

THE *Front-line Supervisor*

Presented by **DOR**

Helping you to manage your company's most valuable resource -- your employees.

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CASE 1 How do I show support?

➤ **Q. My boss said that I need to be a more supportive supervisor. He couldn't give examples except to say "your team has to feel you support them." What can I do?**

A. Look for opportunities to show that you're responsive to your team's needs. If team members ask for resources to help them produce results, fight on their behalf to fulfill their requests. If they struggle to work through a tough problem, acknowledge the difficulty of their task and praise their effort. Consider work rules regarding pay in your organization and what flexibility may be available. For example, if employees work lots of unpaid overtime, can you provide paid time off later? If no, what other options exist to support them? Your boss may also want you to boost your team's morale – to motivate employees to persevere amid adversity. The best way to focus workers on a challenging mission is to shower them with support. Spend time just listening to them. Learn about their fears, concerns and gripes. By paying attention to your team's comments, dignifying their views and championing their interests, they will feel supported, and you will earn their admiration.

CASE 2 Meaningful relationships encourage loyalty

➤ **Q. What is the key issue in leadership often overlooked by supervisors that can undermine their attempt to achieve workplace goals and build a cohesive team?**

A. A key leadership skill is identifying the skills and talents of employees and motivating them to use those skills in the pursuit of organizational goals. Effective leaders invest in developing constructive working relationships of those goals. Behaviors that demonstrate effective leadership skills are both learned and naturally part of some supervisor's personalities, but the investment by the leader in authentically meeting the needs of the team is what promotes loyalty and motivates followers (employees). The payoff for effective leadership is acquiring influence. Many supervisors reverse the process or miss part of it in their pursuit of becoming a leader. They focus more or too much on, achieving goals, while neglecting the needs of employees on whom they rely. Leaders will not generate loyalty without also developing meaningful relationships with the employees they supervise.

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