



Supervisor Training: Adding Tools to Your Kit

October 22, 2025

Ground Rules

1. Participation is key!
2. Take the learning, leave the stories. Do not repeat without permission.
3. Share the air and allow others to participate.
4. Respect everyone's opinions and perspectives.

Objectives

- Breakdown the journey of the employee experience
- Identify factors that contribute to job satisfaction and retention
- Identify key leadership skills to enhance one's employee experience
- Discuss common leadership challenges
- Review components of the performance management cycle

Icebreaker



- What is your name and your role here at Utica?
- What does leadership mean to you?
- What is a challenge that you face as a leader?

Supervisor Toolkit

www.utica.edu/directory/human-resources/training-and-development



The Employee Experience



Employee Experience

The Journey With Your Organization



1. Attract - Recruiting Top Talent

The search process is a two-way street. Is the candidate the right fit for us and are *we* the right fit for *them*?

Things to consider when attracting talent...

- Why should *they* choose Utica University?
- What sets us apart?
- Are we committed to what we are “selling?”

2. Hire - Pick the Stars

- Is our hiring process equitable?
- Does the process work? Are we hiring the right candidates?
- Is the person a good fit for the job *and* the University?

3. Onboard - Affirm the Decision

- This is a critical time when new employees determine if they made the right choice.
- Questions they may be asking:
 - How do we do things?
 - What is my role?
 - What are my strengths?
 - What does my future here look like?
 - Who are my key partners?
- Help minimize learning curves with the: [Orientation Checklist for Supervisors](#)



First Impressions Matter!

What are some ways you onboard your new employees or colleagues?

What are a few things you cover within their first day/week?

Significant Influences on Quality of Employee Experience

- Quality of the relationship between employee and manager
- Role clarity
- The value they bring to their team
- The space and place where they work
- How their work affects their overall wellbeing

After the First 90 Days

Employee & Supervisor Check-In & 90-Day Evaluation

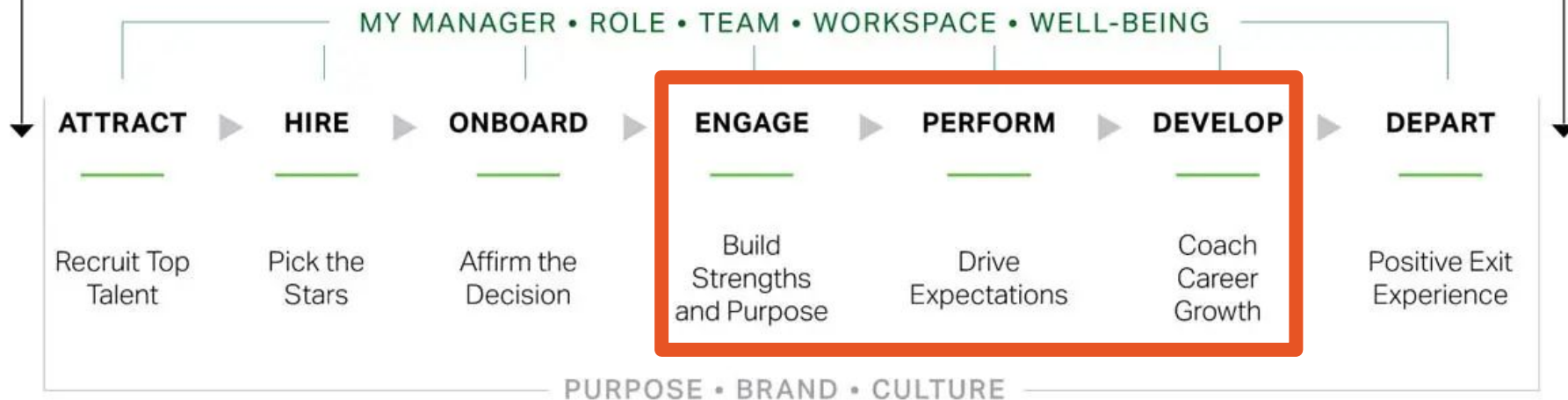
- Provide feedback and address any early concerns
- Supervisor should ask where they can help their employee continue on the path of success
- Identify training and professional development opportunities
- What can we do to improve?

Leading Factors of Job Satisfaction

1. Respectful treatment of all employees at all levels
2. Salary & compensation package
3. Trust between employees and management
4. Job security
5. Opportunities to use their skills and abilities at work

Employee Experience

The Journey With Your Organization



Leadership

What does the term 'leadership' mean and why is it important?

