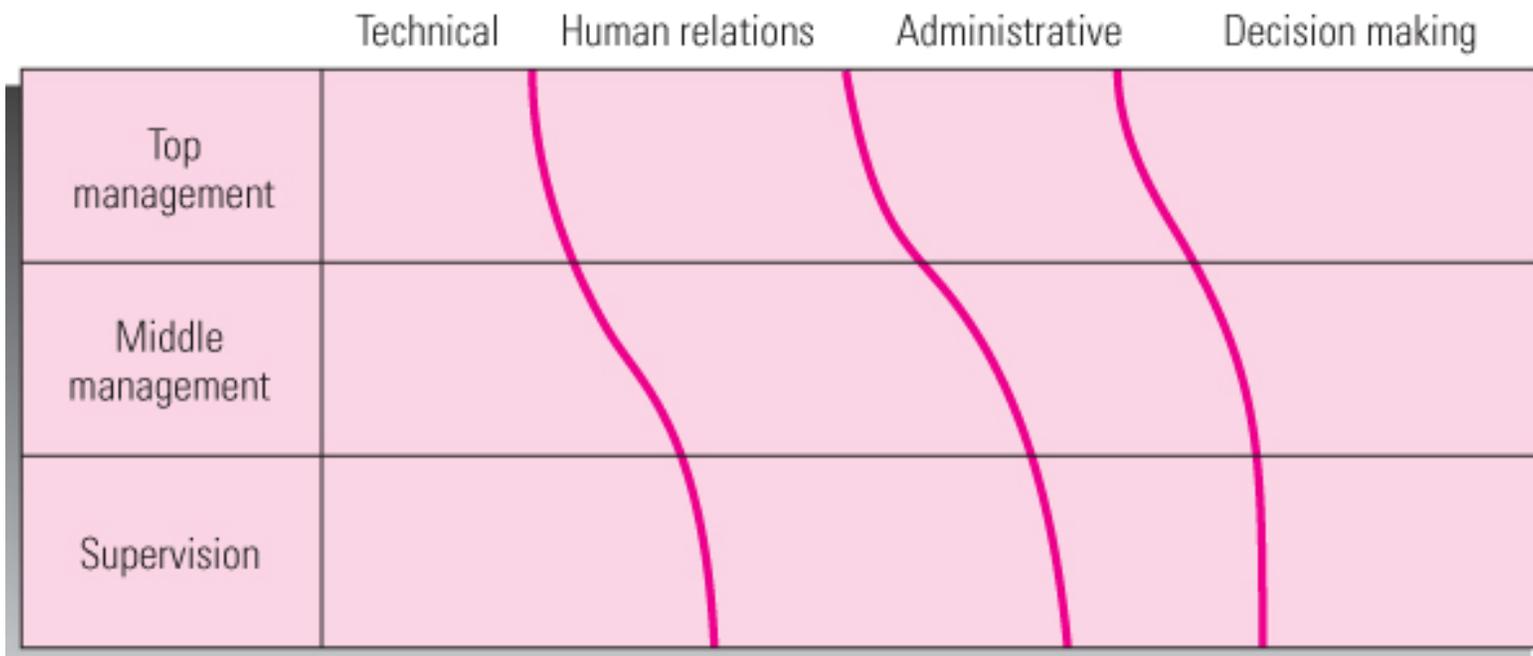


Time Spent on Mgmt Functions



Skills Required at Different Levels

- The mix of skills needed changes as one moves up the managerial ladder



Advanced Supervisory Skills

- **Technical** knowledge:
 - Machines, processes, production methods
- **Human relations** knowledge:
 - Human behavior, working well with people
- **Administrative** knowledge:
 - Understanding the organization and how it works
- **Decision making** and **problem solving**:
 - Analyzing information, reaching a decision

Decision Making vs. Problem Solving – Key Elements of a Supervisor's Responsibilities

- **Decision making**

- The process of choosing from among alternatives

- **Problem solving**

- Determining the appropriate responses or actions necessary to alleviate a problem
- Problem solving involves decision making, but not all decisions involve problems

