



Overtime Athletics
Summer Training:
Skilled Supervisors



Foundations of Success for All Senior Staff

Being a great manager *and* someone who is easy to talk with isn't always, well, easy. The best leaders and supervisors understand and excel at these five principles:

1. Accessibility

2. Approachability

3. Staying Involved

4. Communicating Clearly

5. Delegating Responsibility

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Accessibility

Being **accessible** is about:

- Your colleagues know where to find you at different times throughout the day.
- When your colleagues do find you, you make time to talk to them. Or, if you can't talk then, you set up a time to talk soon.
- You follow up with them later or follow through with what you said you would do.
- You adopt an open-minded attitude about what insight and experiences your staff may have had.

Remember, accessibility also **looks** like something and **sounds** like something.

- Open body language
- Sustained eye-contact
- Calm and warm responses



Approachability/Staying Involved

Being **approachable** is about how people feel about coming to you for advice, guidance, support, to vent, or anything else. To be approachable, make sure that:

- You show with your eye contact and other body language that you are paying attention.
- You remain calm. It's natural to have an opinion about what you're hearing, but flying into a rage, no matter how unhappy you may feel, scares people off.
- You ask open ended questions in order to learn more about that person's experience

When the staff you supervise ***know where to find you*** and ***feel good about talking with you***, then your job as a supervisor is easier.

Remember your speed! Slow down and you'll be more approachable.

Staying involved is about:

- Your staff feel that you could be on the ground doing what they are doing.
- Your input is helpful.
- You're a role model in everything you teach or train and expect of the staff.
- Staying involved makes you feel *helpful to them* instead of *critical of them*.

Clear Communication/Delegating Responsibility

The simplest description of **clear communication** is:

Express yourself clearly, especially your expectations for your staff

Listen carefully, especially to the concerns your staff have

Finally, **delegating responsibility** is more than just handing out menial tasks and busy work, it involves:

Creating an opportunity for growth and development

Making room for creative or different approaches

Advanced Staff Supervision

Prepare, Encourage, Evaluate, Participate, and Learn: PEEPL Power

Are you up to the challenge? Supervision of camp staff can be delicate for several reasons.

You may be close in age to those you supervise.

You may have been colleagues with your supervisees just last year.

You may find it hard to give feedback, wondering how your criticism will affect your friendships.

You may find rule enforcement an onerous task and find yourself wishing for less responsibility.

Change your mindset; change your life. When you see yourself in a supportive role, everything changes.

Embrace the process: **P**repare, **E**ncourage, **E**valuate, **P**articipate, and **L**earn.

Your primary job as a supervisor is support. Work hard to help other people do their jobs well.

Advanced Staff Supervision cont.

What is The Process?

It's just a simple way to remember the most important elements of supportive staff supervision. Here's a quick summary.

PREPARE

Staff often complain: "No one told me I was supposed to do that" or "No one told me I was doing that the wrong way." To avoid these frustrations, begin by sitting down with your staff to discuss their goals, the methods to achieve those goals, their roles and responsibilities at camp, and your role to coach and support.

ENCOURAGE

When the front-line counselors and junior staff you supervise see you coming, they should be happy, not afraid. Encourage candid, bidirectional communication by modeling gentle feedback. Encourage staff to work hard to achieve their personal and professional goals. And point out all the things your staff are doing well.

EVALUATE

Some combination of nonverbal, spoken, and written feedback is essential in helping your supervisees track their progress in achieving the goals you set together at the Prepare stage. Balance authentic praise with constructive criticism, set appropriate limits, and be sure to set regular meeting times with supervisees.

Advanced Staff Supervision cont.

PARTICIPATE

Few things sour the leadership dynamic at camp faster than an “us versus them” supervision mentality. You should be as involved in camp programs, camp duties, and campers’ lives as those you supervise. No job is too small or insignificant, so get your hands dirty. Leading by example is your most powerful supervisory skill.

LEARN

Great supervisors are always willing to admit mistakes, listen to their supervisees’ feedback, and learn better ways of helping their team achieve its goals.



Providing Feedback

Camp Is Also for You

The mantra “camp is for the campers” is often repeated in training workshops to emphasize the fact that campers are our clients. However, working at camp is also about your own professional development. Some of the camp experience is for you. How will you grow this summer, as a leader, a manager, a coach, and a mentor?

Key Growth Factors

Your professional growth, and that of your colleagues at camp, depends on: (1) Adopting a mindset that you want to learn; (2) Setting aside your pride and honestly looking at your strengths and weaknesses; (3) Listening with an open mind to the feedback others give you.

What's At Stake?

Professional growth also depends on your giving others feedback, especially if you are in a supervisory position. However, feedback is notoriously difficult to provide because you may fear that others' reactions will be negative. Simply put, there is a relationship at stake.

Steps to Providing Good Feedback

Preparation Preparation starts before the campers arrive. Conduct group and individual staff meetings to establish expectations for everyone's performance *and* the expectation that feedback will be shared generously, in the spirit of professional growth and development.

Timing Timing of feedback should be both frequent and discrete, meaning out of the earshot of campers. Offer your colleagues feedback soon enough for them to have a chance to improve, but not directly in front of children.

Delivery Delivery of feedback should be respectful, balanced, specific, and solicitous. Use a kind tone, recognize your colleagues' strengths as well as their weaknesses, cite specific examples, and—to keep the feedback flowing in both directions—ask your colleagues what *they* suggest *you* might do to improve.