- The ability of an individual to lead, influence, or guide other individuals, teams, or entire organizations towards a common goal.
- Simon Sinek identifies leadership as *“an act of service, driven by purpose and positive influence.”*
- Leaders provide: direction, vision, motivate and inspire others to achieve the goals of the organization, while creating an environment conducive to success by...
 - Promoting communication and collaboration among team members

Gallup Research Says...

Managers account for 70% of the variance in team engagement based on:

- Manager's innate tendencies
- Manager's engagement
- Employee's perception of manager's behaviors

Core Leadership Skills for Any Role

1. Self-awareness
2. Learning agility
3. Communication
4. Influence

Common Challenges for Supervisors

1. Self-awareness

- a. Connecting across differences

2. Learning agility

- a. Navigating the organization
- b. Balancing the new workload

3. Communication

- a. *Effective* communication
- b. Holding people accountable
- c. Resolving interpersonal conflict

4. Influence

- a. Coaching and developing others
- b. Motivating and inspiring others
- c. Delegating and trust-building
- d. Prioritizing competing demands
- e. Driving team achievement
- f. Leading former peers

Core Leadership Skill: Self-Awareness

- Maximizing your strengths and compensating for weaknesses
- Recognizing your own values, biases, and perspectives
- Think about how you've been shaped by your background & social identity!

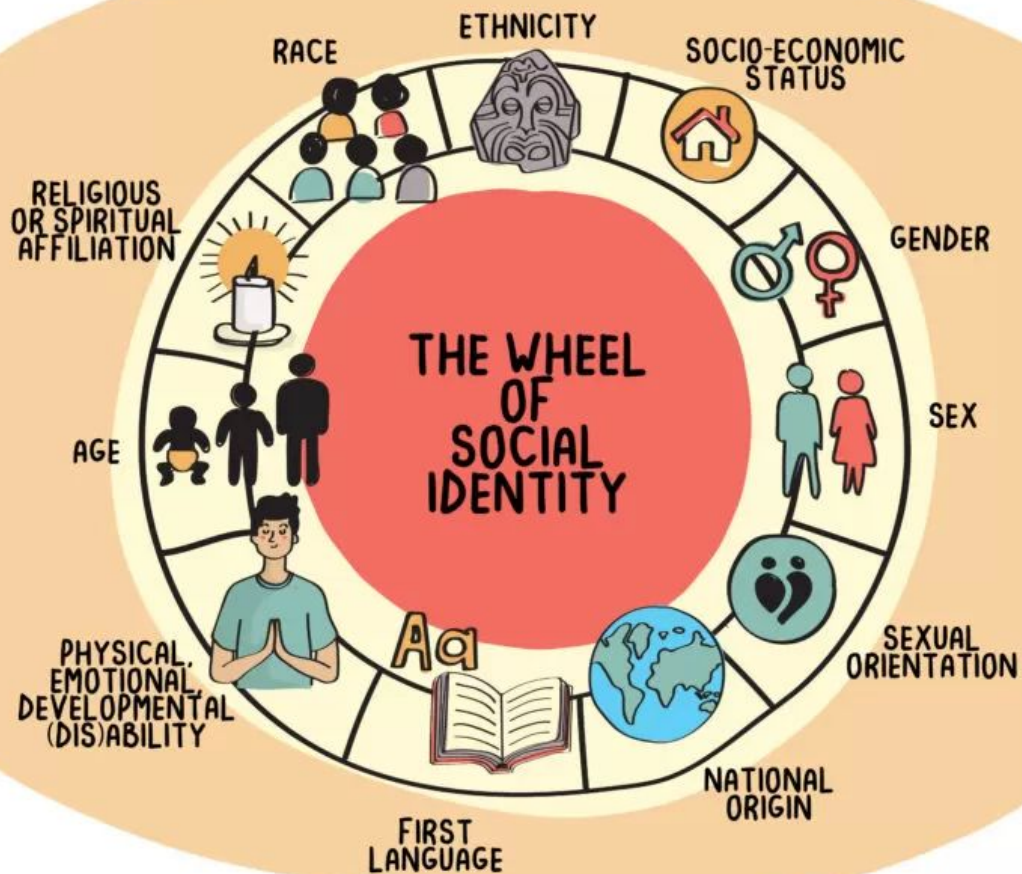
Common challenges:

- Connecting across differences

*“Knowing and leading yourself is
key to becoming as effective as
possible at leading others.”*

- Center for Creative Leadership





Tips for Building Self-Awareness

1. Reflect on your own experiences (e.g., lessons learned and success stories).
2. Take time to understand your own identity and how it affects your interactions with others.
3. Don't assume that others will have the same experiences, level of understanding that you do.

