



**INNOVEST SME**  
Accelerating Small Business

A photograph of four business professionals in a meeting. A woman on the left is smiling and holding a blue folder. A man in the center is smiling and looking at a laptop. A man on the right is leaning over the laptop, smiling. A woman on the far right is smiling and looking at the laptop. The background is a bright, modern office with large windows.

# Transitioning *from* Colleague *to* Supervisor

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*Good management  
consists in showing average  
people how to do the work  
of superior people.*

JOHN D. ROCKAFELLER

# PREFACE

Supervising others can be a tough job. Between managing your own time and projects, helping your team members solve problems and complete tasks, and helping other supervisors, your day can fill up before you know it. This book will help supervisors become more efficient. They will also become more proficient with delegating, managing time, setting goals and expectations (for themselves and others), providing feedback, resolving conflict, and administering discipline.

*Management is  
nothing more than  
motivating other people.*

LEE IACOCCA



# SETTING EXPECTATIONS

First things first: your employees need to know what you expect of them in order to succeed. In this chapter, we will work through the four steps of setting expectations.

1. Define the requirements.
2. Identify opportunities for improvement and growth.
3. Discuss the requirements.
4. Put it all in writing.

## DEFINING THE REQUIREMENTS

The first step is to define the requirements for the chosen task. In other words, what will success look like? You will want to develop your own set of criteria first, and then review it with the employee to get their valuable ideas and input.

Here are some questions to help you get started, focused around the five W's and the H.

- How does the task tie into organizational goals?

- Why are we doing this task?
- What are the key parts to the task?
- What steps will be involved?
- What should the end result look like?
- Who will the employee need to talk to?
- When should the employee report back?
- This framework can be used for individual tasks, projects, and even expectations about the position itself.

## **IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT AND GROWTH**

The best expectations are those that encourage the employee to grow and stretch. So, when setting expectations, you should explore all the possibilities and share them with your staff members.

Here is an example. Let's say you have some training tasks that you would love to delegate, but you're worried that the task would overwhelm anyone on your team. After all, many people aren't comfortable speaking in public.

However, during your expectations meeting, one of your senior staff members mentions that she is interested in learning more about training. This is the perfect opportunity to reduce your workload and to help your

employee develop her skills, not to mention increase her job satisfaction. Everyone wins!

Likewise, your employee may have hopes and dreams but may be unwilling to share them for fear of being rejected, or for fear that they can't meet their own expectations. Your leadership and encouragement is essential to help your employees grow and develop. Encourage employees to try new things and provide them with the support they need. An action plan that gradually increases tasks and responsibilities is one way to do this.

## **SETTING VERBAL EXPECTATIONS**

Expectations can be verbal or written, depending on the situation. For informal expectation-setting meetings, such as a new, simple task, verbal expectations can suffice.

To make sure you've covered all the bases, use the 5 W's and the H during your discussion.

Who?

What?

When?

Where?

Why?

How?

## PUTTING EXPECTATIONS IN WRITING

It's never a bad idea to write down your expectations. This document can be kept for your records, and it can be shared with the employee so they have something to refer to. You can use the following template for written expectations.

<b>Employee Name:</b>
<b>Expectation Statement:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

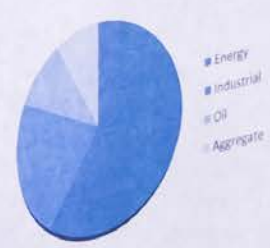
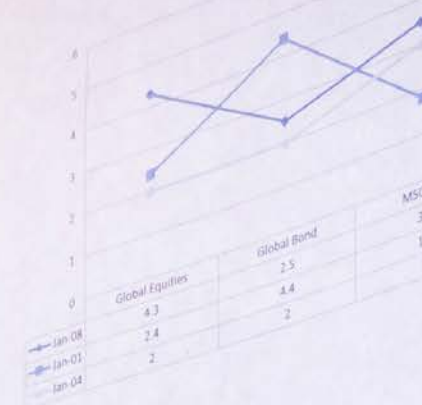
<b>What are the key parts to the task?</b>
<b>What steps will be involved?</b>
<b>What should the end result look like?</b>
<b>Who will the employee need to talk to?</b>
<b>When should the employee report back?</b>

## PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION

Sara and Jorge were setting out a task for their newest employee in the Human Resource Management Department at their company. They were exhausted after a long day at work and were struggling to come up with ideas for how to set out the task. Sara suggested they define the requirements for the task and Jorge agreed. They asked: what the end result of the task should look like, when the employee should report back and what the key parts of the task were. Together, they compiled the answers to the questions and were happy when they could lay out the task and present it to the employee the next day. Sara and Jorge closed up the office and went to their homes relaxed in the knowledge that the employee would have the right tools to succeed.

*Setting goals is the first  
step in turning the  
invisible into the visible.*

ANTHONY ROBBINS



	Global Equities	Global Bond	MSCI EM	S&P 500 Index
Jan-04	2	2	3	5
Jan-01	2.4	4.4	1.8	2.8
Jan-08	4.3	2.5	3.5	4.5

# SETTING GOALS

Goal setting is the single most important life skill that, unfortunately, most people never learn how to do properly. Goal setting can be used in every single area of your life, including financial, physical, personal development, relationships, or spiritual growth. According to Brian Tracy's book *Goals*, fewer than 3% of people have clear, written goals, and a plan for getting there. Setting goals puts you ahead of the pack!

Some people blame everything that goes wrong in their life on something or someone else. They take the role of a victim and they give all their power and control away. Successful people instead dedicate themselves towards taking responsibility for their lives, no matter what unforeseen or uncontrollable events occur. Live in the present: the past cannot be changed, and the future is the direct result of what you do right now!

