

Roles and responsibilities

By making the supervisor responsibilities clear, the role and remit of the position can be fully acknowledged and recognised. This allows the supervisor to conduct their responsibilities with a clear focus and whilst doing so, also allows them to function in a non-biased manner from which clear, unimpeded assessment and measuring of compliance can be made.

The role of a supervisor is a pivotal position for work activities, therefore any additional workload and or distractions outside of their remit must be avoided. This strict application will ensure that the supervisor is able to fully function within their role, unimpeded by additional workplace pressures and stresses, which may compromise their ability to effectively perform their role. This potential scenario must be routinely assessed by senior management, as failure to do so may result in the supervisor being overloaded and distracted from their core duties and reduce their ability to effectively manage and deliver.

Likewise, this scenario has the potential to develop to a point whereby the supervisor's duties may be eroded to the extent that they are less willing and/or able to intervene when a situation arises. As such it is important to have a clear separation between a supervisor and manager role and responsibilities.

To effectively function at the level expected, the supervisor will be required to regularly monitor the work areas and record their findings. Doing so will allow them to spot any hazards or emerging issues before they cause a concern. Supervisors must ensure that all workers are informed of the health and safety hazards on site and the precautions they need to take.

Supervisors must have the ability to oversee the daily performance of their team(s), activity dynamics and workplace undertakings. The supervisor should also be

capable of managing a wide range of people e.g., team/task members, contractors, periodic visitors' from both the client and or external authorities and members of the public etc.

Supervisors should be excellent communicators, define clear objectives for their teams, identify goals/blockers, encourage and engage employees and monitor team performance for effective review. These critical messages must be delivered in a confident and concise manner, whilst in a delivery format which is readily acceptable and tailored to the target audience.

Supervisors must be able to recognise abilities in others and in doing so appoint and manage according to individual limitations and/or strengths. This is also a critical element of the supervisor's role in identifying team members for onward development.

These attributes will also allow the supervisor to issue and accept 'challenge' within the role, which they will see as an opportunity rather than a threat. This is pertinent and requires a degree of sensitivity, as an individual may bring an issue to a supervisor which on the face of it may appear trivial compared to other issues, but to the person presenting the issue it is very important. Therefore, a consistent, empathetic, and professional approach must be at the forefront of a supervisor's skill set.

Taking these characteristics into consideration, for organisations who are recruiting and appointing an individual into a supervisory position it is imperative that they look beyond their technical ability and focus on their attitude and behaviours to effectively carry out the role. Supervisors are required to implement and monitor controls at the point of work. Whereas a manager is required to focus on medium/longer term more strategic requirements.

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The table below summarises this approach:

Management - Strategic	Supervisor - Point of Work Compliance
Source the labour, equipment and materials resources for the work	Confirm that the resources provided are suitable and sufficient against the Safe Systems Of Work (people are fit, competent, equipment/materials in good order and available).
Design (plan) the delivery and routine over-view including essential routine activity specific documentation	Confirm agreement to proceed with management on the given start date/time. (Ensuring all are content and that no last-minute problems have arisen).
Leading risk assessment and identification of safety controls and creation of Safe Systems of Work (SSOW)	Accepting and signing onto any permit paperwork.
Request approval to conduct work as designed (planned)	Conduct Pre- Start Briefing to the team/s to explain and confirm understanding of the Risk assessment and SSOW controls.
Request authorisation and timetable to proceed with the work, eliminating confliction with other activities	Oversee that teams are complying with instructions and that controls are being implemented fully.
Sign off that the work has been delivered to the correct quality	Ensure cessation of work if issues arise or if an incident/ accident occurs. Including protecting other parties visiting or attending the work area.
Escalate events to senior management and stakeholders	Ensuring site is made safe and at the end of work period.
	Return and sign off Permits or Certificate of Isolation (CoI) (where used).

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