Core Leadership Skills for Any Role

~~1. Self-awareness~~

3. Communication

2. Learning agility

4. Influence

Core Leadership Skill: Learning Agility

agile adjective

ag·ile ('a-jəl) -jī(-ə)l

Synonyms of *agile* >

- 1 : marked by ready ability to move with quick easy grace
| an *agile* dancer
- 2 : having a quick resourceful and adaptable character
| an *agile* mind

• agilely ('a-jəl(l)-lē) -jī(-ə)(l)-lē adverb

Core Leadership Skill: Learning Agility

Individual contributor

- We are all lifelong learners!
- Learning from mistakes
- Ask insightful questions
- Openness to feedback
- Learning new skills

As a leader

- Inspire learning in others
- Create a learning culture

Common Challenges



- Navigating the organization
- Balancing the new workload

Tips for Learning Agility

Give yourself time and grace...but stay focused on the goal!

- Navigating the organization
 - Familiarize yourself with the organization, get involved, build relationships, and stay up to date with communications
- Balancing the new workload
 - Take the time to make the time. Plan ahead to manage stress, prioritize goals/tasks, and make room for professional development (and encourage your team to do the same!)

Core Leadership Skills for Any Role

~~1. Self-awareness~~

3. Communication

~~2. Learning agility~~

4. Influence

Core Leadership Skill: Communication

- Creating space where people *can* communicate!
- Don't just talk, but listen with intention and empathy
- Ask clarifying questions to better understand the message
- Think about what you would want if you were on the other end while also recognizing they may want something different, and that's okay too!

Core Leadership Skill: Communication

As an Individual Contributor

- Clear writing abilities
- Speaking with clarity
- Active listening skills

As a leader

- Encouraging discussion
- Building trust
- Conveying vision
- Strategic intent

Common challenges

- Communicating more effectively
 - Clearly articulate thoughts
 - Active listening
 - Empathy
- Holding people accountable
- Resolving interpersonal conflict



Employee engagement grows when people feel connected to their work, valued for their strengths and supported by great managers.

-Gallup Research

Key Drivers of Employee Engagement

1. **Purpose** – Doing work that is meaningful and mission-driven
2. **Focus on Strengths**– Feeling encouraged to do what they do best every day
3. **Caring Managers** – Having *genuine* support
4. **Ongoing Conversations** – Consistent and ongoing feedback
5. **Development** – Opportunities to learn and grow

This all starts with...communication.

Key Drivers of Employee Engagement

1. Purpose – Doing work that is meaningful and mission-driven
 - a. “Why am I even doing what I’m doing?...Does my work even matter?”
2. Focus on Strengths– Feeling encouraged to do what they do best every day
 - a. “I never feel good enough...my meetings always focus on what I can do more of and do better with.”
3. Caring Managers – Having *genuine* support
 - a. “No one cares...I’m just another cog in the wheel.”
4. Ongoing Conversations – Consistent and ongoing feedback
 - a. “I guess I’m doing a good job? No one has really told me otherwise.”
5. Development – Opportunities to learn and grow
 - a. “I feel stuck and uninspired.”

The Power of 1:1 Meetings

1. Do you hold regular meetings?
2. Do you feel like they are valuable? If so...why not?

Ineffective 1:1s

- Status updates with no real conversation
 - A runthrough of to-dos and no room for conversation regarding progress, roadblocks, goals, and direction
- Agendas...
 - Does not exist on either end
 - Is one-sided
 - Is 100% task focused
- Time not being valued
 - Meetings are rushed, rescheduled, and treated as a box checked