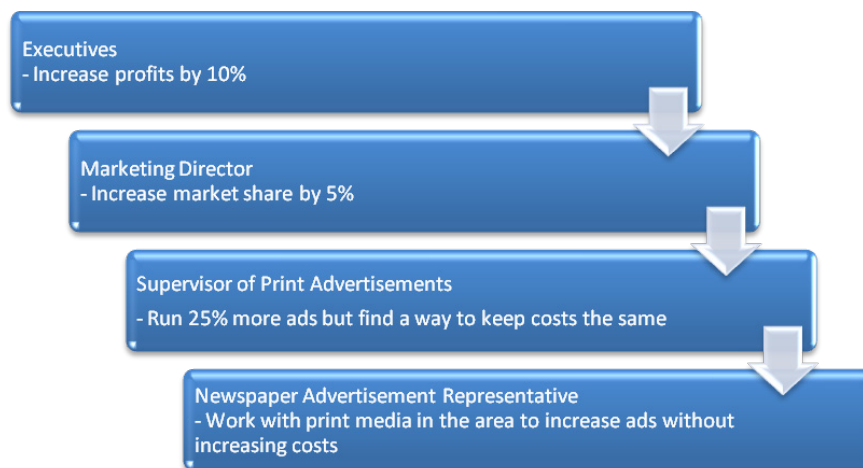
## UNDERSTANDING CASCADING GOALS

Some of the most successful organizations use the cascading, or waterfall, goal setting method. This means that the executives set their goals first, and then those goals flow down through the organization. This ensures that everyone is on the same page and working for the same thing.

Here is an example where the executives have set a goal to increase profits by 10%. The Marketing Director is one person that reports directly

to the executives. They have determined that they can contribute to this goal by increasing the company's share of the market by 5%. The other members of their department then work with their supervisors to determine how they can contribute to this. (They will likely have other goals, too, but this would be their primary focus.)

This is a very short excerpt of the company's waterfall goals. The goals themselves will require more fleshing out, but we'll get to that in the next topic.



## THE SMART WAY

SMART is a convenient acronym for the set of criteria that a goal must have in order for it to be realized by the goal achiever.

Specific: Success coach Jack Canfield states in his book *The Success Principles* that, "*Vague goals produce vague results.*" In order for someone to achieve a goal, they must be very clear on what they want. Often, creating a list of benefits from the accomplishment of the goal will give them a compelling reason to pursue that goal.

Measurable: It's crucial for goal achievement that goal setters are able to track their progress towards the goal. That's why all goals need some form of objective measuring system so that they can stay on track and become motivated. It will also help you as the supervisor evaluate their progress.

Achievable: Setting big goals is great, but setting unrealistic goals will just de-motivate you. A good goal is one that challenges, but is not so unrealistic that the person has virtually no chance of accomplishing it.

Relevant: Before you even set goals, it's a good idea to sit down and define your core values and your life and career purposes. These tools will help the person set goals that matter to them.

Timed: Without setting deadlines for goals, the goal setter will have no real compelling reason or motivation to start working on them. By setting a deadline, your subconscious mind begins to work on that goal, night and day, to bring you closer to achievement.

## **THE THREE P'S**

Setting meaningful, long-term goals is a giant step toward achieving your dreams. In turn, setting and achieving short-term goals can help you accomplish the tasks you'll need to achieve the long-term ones. It is also important to make sure that all of your goals unleash the power of the three P's:

Positive: Who could get fired up about a goal such as *“Find a career that’s not boring”*? Goals should be phrased positively, so they help you feel good about yourself and what you’re trying to accomplish. A better alternative might be this: *“Enroll in pre-law classes so I can help people with legal problems someday.”*

Personal: Goals must be personal. They must reflect your own dreams and values, not those of friends, family, or the media. When crafting your goal statement, always use the word “I” in the sentence to brand it as your own. When your goals are personal, you’ll be more motivated to succeed and take greater pride in your accomplishments.

Possible: When setting goals, be sure to consider what’s possible and within your control. Getting into an Ivy League university may be possible if you are earning good grades but unrealistic if you’re struggling. In the latter case, a more reasonable goal might be to attend a university or trade school that offers courses related to your chosen career. You might also pursue volunteer work that would strengthen your college applications.

## **HELPING OTHERS SET GOALS**

Before you help others set goals, you should set your own goals using the guidelines described above. Your primary focus should be goals that are in line with the organization, in the waterfall form described previously. Then, you will want to set a few personal development goals and a few department-specific goals.

Once you have established your goals, you should have a meeting with each employee and help them set their goals. It is a good idea to ask them to come to the meeting prepared with some ideas of organizational, departmental, and personal goals that they would like to achieve. You should also be prepared with some goals that you would like to see employees work on.

In the meeting, ask the employee to write down the final goals decided on. (These should follow the SMART PPP format discussed previously.) Then, they can add action steps for each goal. Once they finalize the document, they should send a copy to you.

Here is a template that you can use.

<b>Name:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

<b>Circle the area of the goal.</b>	<b>Departmental</b>	<b>Organizational</b>	<b>Personal</b>
<b>Goal #1:</b>			
<b>Specific?</b>		<b>Personal?</b>	
<b>Measurable?</b>			
<b>Achievable?</b>		<b>Possible?</b>	
<b>Relevant?</b>			
<b>Timed?</b>		<b>Positive?</b>	

---

<b>Next Step</b>	
<b>Start Date</b>	
<b>Due Date</b>	

After goals have been set, they should be reviewed on a regular basis. The appropriate timeframe depends on the goal. We recommend reviewing each goal on a quarterly or semi-annually basis, and then creating new goals annually.

It is extremely important that the goals that you help employees set are designed for them, not for you. This will keep them motivated and help them achieve their goal.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Henry, Dean and Gitta were discussing new goals for their marketing company. They couldn't decide on specific goals which would help them better their profits, until Dean suggested they use the SMART approach. Gitta and Henry agreed, and together they set out Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed. Using this approach the trio of business owners was able to successfully layout a specific goal of increasing their profit margin by 3% by the end of the year, using a series of goal-driven tasks which would aid them. Henry, Dean and Gitta tidied up the office and went home for the weekend, satisfied that they could implement their goals on the following Monday.

*Endeavors succeed  
or fail because of the  
people involved. Only by  
attracting the best people  
will you accomplish  
great deeds.*

COLIN POWELL



# ASSIGNING WORK

Just as important as what tasks you assign to individuals is how you assign them. Allowing employees to have a say in what tasks they perform and how they perform them can increase job satisfaction and performance exponentially. However, there are often situations where tasks need to be assigned quickly, or you may require menial tasks that no one really wants to do, to be completed. This chapter will give you several ways to assign work and explore which method is appropriate in which situation.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

When assigning any sort of work, keep the 5 W's and the H in mind, just as we did when setting expectations. In particular, you will want to explain what the task is, when it is due, and when they should provide progress reports. Although it is often best to give employees as much freedom as possible in executing the task, you will want to explain what the end product should look like, particular steps that will need to be followed (especially when safety or interdependence with other projects is involved), and resources that they can use.