Decision-Making

- The level & types of decisions made distinguish operative employees from supervisors
 - An operative employee is concerned with how decisions affect him/her individually
 - A supervisor must consider how decisions affect his/her employees & the organization
- A supervisor's decision-making ability contributes to the success or failure of the organization

Examples of Management Decisions

- **Expected (Anticipated) Decisions**

- New hire recommendations
- Approval of vacation requests

- **Unexpected (Unanticipated) Decisions**

- Employee requests next Friday off to attend a child's school event
- Three employees call in sick
- Deciding if an equipment malfunction should shut down operations

Problem Solving

- **Programmed decisions**
 - Are reached via an established or systematic procedure
 - The decision maker is familiar with the situation
 - Includes routine, repetitive decisions

Decision Making Vs Problem Solving

- **Nonprogrammed decisions**
 - Have little or no precedent
 - Relatively unstructured & require a more creative approach
 - More difficult to make than programmed decisions



Decision Traps to Avoid

- **Trap 1:** Making all decisions BIG decisions
- **Trap 2:** Creating crisis situations
- **Trap 3:** Failing to consult with others
- **Trap 4:** Never admitting a mistake

Decision Traps to Avoid

- **Trap 5:** Constantly regretting decisions
- **Trap 6:** Failing to utilize precedents & policies
- **Trap 7:** Failing to gather and/or examine available data
- **Trap 8:** Promising what cannot be delivered
- **Trap 9:** Delaying decisions too long

Group Decision-Making, AKA Brainstorming

- A group is presented with a problem
- Members present any & all potential solutions
- No criticisms are allowed
- After all ideas are suggested, they are evaluated
- Sessions should last 45 minutes to an hour
- The problem is not discussed prior to the session
- Most applicable to simple decision problems

Barriers to Organizational Creativity

- Fear of failure
- Premature criticism
- The supervisor's shadow
- Distractions & interruptions
- Protection of status quo

Barriers to Organizational Creativity

- Hierarchical idea filter
- Appropriated ideas
- Lack of support
- Excessive togetherness

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

- Alignment
- Planning/Problem Solving
- Communication
- Motivation
- Compliance

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

- **Alignment**

- Two elements to alignment:

- Aligning yourself to your new role
- Aligning your department to the organization

- Mistakes:

- Supervisors continue to perform in their old roles; perform old job & don't supervise
- Over-manage by micromanaging

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

- **Alignment**

- Common hurdles related to alignment:
 - Predecessor was not aligned
 - Department not comfortable with being held accountable
 - New supervisor does not transition from buddy to supervisor

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

■ Planning/Problem Solving

- New supervisors need to learn to plan:
 - **The work** -- What results do you intend to achieve, & what must you do to get those results?
 - **The schedule** -- How much time is required for each task & subtask? What needs to happen before something else can happen?
 - **The resources** -- How many people, what materials, how much, & when?

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

■ Communication

- *Communicating down* can be challenging for supervisors. Positive communications include:
 - Performance expectations
 - Performance feedback, plus and minus
 - Departmental and organizational goals and objectives
 - Change

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

■ Communication

- When *communicating up*, be sure to find out what type of information your bosses want, how they want it, & how often they want it
 - State objectives concisely and support them with facts
 - Show how the proposal is in the interest of manager
 - Ask if there are any questions
 - Make sure they agree

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

- **Communication**

- When *communicating across departments*, learn about them—what do they need from you & when & how do they need it?
- **Common hurdles to good communication:**
 - Previous low levels of trust in the department
 - Poor communication skills
 - Silos among departments

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

■ Motivation

- It's important to motivate yourself *and* to motivate others
- Think about what motivates you -- a "thank you," a "please," hearing praise about a job well done?
 - Most likely, those things will motivate your employees, too
- Ask yourself:
 - Do you walk your talk?
 - Do you treat people fairly and consistently?
 - Are you willing to do what you are asking other people to do?