Tips for an *Effective* 1:1 Meeting

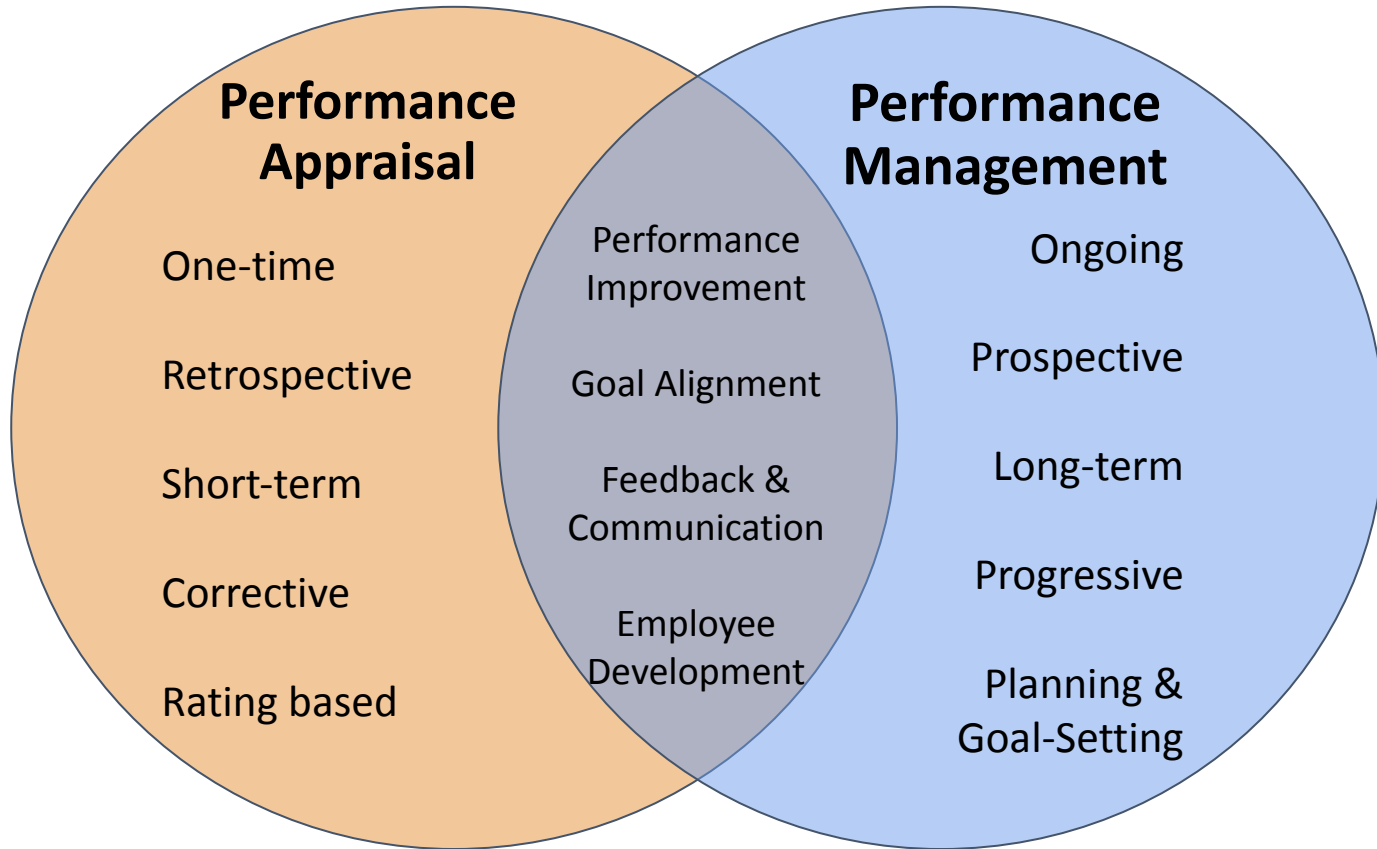
Instead of... → Try...

- **Checklist of items** → connect work to growth and purpose
 - These tasks tap into x skill...what can I do to help you sharpen that skill?
- **Shallow conversations** → get to genuinely know your employee and take interest in their long term goals
- **Dominating the conversation/agenda** → let the employee take the driver seat
 - What's on your mind? Tell me more...(and give them the space they need!)
- **Casual conversation with no actionable items** → hold *each other* accountable
 - Keep record of your conversations to follow up on loose ends and ensure you are both on the same page.

Time to Talk!



"I know it's not an elephant, but we still need to talk about it."



Why Performance Conversations Can Be Hard

- Out of my comfort zone (ignore it and it'll go away)
- Let it wait too long ... "I'M BUSY!"
- What if it backfires?
- Fear of being the bad person
- Fear of being unfair (check yourself!)
- Employee is a friend as well
- Nice person, bad habits
- I know the person has a medical issue (but does HR know?)
- It's not just about a form...it never ends

Some Challenging Realities

Some conversations may be easy when you and the individual are on the same page but it is likely they may disagree with what they hear.