Follow-Up Following-up with your colleagues means checking back with them to see how a suggestion you've made has been implemented ("How is it going with the _____?") Praise improvements. Follow-up may also mean telling them how *you* have implemented a suggestion that *they* made.

Feedback Case Studies

1. You see a fellow counselor lose his/her temper with a camper. “Stop asking me when is lunch!” screams your colleague at one of his/her 8-year-old campers. “You’re so annoying!”

- *Describe how adequate preparation might have prevented this hostile interaction in the first place.*
- *Now describe how you might use appropriate timing and delivery to provide good feedback. Then describe what specifically you might suggest for improvement.*
- *What kind of follow-up might you offer if you see that same counselor keep his cool the next time a camper exhibits annoying behavior?*

2. As your group gathers for an activity, one of the coaches under your supervision keeps talking and fooling around with another coach while you’re trying to explain the rules to the activity.

- *Describe how adequate preparation might have prevented this kind of poor leadership in the first place.*
- *Now describe how you might use appropriate timing and delivery to provide good feedback. How might you refer to the standards you explained before opening day?*
- *What kind of follow-up might you offer if you observe that junior leader show up late to the next evening activity?*

3. During an athletic instruction period, you observe the Sports Program Head teaching an incorrect fundamental. Even though you are not the Sports Program Head, you know the proper way to teach the fundamental.

- *Describe how adequate preparation might have prevented this incorrect instruction in the first place.*
- *Now describe how you might use appropriate timing and delivery to provide good feedback. What if the Sports Program Head gets offended by your feedback?*
- *What kind of follow-up might you offer if you see that same counselor continue to instruct the campers incorrectly?*

Difficult Management Conversations

Prepare for any difficult conversation – think about questions such as:

What does the troublesome counselor understand or expect about this part of his job?

Does she think her role is to be a team player, support other staff, or change their behavior?

Has this troublesome counselor received critical feedback before? If so, what worked well? What didn't?

What does he need to be successful?

Always remember to have any critical discussion away from others, especially campers.

Keys to a successful conversation:

Calmly state the facts

Listen carefully

Ask open-ended question

This approach can help counselors feel empowered and motivated to resolve the conflict by changing their own behavior.

Follow-up & after the conversation:

Create and agree to a specific timeline

Create an action plan with behavioral goals

Provide needed support

Give the staff member a reasonable opportunity to change their behavior

Now is the time for the supervisor to notice and praise other behaviors of this counselor.



Stages of Difficult Conversations

The four stages of every difficult conversation are:

Prepare

Reflect, calmly, on what the problem is (Describe how your expectations do not match the counselor's performance).

Review Facts

State, at the start, what you know about what happened. Ask, at the start, for the counselor's version of the facts.

Set Goals and Methods

State your goal for a specific behavior change.

Ask what methods the person plans to use to achieve those goals and what supports the person needs to make this change.

Plan and Verify

State what the consequences of continued underperformance are.

Ask whether the person has any questions or ask them to summarize to verify they understand ("Just so I'm clear that you understand, can you tell me in your own words, what the plan is?").

Case Studies of Difficult Management Conversations

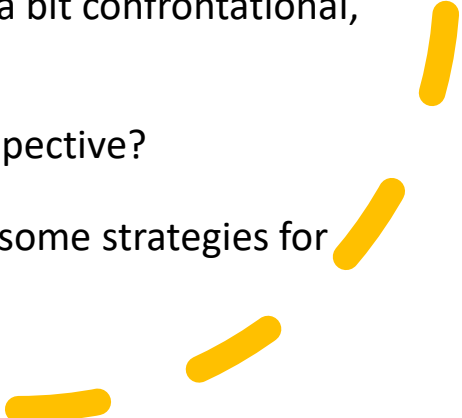
Case Study #1

David, a 20-year-old Staff member is constantly in a bad mood. He is never really excited or enthusiastic about any activities. He is generally on time to things and responsible, just wears his negativity on his sleeve. When you approach him to talk about it, he doesn't have any idea what you are talking about.

- Think about his expectations. What would you want to prepare for this conversation?
- What are some goals you might have for this conversation?

Case Study #2

Marcus approaches you and says that Alisha, one of the female coaches, is making people uncomfortable. At first it is a very general complaint, but after you probe a bit, you find out that it is because she is an awkward hugger. She is a very touchy-feely kind of person and has a bubbly personality, but she often forces hugs on others. To top it off, she seems to be more physical with the boys, which is sending a weird message. When you approach her about this, she is shocked, a bit confrontational, and doesn't really believe that others feel that way.

- What are some questions you could ask to get Alisha's perspective?
 - If she is defensive and doesn't believe you, what would be some strategies for creating a plan to change her behavior?
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Case Studies of Difficult Management Conversations

Case Study #3

Courtney has developed a relationship with Will. She is letting it get in the way of her job. She seeks him out at meals, she has even been late to several activities. Will, on the other hand, has NOT let it affect his job. According to his Supervisor he is the best counselor, and he hasn't noticed any of this kind of behavior.

- How will you approach Courtney about her job performance without letting the conversation turn to Will's job performance?
- What are some other considerations you should make about this conversation?

Case Study #4

Jason, a staff member at your camp, is very well meaning, but is just not that good with kids. He isn't unsafe or mean, but he doesn't really understand how to talk to kids or how to play with them. Because he is so well meaning, he takes all of your suggestions to heart and tries them, but again just doesn't seem to get it when he does.

- What are some ways to initiate this conversation?
 - What are a few specific behavioral changes you can explain to Jason?
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