

SOS POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

MBA HRD 402

SUBJECT NAME: MANPOWER POLICY AND PLANNING

UNIT-V

TOPIC NAME: MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE SUPERVISION

SUPERVISION

Everything you need to know about supervision. Supervision is direction, guidance and control of working force with a view to see that they are working according to plan and are keeping time schedule. Further; they are getting all possible help in accomplishing their assigned work.

Supervision is a Latin Word. Super means ‘from the above’ and vision means ‘to see’. In ordinary sense of the term, supervision means overseeing the activities of others.

In management supervision means “Overseeing the subordinates at work with authority and with an aim to guide the employees, if he is doing wrong.”

SUPERVISION – MEANING

‘Supervision’ comprises two words, namely ‘super’, that is, superior or extra, and ‘vision’, that is, sight or perspective. The literal meaning of the term ‘supervision’ is to ‘oversee’ or ‘to inspect the work of other persons’. Thus, ‘supervision’ refers to an act by which any person inspects or supervises the work of other people, that is, whether they are working properly or not.

In business organizations, there are ‘supervisors’ and ‘subordinates’. According to **M. S. Vitoles**, supervision refers to the direct, immediate guidance and control of subordinates in the performance of their jobs. Thus, the activity of supervision is concerned with the direction, guidance, control and

superintendence of the subordinates. A supervisor performs these tasks. R. C. Allan has called it a 'responsibility job', which is above 'work job'.

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Overseeing is to be done at all levels of management from top to bottom; Lower-level management or first-line supervisors oversee the work of operative staff, while middle and top management remain busy in overseeing the work of their subordinate management members. But in the ordinary sense of the word, supervision is concerned with directing and guiding non-management members of the organization.

Supervision – Definitions Propounded by Toft Hartley Act, Vitiates, Davis and G.R. Terry

According to the Toft Hartley Act, 1947 (USA), 'Supervisors are those having authority to exercise independent judgments in hiring, discharging, disciplining, rewarding and taking other actions of a similar nature with respect to employees'.

We can divide the definitions of supervision into three categories depending on the emphasis these have laid on a particular aspect:

1. From the point of view of emphasis on maximizing production – The definition following under this category associates supervision with output, that

is, because of their skills, expertise and experience etc., supervisors help their subordinates to improve their output in terms of both quantity and quality.

Thus, supervision implies guiding and looking after the work of the subordinates so as to ensure that the work is being done according to the norms laid down for the purpose. In this way, the primary objective of a supervisor is to help in getting the production maximized both quality- and quantity-wise.

2. From the point of view of emphasis on workers' performance and human relations aspect – In this category, we include those definitions that lay emphasis on workers' performance and human relations aspect, and which accept the worker as a part of the social system. Thus, according to this view, supervision is the process by which a supervisor helps the supervisee to adjust to his/her job, to develop team spirit and to assume even greater responsibility.

3. From the point of view of emphasis on the development of the personality of the worker – In this category are included those definitions that lay emphasis on the development of personality of the worker. According to the experts holding this view, supervision is the act of 'guiding the workers to develop their self in the best possible manner'.

In short, we can say that supervision involves motivating, guiding, inspecting, superintending, developing, coordinating and controlling the subordinates.

According to Vitiates – "Supervision refers to the direct and immediate guidance and control of subordinates in the performance of their task." Thus, the supervision is concerned with three main functions of management, i.e., direction, immediate guidance and control with a view —

(1) To see, they are working, according to plans, policies, programs, instructions and the time schedule,

(2) To guide them at the work if they are doing something inconsistent to directions given and need help so as to let them able to accomplish their assigned task, and

(3) To give them directions to get the work done, if necessary.

SUPERVISION – SIGNIFICANCE

Supervision is primarily concerned with overseeing or watching the performance of workers under his control. He plays an important role in the management set up. He is the person who is directly connected with the workers and acts as a vital link between the management and workers.

The significance of supervision can be explained as follows:

1. Issue of Orders and Instructions:

The workers require guidance of supervisor at every step. He clears their doubts and tells them the proper method of doing a job. A sub-ordinate can give better performance when he knows the work he is supposed to do.

2. Planning and Organizing the Work:

A superior acts as a planner and a guide for his sub-ordinates. A schedule of work is prepared so as to ensure an even and steady flow of work. The supervisor lays down production targets for the workers and determines the methods and procedures for doing the work.

3. It is Important at All Levels:

Supervision means overseeing and watching sub-ordinates. The time devoted by top management to supervision is only 20% whereas supervisor (or foreman or overseer or superintendent or section officer) devotes about 80% of his time to supervision. Top management

supervises managers whereas supervisor supervises workers. The supervision at the front line or firing line is most important since actual work is done at that level.

4. Vital Link between Workers and Management:

A supervisor is a representative of the management and a very important figure from workers point of view. He communicates the policies of the management to workers (downward communication) and also provides feed back to the management as to what is happening at the lowest level (upward communication).

5. Motivating Subordinates:

A supervisor is a leader at the lowest rung of management ladder. He serves as a friend, philosopher and guide to workers. He inspires team work and secures maximum co-operation from the employees. It is he who can help in getting optimum utilization of manpower.

6. Feedback to Workers:

A supervisor compares the actual performance of workers against the standards laid down and identifies weaknesses of workers and suggests corrective measures to overcome them. In this way, workers can improve their performance in future.

7. Proper Assignment of Work:

A supervisor makes systematic arrangement of activities and resources for his group. He assigns work to each worker and delegate's authority to workers. Workers feel frustrated when the work being done by them is not properly arranged. Some workers may sit idle whereas others may be overburdened if work is not properly assigned.

REQUISITE QUALITIES FOR EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION ARE:

1. Tact and discretion,
2. Social skills,
3. Technical competence,
4. Empathy,
5. Honesty,
6. Courage,
7. Self-confidence,
8. Communication skills,
9. Teaching and guiding ability and
10. Strong common sense.

The employee-centered supervisor in all functional areas of business as a first-line manager is expected to perform following activities to secure higher productivity with employee satisfaction-

- a. Organize work and allot assignments to each employee;
- b. Hear and redress grievances and complaints;
- c. Recommend promotions, transfer, pay increases;
- d. Enforce rules and regulations with equity and justice;
- e. Keep subordinates well informed;
- f. Keep subordinates posted about their progress;
- g. Give people tools and materials; and

- h. Planning, directing motivating and controlling responsibilities.
- i. Help his/her workers to develop their innate qualities to improve their performance
- j. Help his/her subordinates to adjust to their job requirements and to develop
- k. Make the workers loyal towards their organization
- l. Provide expertise, skills, knowledge and experience to make workers
- m. Encourage free communication
- n. Develop employee potential to an extent where they need no supervision
- o. Cooperate with other supervisors
- p. Prove a good link between the management and workers
- q. Solve personal problems of his/her subordinates to the extent possible
- r. Maintain discipline
- s. learn without fear and hesitation