Things to consider:

1. Remember the “Why”
2. Find your center and prepare
3. Handle reactions in the moment
4. Move the conversation to a productive place



Helpful Tips for Dealing with Emotional Reactions

If someone begins to cry...

- Be prepared with tissues and try to have the conversation at the end of the day so they can go home afterwards.
- Know what you might need to set up another meeting once they have calmed down.

If someone begins to yell...

- Ask them to take a deep breath and lower their voice. Reschedule the meeting if it is not constructive.
- If they yell through passion, let them know you appreciate their passion but that they can get their point through without yelling.

If they become defensive...

- Acknowledge and empathize their feelings but remember to stay firm on the issue at hand.
- Clarify intentions (e.g., “I am sharing what I am hearing and seeing.”)

Reminder!

Employee Assistance Program

- Bree Health: 1-800-327-2255 or www.breehealth.com
- [Utica University member guide](#)

You can always call HR for help. Please make sure to do so, especially if other issues arise (e.g., a reference to a medical issue) during the conversation.

Common Causes of Workplace Conflict



1. Conflicting priorities

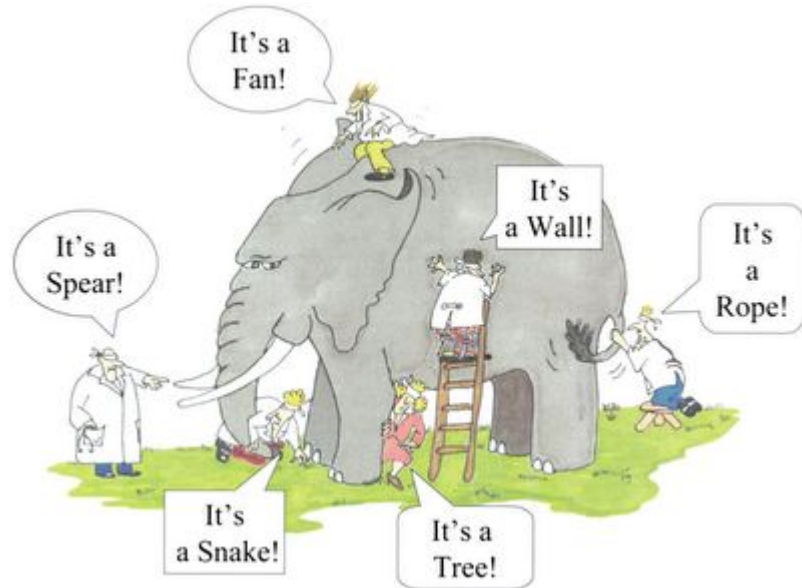
Differences in priorities may include or be influenced by...

- Budgets and resources
- Incompatible goals
- Reactions to operational and/or structural changes
- Unclear or misunderstanding of expectations

2. Conflicting perspectives

Our perspectives come from how we see and react to the world.
Differing perspectives may stem from different facets of our identity

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Political views
- Personality type



3. Conflicting assumptions

Assumptions come from a misinterpretation of someone else's intentions...something that you accept without question or proof.

“We each view the world through a framework based on our life experiences and might assume others experience things the same way we do.” - SHRM, 2025



“The only way to know what someone intended is to ask them — and the only way to let a person know their impact is to tell them.”

S

SITUATION

ABOUT THE CONTEXT

- Describe the situation.
 - Be specific. The goal is for the receiver to be clear about the time, place, and circumstances.
-

B

BEHAVIOR

ABOUT THE FEEDBACK RECIPIENT

- Describe the observable behavior. Keep it simple and descriptive.
 - Here's what I saw and / or heard — what a video recording would capture.
 - Avoid judgment. Do not talk about what you assume the other was thinking, or the motivation for the behavior.
-

I

IMPACT

ABOUT THE FEEDBACK GIVER, OTHERS, OR COLLECTIVE RESULTS

- Impact on you — what you thought and / or felt.
- Impact on others — how others reacted. Keep it factual.
- Impact on the results of the team, project, and / or organization.

