Supervision At A Glance

-The central focus of supervision is the quality of practice offered by the supervisee to clients.

Kadushin’s model of supervision

Administrative – the promotion and maintenance of good standards of work, co-ordination of practice with policies of administration, the assurance of an efficient and smooth-running office;

Educational – the educational development of each individual worker on the staff in a manner calculated to evoke her fully to realize her possibilities of usefulness; and

Supportive – the maintenance of harmonious working relationships, the cultivation of espirt de corps.

Supervision performed as a Field Instructor should look differently than as a supervision of an employee. Practicum supervision is in the teacher-learner relationship, in which the learner grows and develops personally and professionally. Employment supervision emphasizes the supervision of the employee in the implementation of their duties for which he or she has been hired by the organization. Often the employee learns and grows and the supervisor becomes the mentor, but the primary mission is the delivery of social services by the employee (Birkenmaier, Berg-Weger 2007).

Putting the functions together

The primary foci of supervision

1. To provide a regular space for the supervisees to reflect upon the content and process of their work

2. To develop understanding and skills within the work

3. To receive information and another perspective concerning one’s work

4. To receive both content and process feedback

5. To be validated and supported both as a person and as a worker

6. To ensure that as a person and as a worker one is not left to carry unnecessarily difficulties, problems and projections alone

7. To have space to explore and express personal distress, restimulation, transference or counter-transference that may be brought up by the work

8. To plan and utilize their personal and professional resources better

9. To be pro-active rather than re-active

10. To ensure quality of work


A Suggested Format For Supervision Sessions

The following is an example of one format for an individual supervision session. This format needs to be adapted to both the needs of the setting and persons involved in the supervision session:

Preparation:

- Ensure that sessions are set in advance and occur at regular intervals (eg. Weekly, fortnightly etc.)
- Where possible avoid late afternoon sessions particularly Friday’s
- During this time you might read over notes from the last session and consider what this session may focus on.
- Notify reception that you do not want any interruptions and place a PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB sign on your door, so that when you close your door once the student arrives, you have reduced the likelihood of any interruptions.

THE SESSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Opening Question</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Establish the Supervisee’s Comfort</td>
<td>How are you?</td>
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<td>2. Clarify purpose/agenda</td>
<td>What would you like to discuss?</td>
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<td>3. Decide on a starting point</td>
<td>What shall we start with?</td>
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<td>4. Explore issues</td>
<td>How did you…?</td>
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<td>5. Imagine alternatives</td>
<td>What if you…?</td>
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<td>6. Focusing the supervisee</td>
<td>What now for you?</td>
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<td>7. Supervisory suggestions</td>
<td>Perhaps you could?</td>
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<td>8. Planning</td>
<td>You will…?</td>
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<td>9. Summarizing</td>
<td>Did we…?</td>
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<td>10. Set next session</td>
<td>When can we meet next?</td>
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Phase one highlights the importance of checking out how the student is prior to embarking on establishing the agenda and purpose of the session. Sometimes the best thing a supervisor can do is listen to a students concerns and this can take up most of the session. However you may want to check this out with the student shortly after their initial response to the How are you? (Morrison, 1993).

Clarifying the purpose of the session and setting the agenda this generally follow the student wishes. The main exception to this is when safety and ethical issues arise, and when there matters arise they should take priority.

Phases four to eight help the student move from their experience through to a new thought process through a reflective conversation with the supervisor.

Phase Nine checks out whether what you discussed was what the student wanted to discuss.

Phase Ten closes the session.

For your own learning you may wish to consider the following questions:

How do you prepare for sessions?
How do you structure your supervision sessions:
To what extent does this structure mirror the client-social worker session?