

Supportive Supervisor Behaviors: Quick Reference Guide

Types of support that you can provide to your employees

Work-Family & Work-Life Support

Creative Management

- Creatively problem solve how to simultaneously meet organizational needs and employee work-life conflicts
- Ask employees for input about how work can be carried out in a manner that doesn't conflict with personal needs
- Implement employees' suggestions (enhance engagement)
- Ask employees for input on areas where work can be carried out differently: more safely, remotely, flexibly, etc.

Emotional Support

- Show employees that they are cared for
- Consider their feelings
- Help them feel comfortable communicating with you
- Express support for employee success
- Talk with employees about their personal needs
- Follow up with employees on important personal events
- Show concern and interest for your employees

Daily Job and Personal Problem Solving

- Respond to employees' work-life needs on a daily basis
- Adjust work to accommodate employees' (personal) needs
- Ask what you can do to help employees with challenges
- Be receptive to employees' suggestions of how to schedule work around their (personal) needs

Model Healthy Work-Life Behaviors

- Demonstrate good ways to cope with work-life conflicts
- Share a story about how you juggled a work-life conflict
- Share your own experiences with new ways of organizing work tasks and priorities around family or personal needs

References:

Hammer, L. B., Truxillo, D. M., Bodner, T., Pytlovany, A. C., & Richman, A. (2019) Exploration of the impact of organisational context on a workplace safety and health intervention, *Work & Stress*, 33:2, 192-210.

Hammer, L. B., Kossek, E. K., Yragui, N., Bodner, T., & Hanson, G. (2009). Development and validation of a multidimensional measure of family supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSB). *Journal of Management*, 35, 837-856.

Safety Support

Safety Communication

- Encourage maintaining safe work environments
- Discuss safety practices with employees often
- Begin meetings discussing safety and encouraging employees to use proper equipment
- Encourage employees to discuss safety issues with you
- Demonstrate how to provide warnings about events that could change/ disrupt/ injure employees
- Set realistic safety goals and provide clear and measurable expectations of safety behaviors

Provide Resources

- Ask employees about equipment, tools, training or resource needs. For example:
 - Are they adequate and up-to-date?
 - Are they malfunctioning?
 - Do parts need to be replaced?
- Provide training, equipment, time, software, etc. that helps employees get their work done safely

Feedback/Reinforcement and Coaching

- Provide immediate praise for a good idea, work results, safe behavior
- Correct unsafe actions and behaviors
- Observe how individuals or teams are performing and provide guidance on how to be more efficient
- Inspect or review an employee's results and provide feedback
- Ask for feedback from your employees about your own strategies for supporting safe practices
- Teach an employee a technical skill or safe work strategy

Safety Role Modeling

- Make safety a #1 value in your work group
- Talk about safety being a priority of your own
- Discuss why safety is important to you
- Let your employees see you engaging in safe practices
- Wear appropriate equipment when visiting a jobsite
- Share what safe practices should look like



Safety & Health Improvement Program
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