Principles of Effective Communication with SBI Model

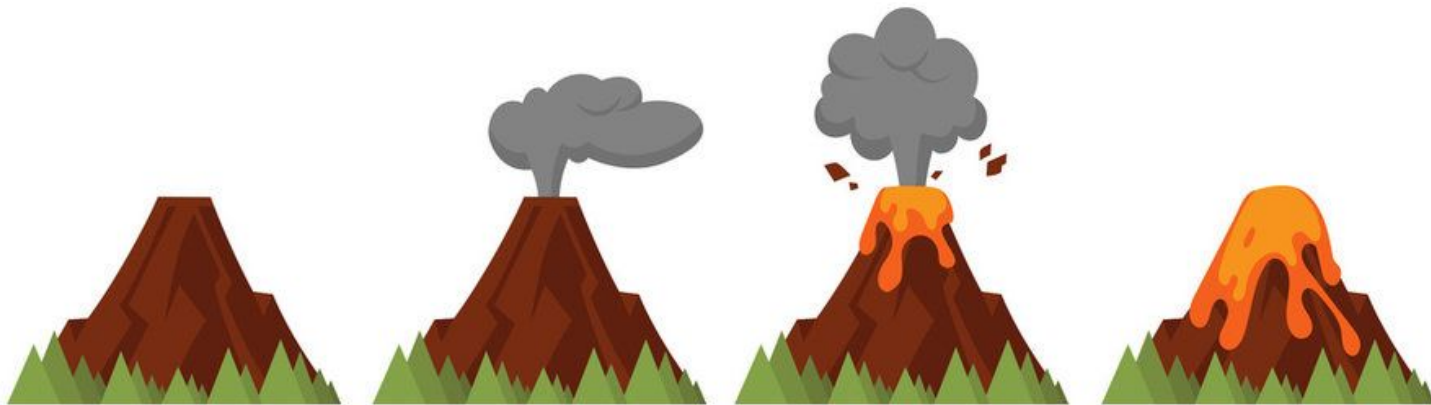
S: “This morning at the 11 a.m. team meeting” vs. “Last week”

B: “You interrupted me while I was telling them about the monthly budget.” vs. “You were rude.”

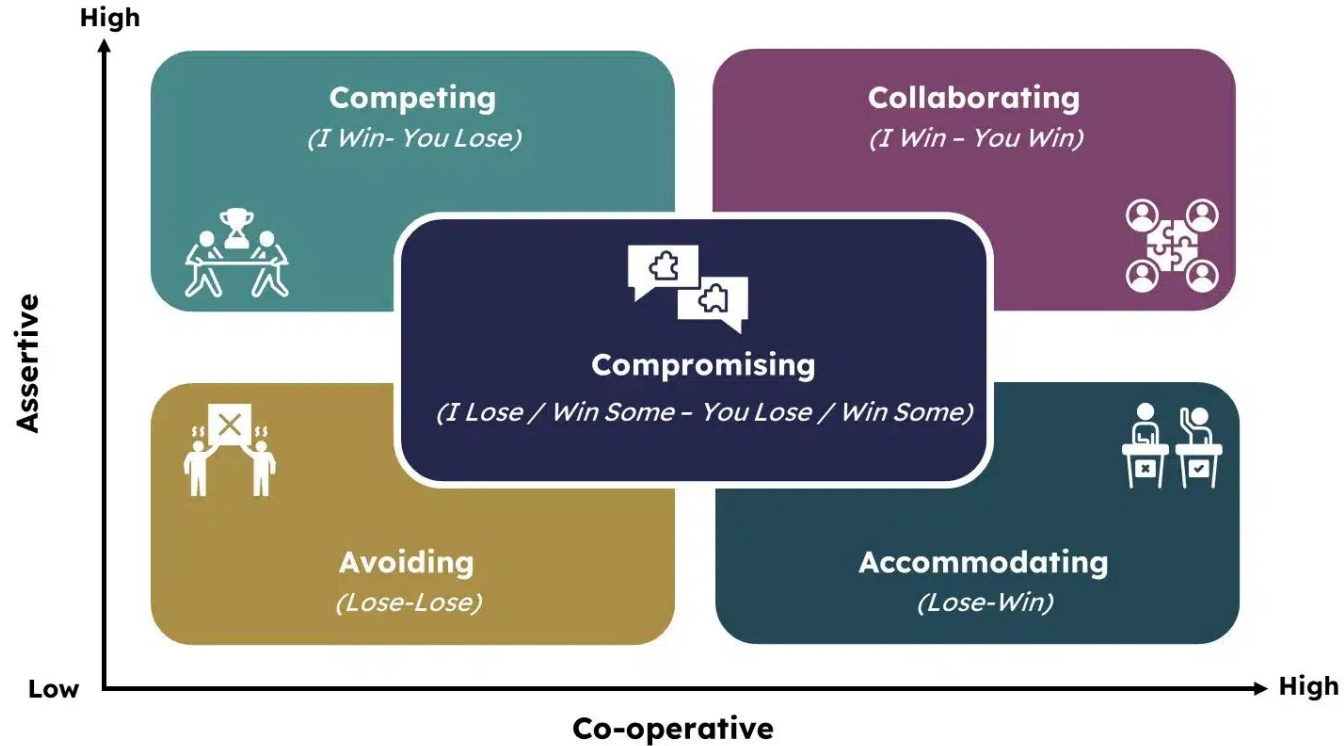
I: “I became frustrated when you interrupted me because I felt like I couldn’t get a word in.”