Work assignments often fall into one of three categories:

Orders: These leave no room for guesswork, and they typically match the dictatorial approach discussed below. These should only be used for emergencies. Example: *“Shut off that tap, now!”*

Requests: These types of assignments leave the employee some room for interpretation. These are the work descriptions you will want to use most often. Example: *“John, please turn off that water.”*

Suggestions: These types of work assignments leave the most room for interpretation and should only be used if you don't care how the work gets done, or if it's a low priority task. Example: *“Susan, it would be nice if we could come up with a different format for that report.”*

## **THE DICTATORIAL APPROACH**

The easiest short-term work assignment method is to simply assign tasks to individuals. However, this generates the least job satisfaction and independence.

This method should be used when a task needs to be completed urgently, or if it is a task that no one wants to take on.

For best results, make sure that you explain the importance of the task and the rewards to the individual, the department, and the organization.

## **THE APPLE-PICKING APPROACH**

This method gives employees more freedom in choosing their tasks, although it does not emphasize team problem solving or collaboration. The basic idea is that the team member chooses a project that they would like to work on from a list of departmental tasks.

This is a good method to use when there is a small group of tasks to be assigned, a very small group of employees, and not enough time for a meeting. In this case, make sure that the tasks are equal in value and workload. This method can also be used when the department has a list of low-priority “fillers” and an employee needs a short term project.

Be careful when using this method if there are just as many tasks as people, as employees’ choices will be reduced as you move through the team members.

## **THE COLLABORATIVE APPROACH**

With this method, the team has a meeting to decide who completes which task. The list of tasks is posted on flip chart or whiteboard. For maximum effectiveness, all team members help establish objectives and deadlines for each tasks.

This is the most effective method because giving team members a say in the way the work is distributed, and giving them the opportunity to choose more meaningful tasks, will enable you to get more out of your employees and to help them grow and develop.

However, this method is not appropriate for a list of menial tasks, or if a task needs to be urgently completed. It is most effective when used with a mature team (a team that has worked together for six months or more).

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Jessie and Ling were rushing to write out a small list of tasks for delegation amongst their employees in their small business. They wanted to get it down as soon as possible because there wasn't time for a meeting – they were set to meet several new clients that afternoon. Ling suggested they use the apple-picking method for task delegation and explained that they could allow their employees to select which tasks they want to perform by putting the list up and having their employees sign up for them. This would cut out the need for the meeting and would help the employees focus on only what they wanted to do. Jessie agreed, and the pair were happy when their employees took to the idea, sparing them time.

*The great leaders  
are like the best conductors:  
they reach beyond the  
notes to reach the music  
in the players.*

BLAINE LEE



# DEGREES OF DELEGATION

Many supervisors feel that by giving tasks to others, they're giving their power away. This simply isn't true! Delegation is one of the most valuable skills you will ever learn. By delegating the tasks that you don't really need to do, you free up time for those high-reward projects.

Even better, delegating doesn't have to be all or nothing. In this chapter, we will learn about the degrees of delegation and when to use each of them.

## LEVEL ONE: COMPLETE SUPERVISION

The first level of delegation is complete supervision. This gives the employee the least independence, but it gives you the most control.

Although this level of delegation should not be used often, it can be used in situations such as these:

The task is dangerous and the employee is not familiar with it.

The task has important organizational, financial, or legal implications. For example, if an employee is preparing a year-end report for the first time,

you will probably want to supervise the process and carefully examine the results.

## **LEVEL TWO: PARTIAL SUPERVISION**

The second level of delegation is a good balance between employee freedom and manager supervision. With this level, the employee does the task on their own, but the supervisor monitors the work, evaluates progress, and keeps a close eye on how things are moving along.

This is the most commonly used level of delegation, and is the one that you will use for most tasks. However, to maximize your delegating potential, try to encourage employees to grow and develop by adding more levels of complexity as they become more comfortable with the task.

For example, let's say that you have been delegating the weekly team status report to the team's most senior person. After the report is submitted, you type the report using your organization's template. Once the delegate has become comfortable with creating the report, the next step could be to use the template themselves, cutting out one step for you, and moving them further along the journey to independence.

## **LEVEL THREE: COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE**

The last level of delegation is the one that we should hope to move towards for most tasks. Here, the employee does the task completely on their own.

However, spot-checks and progress updates are important. Continuing with the example of the progress report, let's say that the final step is to post the report on the departmental Intranet. The delegate may want to CC you when they post the report so that you can read it, and so that you know it has been submitted.

Think very carefully when choosing a level of delegation. Too low, and the employee may feel distrusted and smothered. Too high, and you may find a disaster on your hands.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Claus and Hans were gas engineers working on installing a system for a new oven in a client's home. They had recently employed an apprentice who knew the basics but needed a more extensive knowledge of the craft. As they were expanding, they were eager to get the employee on board with the process for gas installations, but were worried about how he would handle new jobs. Claus suggested they use the Level One: Complete Supervision of task delegation and Hans agreed, because this would provide the apprentice with valuable supervision and would keep them safe in a dangerous situation because both Claus and Hans would be on hand to provide direction. The men left for home satisfied that they could complete the job and give their apprentice experience safely.

*Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.*

GENERAL GEORGE S. PATTON



# IMPLEMENTING DELEGATION

Now that we understand the different ways of delegating, let's look at the actual skills involved in delegating. At first sight, delegation can feel like more hassle than it's worth. However, by delegating effectively, you can hugely expand the amount of work that you can deliver. When you arrange the workload so that you are working on the tasks that have the highest priority, and other people are working on meaningful and challenging assignments, you have a recipe for success.

## DECIDING TO DELEGATE

Delegation allows you to make the best use of your time and skills, and it helps other people in the team grow and develop to reach their full potential in the organization. Delegation is a win-win situation for all involved, but only when done correctly.

Keep these criteria in mind when deciding if a task should be delegated:

The task should provide an opportunity for growth of another person's skills.

Weigh the effort to properly train another person against how often the task will reoccur.

