



Human Service Credential in Leadership & Frontline Supervision

A Providers' Council Program

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Module 01: Introduction to Leadership and Frontline Supervision

This module provides an overview of the supervisor's role, specifically how the supervisor enhances staff relations using effective communication skills, encouraging growth and self-development, facilitating teamwork, employing conflict resolution skills, and providing adequate support to staff. You will identify your own leadership strengths and explore ways to build a positive working relationship with staff.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Define the frontline supervisor's role in a human services agency.
2. Know the importance of your organization's mission and vision.
3. Understand the standards for professionalism in the workplace and the importance of professional boundaries in a supervisory relationship.
4. Describe methods for identifying individual leadership strengths.
5. Recognize the unique challenges of shifting from a peer to a supervisory relationship.



Module 02: Communication

The act of communicating involves at least two people: the sender of a message, and the receiver of a message. People communicate through words, behaviors, gestures, facial expressions, pictures, and signs. Communication is an essential tool in supervision. Frontline

supervisors must know how to effectively communicate with their staff as well as other people within and outside their agencies.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Define communication and communication styles.
2. Describe effective communication strategies and how they can be applied in the agency.
3. Show how supervisors communicate to build and maintain relationships with staff.
4. Compare the ways a supervisor communicates versus how a Direct Support Professional communicates.

Module 03: Engagement, Motivation and Teamwork

Empowering others is a crucial aspect of your role as frontline supervisor. You can empower others by motivating, setting an example, and developing and maintaining effective teams. This module will look at these tools and how they can help you supervise productive and satisfied staff.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Empower staff to work with appropriate levels of independence and confidence.
2. Use role modeling to empower staff.
3. Motivate your workforce in a relevant and meaningful way.
4. Recognize the stages of group development and the importance of a fully functional team.



Module 04: Performance and Personnel Management

The frontline supervisor must understand the importance and value of managing staff effectively. This module will discuss the tools and skills necessary for managing personnel, including developing performance goals, assessing employee skills to succeed, building good management practices into staff interactions, and using meetings as productive management tools.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Define the role and responsibilities of the frontline supervisor in managing personnel.
2. Describe the steps for using formal and informal assessments to identify skill development needs.
3. Identify ways to facilitate teamwork and coach staff to participate in meetings.
4. Demonstrate a basic understanding of employment law.

Module 05: Documentation and Rule Compliance

Documentation is an important aspect of the supervisory responsibility. Knowing what to document, how to document it clearly and without bias, and overseeing others' documentation is critical to the success of the services delivered.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. List best practices in documentation and the next steps to take in order to apply them at your organization.
2. Describe current state licensing rules and regulations, agency policies and practices, and protection of consumer rights and methods for relaying this information to staff.
3. Comprehend the purpose and importance of documentation and its legal implications.
4. Understand the negative effects of language in documentation and ways to reduce stigma and discrimination in written materials.
5. List steps for providing staff with guidance and feedback on neutral writing.



Module 06: Program Planning, Implementation, and Fiscal Responsibility

Program planning and monitoring supports functions and activities within your agency and ensures programs are mission-driven, outcome-focused, effective, and efficient.

Current programs and new initiatives should be the result of planning activities, which clearly state program goals and objectives, expected program activities, and identified performance measures that track intended outcomes for individuals receiving services.

Frontline supervisors have a fiscal responsibility to individuals receiving services, staff and vendors delivering services, and the agency. To be fiscally responsible, you need to know about the budget process, the elements of a budget, how decisions are made, and who is responsible. Understanding consequences and being held accountable for one's decision are important aspects of being fiscally responsible. Good financial management is a vital part of good supervision.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Describe the program planning and monitoring requirements as they relate to individual goals and outcomes with consumers.
2. Understand the role and responsibilities of the frontline supervisor in stakeholder meetings.
3. Identify the steps in monitoring, documenting, and reporting progress toward meeting outcomes.
4. Define fiscal responsibility.
5. List ways of ensuring fiscal responsibility and management by understanding your role in managing your program's budget.
6. Name strategies for making sound budgetary decisions and understand the implications of decisions on programs and services.



Module 07: Training and Staff Development Activities

Promoting and managing the orientation needs for new employees and the ongoing staff development needs for current employees are important responsibilities of the frontline supervisor.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Identify the components of training programs that successfully engage new employees and bring them onto the team through the onboarding process.
2. Oversee the ongoing skill development of employees.
3. Evaluate training and staff development activities.
4. Coordinate direct support professional and in-service training by arranging training and in-service sessions and maintaining training records.
5. Recognize career and educational needs of staff and methods for mobilizing the resources they need to reach their goals.

Module 08: Advocacy

About this course: Frontline supervisors have the responsibility and opportunity to advocate for staff, for services that support individuals, and for themselves. Recognizing your own advocacy skills and experience, teaching others how to be effective advocates, and managing change that effective advocacy brings, are all essential for effective supervision.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Advocate for programmatic needs with senior staff.
2. Know teaching techniques for promoting advocacy skills among staff.
3. See advocacy as an important leadership skill that you can use to support staff and the individuals they serve.
4. Describe the diverse challenges facing employees and effective advocacy strategies for overcoming such challenges.
5. List ways to advocate for clients, staff and agency services to the external community through public relations by educating community members, advocating for the rights and responsibilities of individuals, and recruiting volunteers.



Module 09: Crisis Response and Conflict Management

As a frontline supervisor, you need to know how to respond to, and support your staff through, a crisis situation. You must understand and value the debriefing process and learn how to supervise others during times of conflict. Crisis as discussed in this module will focus on interactions between staff members and between staff and individuals.

The content in this module is informational only. Specific policies and procedures vary from agency to agency. Always follow your organization's requirements when handling crises and conflicts. Ask your supervisor for guidance, specific instructions, and further training.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Define the frontline supervisor's role and responsibilities during times of crisis.
2. Understand the difference between a conflict and a crisis and techniques for minimizing the escalation of a conflict to a crisis.
3. Describe an effective crisis response by applying critical thinking skills.
4. Identify crisis prevention, intervention, and resolution techniques.
5. Match appropriate techniques to particular circumstances and individuals.

Module 10: Wellness

Being a frontline supervisor has become more challenging and complex. Finding a sense of personal well-being, effectively managing stress and taking control of your time are more important skills than ever. Applying and modeling those strategies for others and maintaining a healthy lifestyle help to keep your staff happy, healthy and motivated.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Recognize the importance of personal wellness and the supervisor's role in modelling personal wellness.
2. Identify practical stress and time management techniques to avoid burnout.
3. Develop a personal wellness plan.
4. Describe strategies for supervising a work environment that is cognizant of self-care and wellness.



Module 11: Introduction to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Frontline Supervisors

This course will give you an overview of diversity, equity, and inclusion, or DEI, and their importance to the employee experience in the workplace. This module also provides foundational knowledge and understanding of DEI practices that will be helpful in supporting your leadership.

We recommend that you have materials for note-taking purposes accessible as you go through this module.

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Define diversity, equity and inclusion.
2. Explain the employee experience.
3. Describe how DEI impacts the workplace, and
4. Identify opportunities to include and promote DEI in your workplace.