4. Conflicting tolerances

- We all have different comfort levels when it comes to conflict.
- Some are more confrontational whereas others are avoidant.
- When conflict is *avoided* it does not mean it just disappears...instead it lingers until it becomes a larger issue.



Strategies For Conflict Management



Conflict Avoidance

What is it?

Why do we do it?

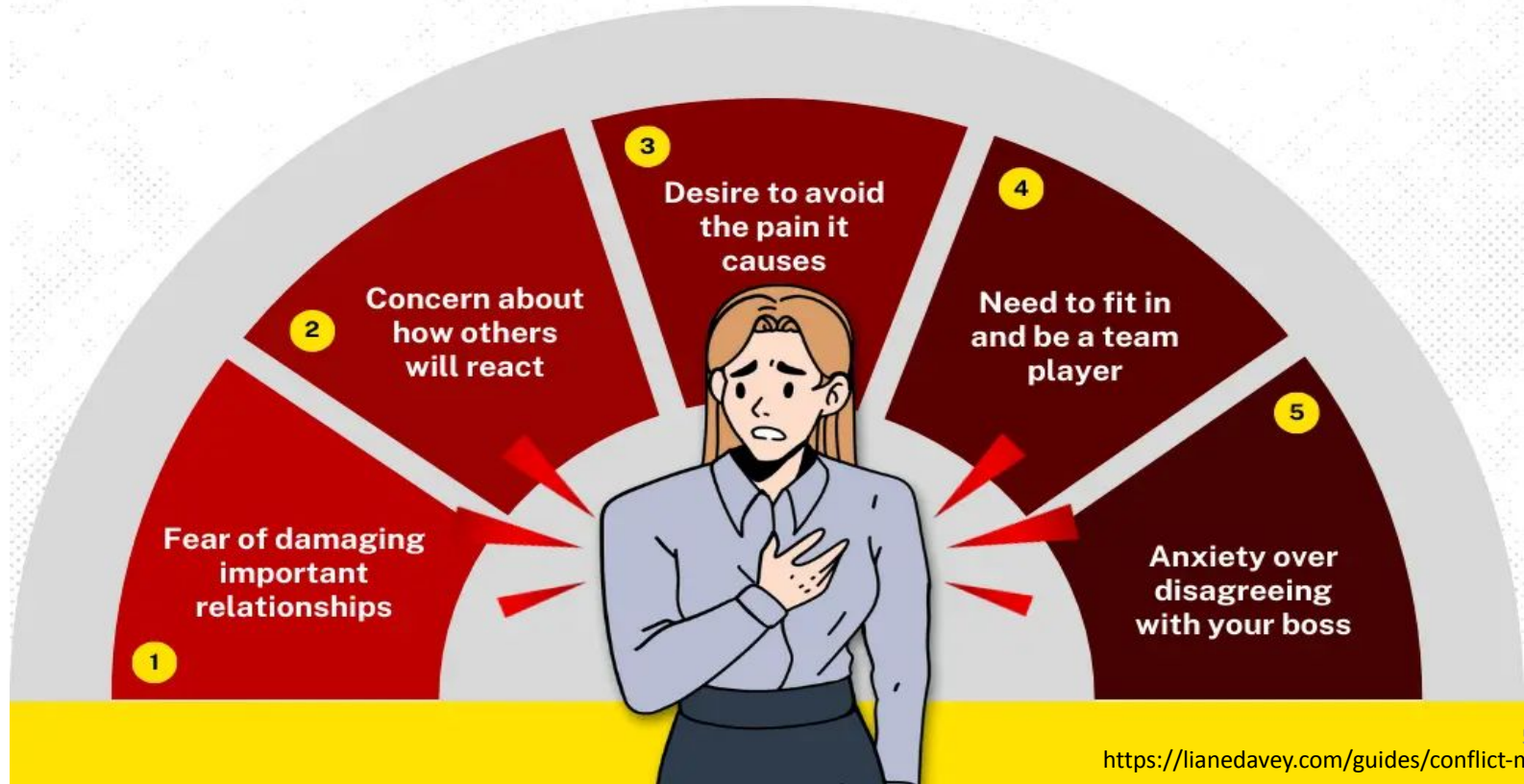
Why does it matter?