Delegating certain critical tasks may jeopardize the success of your project.

Management tasks, such as performance reviews, and tasks specifically assigned to you should not be delegated.

### To Whom Should You Delegate?

Once you have decided to delegate a task, think about the possible candidates for accepting the task. Things to think about include:

What experience, knowledge, skills, and attitude does the person already have?

What training or assistance might they need?

Do you have the time and resources to provide any training needed?

What is the individual's preferred work style? Do they do well on their own or do they require more support and motivation? How independent are they?

What does he or she want from his or her job?

What are his or her long-term goals and interest, and how do these align with the work proposed?

What is the current workload of this person? Does the person have time to take on more work?

Will you delegating this task require reshuffling of other responsibilities and workloads?

When you first start to delegate to someone, you may notice that he or she takes longer than you do to complete tasks. This is because you are an expert in the field and the person that you have delegated to is still learning. Be patient: if you have chosen the right person to delegate to, and you are delegating correctly, you will find that he or she quickly becomes competent and reliable. Also, try to delegate to the lowest possible organizational level. The people who are closest to the work are best suited for the task because they have the most intimate knowledge of the detail of everyday work. This also increases workplace efficiency, and helps to develop people.

## **PROVIDING INSTRUCTIONS**

Now, once you have worked through the above steps, make sure you brief your team member appropriately. Take time to explain why they were chosen for the job, what's expected from them during the project, the goals you have for the project, all timelines and deadlines, and the resources on which they can draw. Let them know how much supervision they can expect from you.

Work together to develop a schedule for progress updates, milestones, and other key project points. After the meeting, ask the team member

to give you a summary of the important points to make sure they have understood the task. If it is a large task, you may want to create a miniature project summary. This can be a valuable tool for the delegate when they are working on the task.

You will want to make sure that the team member knows that you want to know if any problems occur, and that you are available for questions or guidance needed as the work progresses.

## **MONITORING THE RESULTS**

We all know that as managers, we shouldn't micro-manage. However, this doesn't mean we must abdicate control altogether. In delegating effectively, we have to find the difficult balance between giving enough space for people to use their abilities, while still monitoring and supporting closely enough to ensure that the job is done correctly and effectively. One way to encourage growth is to ask for recommended solutions when delegates come to you with a problem, and then help them explore those solutions and reach a decision.

It is important that you hold delegates to the original schedule that you agreed upon. Congratulate them on milestones accomplished and deadlines met. If deadlines are missed, explore why. These investigations often provide valuable lessons learned for both you and the employee. Don't be afraid to ask for progress reports. Remember, your job is to help the employee stay on track, and to remove any barriers that are impeding their task.

When delegated work is delivered back to you, make sure to set aside enough time to review it thoroughly. If possible, only accept good quality, fully complete work. If you accept work that you are not satisfied with, your team member does not learn to do the job properly.

Of course, when good work is returned to you, make sure to both recognize and reward the effort. As a leader, you should get in the practice of complimenting members of your team every time you are impressed by what they have done. This effort on your part will go a long way toward building team members' self-confidence and efficiency now and in the future.

## **TROUBLESHOOTING DELEGATION**

Although delegation seems simple enough on paper, its application in real life can be much more difficult! Let's look at some of the most common delegation issues and how to solve them.

The delegate keeps coming to you with questions.

- Although the delegate should feel comfortable coming to you and asking questions, there can come a point where they are relying on you too much.
- One way to reduce the need for your time, and to increase their independence, is to show them where they can find the answers.

- Another approach is to ask them for recommendations when they have a problem. Then, help them explore the possibilities and choose a solution.
- It may also be possible that you have assigned a complicated task to someone who is not prepared for it. If this becomes the case, the best approach is usually to ask a senior person to assist the junior person with the task. (Once again, this helps develop employees and increases their independence.) Try to avoid re-assigning a task unless it's absolutely necessary.

You hear that another team member is performing the delegated task.

- It's always best to get your information from the source. Talk to the delegate and find out who they are using as a resource and how much of that person's time is being used. If you feel that too much of that person's time is being used, suggest alternate resources.
- You may also want to check with the person involved in the task to ensure they don't feel overwhelmed or taken advantage of.
- In general, when you hear these kinds of rumors, keep a close eye on the situation, and react appropriately.
- The end result is not what you expected.
- First, take a moment to evaluate the problem. Is it done incorrectly, or just not done the way you would have done it? (There really is a difference between the two!)

- Explain to the delegate what is done incorrectly and how it can be resolved. Take time to find out why the delegate did the task the way they did. Were the original instructions incorrect? Were they unable to find help when they needed it? Did someone else tell them to do it differently? Take careful notes during this discussion. This can provide valuable lessons for you and the delegate.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Paloma, Jess and Dmitri were working on delegating to specific tasks to employees, but were struggling to come up with a system for delegation which would be fair to all the employees in question. They were eager to get out of the office, because they were working late to implement the delegations the following morning. Dmitri suggested they consider the skill sets of employees and Paloma added that they should consider the training which may be needed with regards to each task, and who would be best suited to that training. The trio agreed that they needed to draw up a list of questions which would better help them assign which employees were best suited to which task. Once this was done, they were able to complete their delegations with minimal debate and were happy to get home early!

*Anticipate the difficult  
by managing the easy.*

LAO TZU



# PROVIDING FEEDBACK

As a supervisor, you will work with all types of people in all types of situations. With this in mind, it only makes sense that there are many types of feedback that we can deliver. In turn, delivering the appropriate type of feedback increases the chance that the receiver will hear, understand, accept, and act on that feedback.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD FEEDBACK

In order for feedback to be well received and acted upon, four main characteristics should be present. Simply remember the STEBAH acronym:

**Specific:** Be specific about what behavior you want the person to change.

**Timely:** The feedback should be delivered as soon as possible for maximum effectiveness.

**Expressed Directly:** The feedback should be delivered in a direct manner to the person whose behavior needs to change.

**Behavior-Focused:** The feedback should focus on the behavior that should be changed, not the person, or their personality.

**Actionable:** The feedback has to be about something the person can change. Complaining that their left-handedness is causing a slowdown on the assembly line is not productive, because it is not realistic to expect the individual to be ambidextrous.