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

- **Motivation**
- To motivate, consider:
 - Getting employees more involved
 - Providing cross-training
 - Delegating responsibilities
 - Identifying opportunities for advancement
 - Showing trust in employees

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

- **Motivation**
- *Strengths that help motivation:*
 - Comfort with employee involvement
 - Delegating ability
- *Weaknesses that will detract from motivation:*
 - Micromanagement
 - Dictatorial management
- *Common hurdles for new supervisors:*
 - Negaholics
 - Previous distrust of supervisor

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

■ Compliance

- Compliance is a very broad area & needs in-depth training
- Supervisors must be trained on discrimination, harassment, and compensation
- New supervisors need to know that their actions & inactions contribute to the level of liability an organization faces

Key Reasons for Supervisory Success

■ Compliance

- Supervisors face potential individual liability.
- New supervisors often make big mistakes in wage and hour issues
- Another significant failure is not documenting performance issues on an ongoing basis
 - When a string of performance appraisals say "meets expectations" with no comments, it's tough to prove poor performance

What Are Some Other Key Reasons for Supervisory Success?









Managing Stress & Conflict

- What are some of the causes of supervisor stress?
 - Changes in workplace demographics
 - Diversity issues
 - Frustrated & stressed employees
 - Workplace violence – potential & actual

Changes in Workplace Demographics

- Schwarzkopf Generation – Born before 1946
 - 6.5% of the workforce
- Baby Boomers – Born between 1946 and 1964
 - “Boomers,” born 1946 to 1953
 - “Generation Jones,” born 1954 to 1964
- Generation X – Born between 1964 and 1980
- Generation Y – Born between 1980 and 1995
 - Also known as Millennials or “iGens”

Understanding Who Boomers Are

- Embraced rock-n-roll – Elvis and the Beatles
- More liberal than their parents
- Although majority are religious, no close ties to churches
- Pursue individual freedoms

Understanding Who X'ers Are

- Increase in divorces
- First "Latch Key" Kids
- Increased educational opportunities
- End of the Cold War
- Beginning of the Computer and Internet Age

Understanding Who Y'ers Are

- Children of Boomers and Gen-Jones
- Drug and Alcohol Use Higher at Earlier Age
- Higher Expenses for Higher Education
- Live at Home Longer

Understanding Who Y'ers Are

- “Helicopter” Parents
- Organizations Feel they Lack Communication Skills
- Tapped into Technology

Working Gen-Yers

- “What’s the deal around here?”
- Recruiting campaign needs to answer the question, “What’s the Deal?”
- Get on board and up to speed fast!
- Summary: high maintenance; need to break things down into smaller tasks

Working Gen-Yers

- Expectations from Org Leaders
 - Working with a supervisor they respect, who supports them
 - What can they learn from the most important aspects of the job?
 - Expect more “face time” with supervisor and others in administration
 - 60% want daily interaction with their supervisor

Gen-Y Challenges

- Accustomed to direct, continuing supervision and guidance from parents, teachers, & others, they seek a similar relationship with their boss
- Professional behavior
- Confidentiality issues
- Critical thinking
- Give/receive constructive criticism

Bring Out the Best in Gen-Y

- Give them “scores” via immediate feedback as projects and tasks are completed.
- Keep the door open, but don't be a doormat. Supervisors should be friendly and fair, but should exercise clear authority.
- Give it to them straight. Millennials ask frequent questions and expect honest responses from their supervisors.

Bridge the Gaps

- Communicate, communicate, communicate!!
- Make sure everyone understands the larger mission
- Maximize every individual's uniqueness
- Create learn/teach plans so every employee with key knowledge, skill, & wisdom can share with other employees who need it

Diversity Issues

- Diversity cannot be limited to Western terms
- Differences go beyond race & language
- Values & customs



Diversity Opportunities and Challenges

- Move away from single employee mold
- Create policies that recognize & respond to individual needs
- Provide additional basic skills training
- Dedicate additional time to special-interest & advocacy groups
- Become more tolerant of behavior styles & viewpoints

Frustrated & Stressed Employees

- *"A little stress helps keep employees on their toes."*
- *"Excessive stress can disable employees."*
- Do you agree with these statements?