What is conflict avoidance?

- “I’ll think about it later” strategy.
- Method to avoid tension, sidestepping issues, and buying time to make decisions.

What Causes Conflict Avoidance?



Why does it matter?

- Increased stress
- Mistrust in organization
- Decrease in overall performance
- Absenteeism
- Turnover

10 Steps to Resolving Conflict

Schedule a meeting to address the problem, preferably at a neutral place.

1. Set ground rules. Ask all parties to treat each other with respect and to make an effort to listen and understand others' views.
2. Ask each participant to describe the conflict, including desired changes. Direct participants to use "I" statements, not "you" statements. They should focus on specific behaviors and problems rather than people.
3. Ask participants to restate what others have said.
4. Summarize the conflict based on what you have heard and obtain agreement from participants.
5. Brainstorm solutions. Discuss all of the options in a positive manner.
6. Rule out any options that participants agree are unworkable.
7. Summarize all possible options for a solution.
8. Assign further analysis of each option to individual participants.
9. Make sure all parties agree on the next steps.
10. Close the meeting by asking participants to shake hands, apologize and thank each other for working to resolve the conflict.

Core Leadership Skills for Any Role

~~1. Self-awareness~~

~~3. Communication~~

~~2. Learning agility~~

4. Influence

Core Leadership Skill: Influence

- When communication becomes action!
- Aligning efforts of others
- Building commitment from people at all levels



Core Leadership Skill: Influence

As an Individual Contributor

- Working effectively with people whom you have no authority
- Present logical and compelling arguments
- Engaging in give-and-take

As a leader

- Steering long-range objectives, inspiration and motivation

Core Leadership Skill: Influence

Social learning theory & modeling positive workplace behaviors

- Treat everyone at all levels with respect
- Project a positive attitude
- Be polite
- Show good judgment
- Be ethical
- Dress appropriately

Lead from a Position of Confidence

- Trust in the decisions you are making because you were hired to solve the problem or do the job in the space you oversee
- Empower your team to make decision in their roles because you hired them to help you do the job and address the challenges as describe in the job description
- Encourage collaboration with and amongst themselves, as well as with others in space where missions align
- Involvement of employees in decision-making spawns better ideas, improved results, foster greater loyalty, increase productivity, and enhance teamwork

Remember...You are more than a supervisor!

Role as a supervisor does not all have to be technical.

- It is more than timesheets, checklists, performance evaluations, and meetings
- **You** are a model of behavior
- **You** can help shape someone's future
- **You** may be there for some of the best times and worst times
- Be the supervisor that you always needed

Questions?



THANK



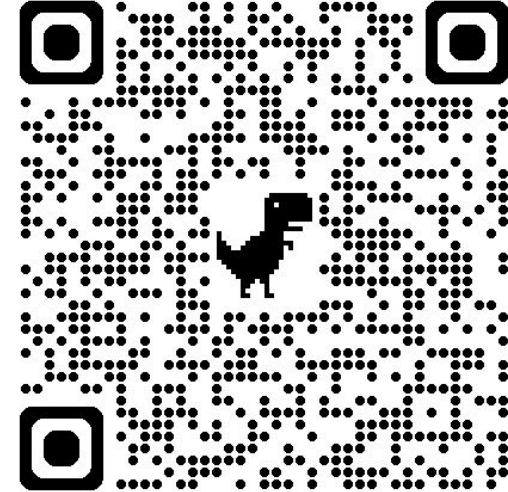
Contact us at ANY time!

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Feedback



<https://forms.gle/8FhFEhZFoodSENWAA>

References

Center for Creative Leadership:

[The Core Leadership Skills You Need in Every Role](#)

[12 Common Challenges of New Managers](#)

[Use Situation-Behavior-Impact \(SBI\)[™] to Understand Intent](#)

Forbes: [3 Steps For Effective Communication And Dealing With Sensitive Issues](#)

Gallup: [What Is Employee Engagement and How Do You Improve It?](#)

SHRM: [How to Manage and Improve Employee Retention](#)

Utica University: [Supervisor Orientation Checklist](#)