**Helpful:** Deliver the feedback in a manner that shows that you want to help the individual with this problem. Key attitudes include respectfulness, honesty, open-mindedness, and empathy.

## FEEDBACK DELIVERY TOOLS

### Direct Praise or Criticism

This is often used in informal feedback situations, but can also be used as part of formal feedback. Remember the characteristics of good feedback even when delivering these short items.

Some examples include:

*“That report that you sent out today looked great, Jamie.”*

*“You need to put your hard hat on, Aaron.”*

*“Thank you for helping Paul out with that task, Lisa.”*

Note that direct criticism, without any buffering (as described below), should be used very rarely – typically only when there is a safety issue (as in the hard hat example above).

## THE FEEDBACK SANDWICH

The feedback sandwich is a constructive way of delivering negative feedback. You simply sandwich the negative between two positives.

Example: *“Susan, your report had all the right statistics in it, and I really appreciate that. However, we need you to use the company template. I’ve e-mailed it to you so that you can use it the next time. Good job getting it in on time, too!”*

This approach has been criticized because it trains the employee to always expect a negative when they hear a positive, and it takes the focus away from the actual problem. However, it is especially useful for new or sensitive employees or in situations where the job is well done overall.

## THE OPEN-FACED SANDWICH

The open-faced sandwich is a modified version of the Feedback Sandwich described above. In it, you give the person some praise, give the feedback, and then give constructive help on modifying the behavior. This places more focus on the problem at hand, but still gives the employee something positive to focus on.

Example: *“Susan, your report had all the right statistics in it, and I really appreciate that. However, we need you to use the company template. I’ve e-mailed it to you so that you can use it the next time.”*

## **ABOUT 360 DEGREE FEEDBACK**

360 Degree Feedback is a tool that allows the employee to receive feedback from all the groups that they interact with, including customers, co-workers, supervisors, and people that report to them. It is a very intensive process, but when implemented properly, it can give people a real sense of their strengths and weaknesses. Although 360 Degree Feedback is worth a book on its own, just remember that your team should be encouraged to deliver feedback to each other using some of the tools just discussed. This will improve communication and problem solving, and build team co-operation and maturity.

## **INFORMAL FEEDBACK**

This is the type of feedback that you will deliver most often. This sort of feedback is quick, precise, and direct. It can be delivered in person, over the phone, or via e-mail. It can happen between co-workers, or between a supervisor and their staff.

When delivering this type of feedback, be sensitive to the message that you are sending and to the other people present. Criticizing a team member in front of the entire team will not be well received. Perhaps surprisingly, being praised in front of a group can make some people feel uncomfortable, too.

## FORMAL FEEDBACK

This type of feedback involves documentation and collaboration to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses, and to create action plans for addressing those areas. It is typically focused on the long term rather than the short term. Some examples include formal reviews, goal setting meetings, or reporting on the team's progress in a team meeting. Most often, formal feedback will be delivered from the supervisor to their staff member(s).

When setting up a meeting for formal feedback, remember the following tips.

Give the employee lots of notice about the meeting.

Be sensitive when asking them to meet with you. For some people, the phrase, *"I'd like to see you in my office,"* produces an immediate phobic reaction. It's best to let them know privately and quietly.

Let the employee know what the meeting is about and give them any necessary documents to prepare for the meeting. This will also help alleviate fear and anxiety.

Make sure the meeting is at a convenient time for both you and the employee. Try to avoid scheduling meetings right before lunch or the end of the day so that neither of you feel rushed.

## PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION

Jason and Lee were reviewing tasks presented to them by employees after a big meeting with a client. The desk was littered with papers and the two men were frustrated and couldn't agree on a process for reviewing the results they'd received from their employees. They felt the results could be improved upon in certain ways, but couldn't agree on how to implement those improvements or approach their delegates about said improvements. Jason suggested they use the STEBAH method for laying out their feedback and encouraging growth in their employees and Lee agreed. Together they assessed the delivered tasks and results in a ways which were Specific, Timely, Expressed Directly, Behavior-Focused, Actionable and Helpful. Both men were happy when their feedback was taken to heart and the tasks were improved upon in the coming week.

*Time management  
is life management.*

ROBIN SHARMA



# MANAGING YOUR TIME

Supervisors often find that between helping their colleagues, managing their staff, and performing their own tasks, that there are not enough hours in the day. This chapter will give you some tools to plan and prioritize effectively and make the most of the time that you have.

### THE 80/20 RULE

The 80/20 rule, also known as Pareto's Principle, states that 80% of your results come from only 20% of your actions. Across the board, you will find that the 80/20 principle is pretty much right on with most things in your life. For most people, it really comes down to analyzing what you are spending your time on. Are you and your team focusing in on the 20% of activities that produce 80% of the results?

### PRIORITIZING WITH THE URGENT-IMPORTANT MATRIX

Great time management means being effective as well as efficient. Managing time effectively, and achieving the things that you want to achieve, means spending your time on things that are important and not just urgent.

To do this, you need to distinguish clearly between what is urgent and what is important:

**Important:** These are activities that lead to achieving your goals and have the greatest impact on your life.

**Urgent:** These activities demand immediate attention, but are often associated with someone else's goals rather than our **own**.

This concept, coined the Eisenhower Principle, is said to be how former US President Dwight Eisenhower organized his tasks. It was rediscovered and brought into the mainstream as the Urgent/Important Matrix by Stephen Covey in his 1994 business classic, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. The Urgent/Important Matrix is a powerful way of organizing tasks based on priorities.

Using it helps you overcome the natural tendency to focus on urgent activities, so that you can have time to focus on what's truly important. You can also share this knowledge with your staff, so that they too can focus on the most important activities.



## DEBRIEF

**Urgent And Important:** Activities in this area relate to dealing with critical issues as they arise and meeting significant commitments. Perform these duties now.

**Important, But Not Urgent:** These success-oriented tasks are critical to achieving goals. Plan to do these tasks next.

**Urgent, But Not Important:** These chores do not move you forward toward your own goals. Manage by delaying them, cutting them short and rejecting requests from others. Postpone these chores.

**Not Urgent And Not Important:** These trivial interruptions are just a distraction, and should be avoided if possible. However, be careful not

to mislabel things like time with family and recreational activities as not important. Avoid these distractions altogether.