Frustrated & Stressed Employees

- There are many stressors over which supervisors have little or no control
- These include the powerful **internal** stressors:
 - Ambition
 - Materialism
 - Competitiveness

Frustrated & Stressed Employees

- There are many stressors over which supervisors have little or no control
- These include the powerful **external** stressors
 - Family problems
 - Commuting
 - Financial mismanagement
 - Midlife crisis.

Frustrated & Stressed Employees

- There are many stressors over which supervisors does have some control
 - Positive skills:
 - Planning, organizing, directing & controlling
 - Physical working conditions
 - Organizational policies
 - Compensation

Frustrated & Stressed Employees

- There are many stressors over which supervisors does have some control
 - Well-written job descriptions with performance standards
 - Communications with Intuitive Listening, Facilitative Behaviors
 - Orientations & training
 - Flexible leadership style

Frustrated & Stressed Employees

- What do you think the #1 employee stressor is?

Frustrated & Stressed Employees

- Best steps to handle stress include:
 - 1. Detect organizational stressors.
 - In counseling sessions, performance evaluations, or exit interviews, ask employees what stressors they experienced.
 - When a staff member puts in for a transfer, dig into the real reasons behind the request.
 - 2. Attack the stressors.
 - Use a problem-solving approach to attack those stressors that you can control.

Frustrated & Stressed Employees

- Best steps to handle stress include:
- 3. Look into other stress factors.
 - Explore ways in which you may be pushing yourself and others beyond each individual's stress threshold.
- 4. Apply more stress where needed.
 - Perhaps you are hindering productivity by not exerting enough pressure on yourself or on others.
 - If that's the case, it may be necessary to upgrade position descriptions and performance standards.
 - Or you may have to delegate more.

Frustrated & Stressed Employees

- Best steps to handle stress include:
- 5. Provide stress management seminars.
 - Invite speakers from the local professional community.
 - Other worthwhile pursuits include exercise, recreational activities, and wellness programs.
- 6. Build a stress management library.

Frustrated & Stressed Employees

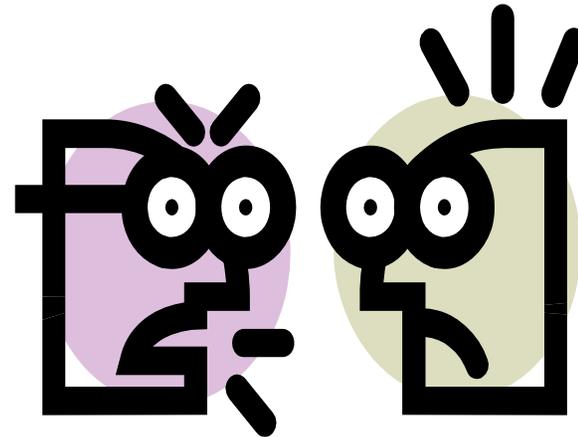
- Best steps to handle stress include:
- 7. Create a relaxation area.

Workplace Violence

- What is Workplace Violence?
 - Any act of violence including threats, placing a person in fear, or intimidation, which occurs in a place of business or organization
- Types of Workplace Violence:
 - Internal
 - External
 - Domestic

Workplace Violence

- Verbal Violence:
 - Threats
 - Harassment
 - Abuse
 - Intimidation
- Often signals more serious violence to come



Workplace Violence – Signs Usually Accompany a Threat

- A potentially violent person:
 - Is unusually argumentative
 - Has a problem with authority figures
 - Frequently blames others for his or her problems
 - Displays marked changes in work patterns like tardiness or absenteeism
 - Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
 - History of violence
 - Explosive outbursts of anger or rage without provocation
 - Resistance and over-reaction to changes in procedures
 - Repeated violations of company policies
 - Increase of unsolicited comments about firearms and other dangerous weapons
 - Escalation of domestic problems

Workplace Violence

- So what policies does Your Organization have for Workplace Violence?

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