## **USING A PRODUCTIVITY JOURNAL**

Prioritizing and planning are excellent activities that will increase your productivity exponentially. However, in order to be most effective your priorities and plans need to be written down. We recommend creating and using a Productivity Journal.

To start, get yourself a spiral notebook and label it as your Personal Productivity Journal or your Professional Productivity Journal. (We recommend keeping a separate journal for work and for your personal life, so you can focus on them at separate times, thus maintaining your optimal work/life balance.) Label each page with the day and the date and what needs to be done that particular day. For your professional journal, make sure to include what team member is involved in each task.

Next, prioritize each task in order of importance. Highlight the top three items and focus on those first. Cross off items as you complete them. Items that are not completed should be carried over to the next page.

### **A few tips for success:**

Take some time at the end of the day to start the next day's list. Then, in the morning, review the list and prioritize.

Always have your productivity journal with you during the day to avoid becoming sidetracked. Crossing off completed tasks will give your

subconscious mind a tremendous amount of satisfaction. This will also help to maintain your motivation to complete the remaining items on your action list.

If you find yourself moving uncompleted tasks over into the following day, and the day after that, then you need to ask yourself why that task is on your list in the first place and what value it has in your life. If you postpone a task three times, it does not belong on your action list.

## **USING ROUTINES AND RITUALS TO SIMPLIFY YOUR WORKDAY**

Having a routine can help your workday go much smoother. By setting aside specific times for open-door meetings, e-mail, phone calls, and other routine tasks, you can complete a group of tasks at the same time. This will increase your efficiency and productivity, and avoid re-work.

Building a ritual for various tasks can also save you time during the day. You can build any type of ritual in three easy steps.

Identify the Task. Let's say you want to build an exercise ritual.

Identify the Time and/or Trigger. For example, perhaps you normally exercise right after work.

Identify the Sub-Tasks. For you, perhaps your ritual involves going to the gym, getting changed, stretching, doing 45 minutes on the treadmill, performing three reps of weights, and doing a lap around the pool to finish things off. Then, you shower and go home.

## PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION

Jill and Kilo were new business owners who had trouble running the business without getting sucked into menial tasks. They were discussing the best ways to manage their time and were frustrated because there didn't seem to be enough hours in the day for the tasks they had lined up. Kilo suggested they prioritize their tasks with the Urgent/Important Matrix and focus on those tasks which were Important for advancing their business and long term goals. Jill agreed with this, and together they laid out a timetable for their immediate requirements and the important tasks which they needed to complete with less urgency. Jill and Kilo were happy when they were able to effectively manage their tasks and push ahead with their business goals. And they got to go home to their families and take a well-deserved rest too!

*Seek first to understand,  
then to be understood.*

STEPHEN COVEY

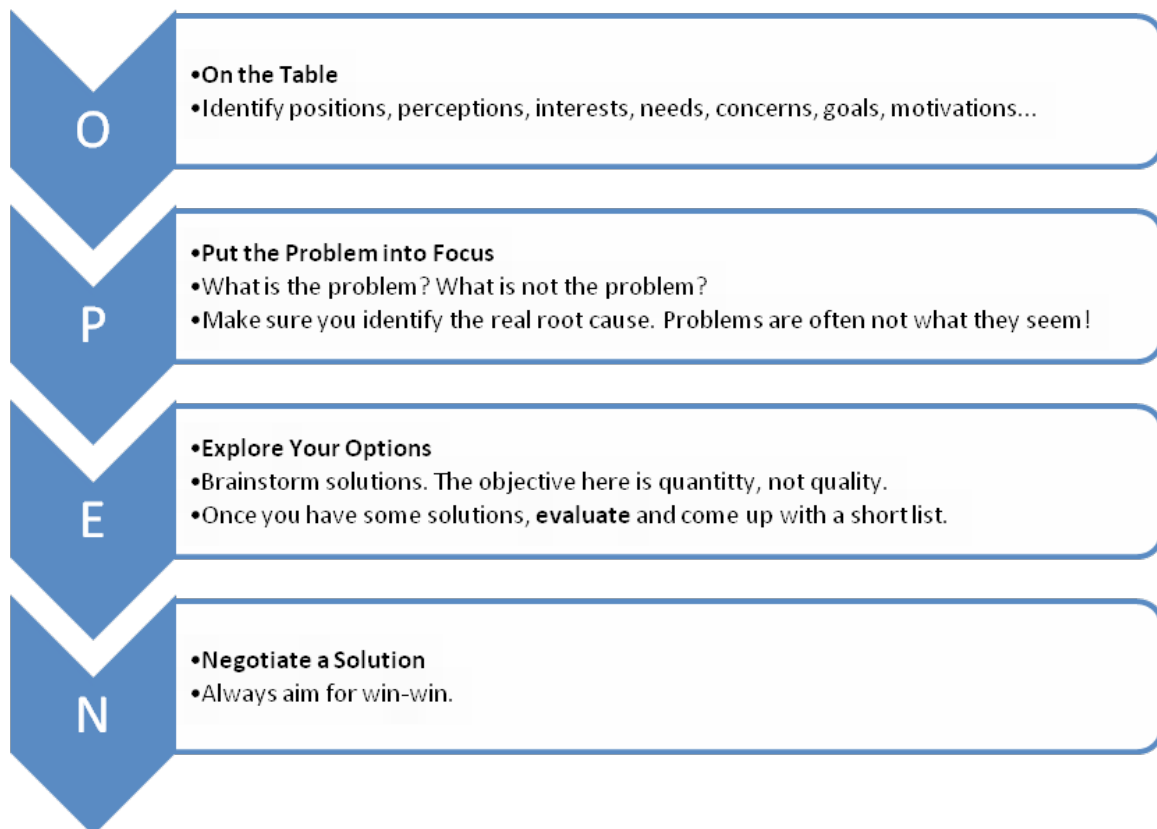


# RESOLVING CONFLICT

Supervisors are often called in to help mediate conflicts within their team, or sometimes within other teams. Although many people dislike dealing with conflict, when it is managed properly, it can be a positive thing. With the proper tools, people are able to air their ideas and their issues, share information in a constructive manner, and work towards resolving their differences. All of this should result in a more productive, respectful, open workplace.

## USING A CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

Having a pre-defined conflict resolution process is a valuable tool. This process will give any supervisor an objective, neutral way to identify, explore, and resolve conflicts. We recommend using the OPEN technique.



After a solution has been negotiated, make sure to follow up and make sure that the conflict has indeed been resolved and that the proposed solution is working. If it is not working, it's time to go back to the drawing board, perhaps with input from others (if appropriate).

## MAINTAINING FAIRNESS

During the conflict resolution process, it is very important that you remain objective and neutral to ensure that the process is fair to all. Key behaviors include:

Never taking sides, even if asked

Asking for, and encouraging, a response from all comments

Remaining objective and neutral, and avoiding subjective comments

Offering factual observations to both sides to help root out the key issues

Encouraging win-win solutions

Ensuring a balance of power is maintained, so that one side does not feel bullied or neglected

### **SEEKING HELP FROM WITHIN THE TEAM**

At times, it may be appropriate to involve the entire team in conflict resolution. This often occurs when:

There is a conflict between all members of the team

There is a conflict between a few team members that is affecting the entire team

In these situations, it is important to have a face-to-face meeting of the entire team. Write the OPEN process on the flip chart. The team's input should be greatest in the first three phases. In the negotiation phase, you (as the supervisor) should ensure that the proposed solution will not negatively affect others or cause more conflict.

### **SEEKING HELP FROM OUTSIDE THE TEAM**

If the people in conflict are unable to resolve the problem with your assistance, and team assistance has not worked or is not appropriate,

then it may be time to seek help from outside sources. This approach can also be used when you have a conflict of interest in the issue at hand.

Outside sources can include:

- Other supervisors
- Mediators
- Human resources personnel
- No one with authority over the team (such as your manager) should be considered, as they may intimidate the people in conflict and take focus away from conflict resolution.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Lola, Damien and Anika were in charge of managing disputes between employees who were having trouble working together. Because of this, they had to come up with effective solutions for handling these matters and creating the best possible outcome. They were struggling with methods of managing the conflict when Lola suggested they discuss fairness in dealing with employees in conflict. They agreed and discussed maintaining the balance of power, encouraging win-win solutions, never taking sides, and asking for responses from both parties. Anika believed that treating the employees fairly would establish trust and help them get to the bottom of the real issues in conflict with ease. The three managers were happy when they could resolve the issue with ease and move onto a solution which suited all involved.

*I have yet to find  
the man, however exalted  
his station, who did not  
do better work and put  
forth greater effort under  
a spirit of approval than  
under a spirit of criticism.*

CHARLES SCHWAB



# TIPS FOR SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Becoming a supervisor can happen in many ways. You may be hired from outside the company to take on a team. You might be assigned to create a brand new team. Or, you might be promoted from within the team. Each situation requires some special skills for success.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU'VE BEEN PROMOTED FROM WITHIN THE TEAM

Being promoted from within the team is often a huge challenge for new supervisors. It is difficult to make the transition from team member to team leader, particularly if you are now responsible for sensitive items, such as salaries or schedules.

To begin, start setting a good example from the moment that you think you may be promoted to supervisor. We all have bad habits; take this time to curb yours. Identifying the source of your bad habits and creating an action plan may also help you identify areas for improvement within the team.

Training can also be beneficial. Enlist your supervisor's help in determining appropriate topics. Some suggestions:

- Leadership
- Communication skills
- Time management
- Conflict resolution
- Giving feedback
- Team building

We have touched on many of these topics today, but there is always more to learn!

Take this time, too, to do some careful observing. What is the current supervisor doing? Which behaviors work for the team, and which don't? You will also want to get a clear job description and go over it with the current supervisor to make sure there are no surprises. You will also want to review the job descriptions for each team member.

When you take over the role of supervisor, have a meeting with your staff. Explain that you have taken over the role and its responsibilities. Clarify that things will continue as usual. It is important to spend your first few weeks settling into the role and understanding the big picture before you make any major changes.

One of the biggest challenges supervisors who have been promoted from within the team face is a lack of respect. For example, let's say you always

had the habit of taking an hour lunch instead of 45 minutes, and most of the team had lunch with you. When you are promoted, you realize the behavior has to stop, but when you request that the team return from lunch on time, they remind you of your previous habits and tease you.

In these situations, simply provide a logical explanation for changing your behavior: *“I know I often returned late from lunch before, but that was before I realized how much it was costing the company. The company has this rule for a reason, and I think it’s important that we all respect it.”*

Above all, do not respond emotionally to taunts, teases, and jibes. A logical explanation, or a simple, *“I don’t think those kinds of comments are appropriate,”* should make your position clear in a professional manner.

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU’RE LEADING A BRAND NEW TEAM**

Many supervisors feel that heading up a new team is one of the easiest tasks. After all, the team members don’t know each other, so they have nothing to argue about. However, other supervisors feel that this is one of the most difficult, rewarding challenges a leader can face.

To begin, make sure that the team has a clear role and objective. This is particularly important for short term, task-based teams. Then, share this role with the team, and help them to focus on their new task. Often, employees who have been transferred to the team from within the company have a hard time letting go of their old positions.

Also, familiarize yourself with Tuckman and Jensen’s stages of team development. We have included a brief explanation on the following page.

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>What You Can Do to Help</b>
<b>Forming</b>	<b>Team members are just meeting; unsure of their role and themselves.</b>	<p><b>Encourage team building through non-conflict laden tasks and activities.</b></p> <p>Involve the team in task planning and goal setting.</p>
<b>Storming</b>	<b>Team members discover differences and butt heads; conflict can interfere with progress.</b>	<p><b>Continue with the plan; evaluate and adjust as necessary.</b></p> <p>Support the team through conflict and help them resolve it.</p>
<b>Norming</b>	<p><b>Team members start to discover similarities too.</b></p> <p><b>Performance typically improves, but social interaction may also cause it to drop.</b></p>	<p><b>Keep the group focused on the goal; encourage social activities outside of team time.</b></p>

<b>Performing</b>	<b>Team members are now comfortable with each other and work together well.</b>	<b>Continue to offer resources and support to the team. Monitor performance, as teams can change stages at any time (particularly when members join in or drop out).</b>
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## WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE TAKING ON AN ESTABLISHED TEAM

Coming on board as the new supervisor for an established team can be a tough task. Your primary objective in this situation is not to appear as a threat, but rather as a helpful new resource and valuable ally.

To begin, gather information about the team's objective, team dynamics, and their history together. If possible, be introduced to the team before you start work as their supervisor, and spend some time watching them work.

It is also important to get started on the right foot. On your first day, have a team meeting. Explain your role and what you will be doing in the coming weeks. (Ideally, you should spend your first few weeks watching the team. Avoid making major changes if possible. Be an observer rather than a participant.) If you have been hired to make changes, set expectations for what will happen in the short term and long term.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Cassidy and Joseph were finishing up a day at the office after being elected team leaders for a problem-solving task force at their firm. They were nervous about how the team would respond to their leadership and were discussing ways to lead the team with ease, and to overcome that anxiety. Joseph suggested they use the Tuckman and Jensen's stages of team development model to help them reach their aims the next day. Cassidy agreed and they went over the stages and planned for each and the possible problems they might face. They broke them down as Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing and left the office confident that they could begin managing the new team the following day with as few hiccups as possible.

*I believe managing  
is like holding a dove in  
your hand. If you hold it  
too tightly you kill it, but  
if you hold it too loosely,  
you lose it.*

TOMMY LASORDA



SUCCESS

# A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR THE NEW SUPERVISOR

Being a new supervisor can be intimidating. How will you know what to do? What if you make mistakes? What if you don't know the answer? In our final chapter, we will give you some tips to get you on the path to becoming a great supervisor.

## ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS OF THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Have you heard the saying, *"There's no such thing as a stupid question?"* It applies to supervisors and leaders too! Don't be afraid to ask questions. Just make sure to do your research first, and to ask the right questions of the right people. This means that if you have a question about front-line activities, for example, go to the frontline workers. Or, for questions about payroll, you would talk to human resources.

Remember, open-ended questions will typically give the most information. These questions ask, *"How?"* or start with one of the W's.

- Who?
- What?

- Where?
- When?
- Why?
- How?

If you're shy about asking questions, try using the phrase, *"I'm just curious."* For maximum effectiveness, these can be combined with the 5 W's and the H. Some examples:

*"I'm just curious, why do we process invoices by hand?"*

*"I'm just curious, when are employee benefits renewed?"*

*"I'm just curious, how often are these reports refreshed?"*

## **GO TO GEMBA**

"Gemba" is a Japanese term meaning, "the actual place." It is a key concept in Lean methodology, a manufacturing-based system that aims to create maximum value with minimum waste. (Although this process was designed for the manufacturing sector, it has many excellent principles that can be applied in different industries. For more information, read *The Toyota Way* by Jeffery Liker.)

"Going to gemba" means going to the place where the action is happening. If you want to see how invoices are processed, or if there is a problem with the process, go to the accounting department and watch the process yourself. If you want to understand more about how your

company's products are made, go to the assembly line. Watch what is happening, ask questions from the frontline staff, and get some hands-on experience. This inside knowledge can help you make better, smarter decisions, and can help you help your staff work smarter. For maximum benefit, make sure your staff knows that you are there to observe and learn – not to judge or criticize.

## **KEEP LEARNING!**

The most important task for any supervisor is to keep learning. A supervisor's job responsibilities can cover many types of tasks, so there is always a lot to learn. Start small, but aim big. Set goals for yourself and keep working towards them.

Key skill areas that we discussed in the last chapter include:

- Leadership
- Communication skills
- Time management
- Conflict resolution
- Giving feedback
- Team building

Training doesn't always have to take place in the classroom, either. Listening to your staff and colleagues, reading books and journals, and

watching educational videos, are all excellent ways to learn more and keep improving yourself.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Isaiah and Kimberly were recently promoted to supervisors within their company and were struggling to get accustomed to their respective roles. They were meeting over lunch to discuss ways which they could discover more about the company and adapt to the way things run. Kimberly suggested they use the Go to Gemba term to discover what they wanted to know about the company. Isaiah wasn't sure what she meant until Kimberly explained that it meant they should go directly to the source of their question: they were concerned about the invoicing system so they should approach this directly at accounting. Isaiah and Kimberly were both happy to attack the problem head on and learn more about the company, thus fulfilling their roles as supervisors.

*It is wise to keep in mind  
that neither success nor  
failure is ever final.*

ROGER BABSON

# CLOSING THOUGHTS

- **Warren Buffett:** You only have to do a very few things right in your life so long as you don't do too many things wrong.
- **Peter F. Drucker:** Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.
- **Steve Jobs:** Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.



**Rick Chisholm** made history when he single-handedly changed the professional Audio Visual industry by breaking all the rules and capitalised over 50% market share in Australia with very little capital, no partners, mergers or lenders and set up the first franchise operation of its kind in the world in the late 1990's and early 2000's.

As a 7x founder of companies and 30x businesses such as Innovest, AI Machine, Lightsounds, LSW, Light Emotion with revenue in excess of \$300 million and having employed more than 1,000 staff over the last 35 years. Rick is known as the Start-Up and SME Guru and is Author of a number of books including Business Success for Life. Unlike many mentors, he actually walks the talk and has a number of businesses under management in such areas as Automation, Events management, Importing, Distribution, Retailing and E-commerce.

His BIG passion is Business Education empowering Businesses Owners through knowledge and skills. Whilst Rick has experienced great success, he has also endured many failures. Rick has faced and overcome the exact same challenges you are facing now.



**Tala Chisholm** is an SME specialist who has owned and managed several small to medium sized businesses in the last 20 years, several of which were eventually sold. She has extensive experience in the fields of retail, franchising, licensing, dealerships, education, importing, distribution and consulting.

Her expertise lies in building and implementing customised cross-platform database and software solutions for businesses, automation, IT, web marketing, advertising, graphic design, business administration, process refinement and implementation. Her business experience ranges from bricks-and-mortar Giftware retailing to highly technical fields such as Security, CCTV, Entertainment Lighting and Audio sales, hire and installations as well as e-commerce.

Throughout her career she also trained and mentored Franchise business owners as well as internal division managers. Some areas of training included retail operations, management practices, business strategy, accounting, cash-flow, marketing, customer service and IT. She has also headed up the drafting of Operating Compliance Manuals for Franchise operations and implementation of all the elements involved.

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