

## **Meeting a Supervisor's Expectations Through Good Character Traits**

It is important for you to do what your supervisor expects, which of course includes doing your job properly. A job description is significant in understanding your duties. Good, clear communication with your supervisor is important. Your supervisor expects you to communicate and should tell you what else is expected of you on the job. Supervisors may think their expectations are “common sense” and fail to communicate them to you. But these may not necessarily be common sense things. They may be things you learn the hard way from work experience. We'll review some of the “little things” you need to know to get along with your supervisor. They are important because “little things” to you often become “big things” to your supervisor, as they are multiplied by all the workers they supervise.

There are six behaviors you should practice to satisfy your supervisor's expectations:

1. Be truthful
2. Be cooperative
3. Get your work done
4. Be adaptive
5. Take the initiative
6. Return from your break on time

- ◆ **Be Truthful.** Your supervisor expects you to tell the truth at all times. If you make mistakes, don't try to cover them up by lying. Lies will usually be discovered and are grounds for dismissal. Supervisors need employees they can count on to tell the truth at all times. Without honesty between the supervisor and workers, it is impossible for either to do a good job.

1. What are some reasons a worker might lie to his or her supervisor?

2. What problems could be caused for the supervisor by these lies?

## Module 9 v Activity 24 v COOPERATION

- ◆ **Don't Extend Your Breaks.** A supervisor expects you to work during your scheduled hours. Normally a full-time worker will be allowed a 15-minute break mid-morning and again mid-afternoon, in addition to a 30-minute or one-hour lunch break. Your supervisor expects you to stay within the limits of your scheduled breaks. When you don't return from a break on time, it can cause problems. A customer may have to wait, another worker may not be able to take their break, and others may not be able to finish a task until you complete your part of the job. If you can't get back from break on time, explain the reason to your supervisor. Make sure you aren't extending your breaks unless there is an exceptionally good reason.

1. What are some acceptable reasons for extended breaks?

- ◆ **Get Your Work Done.** You should complete all assigned tasks as quickly as you can while doing the best job possible. Your supervisor will have difficulty checking your work all the time but will expect you to continue working productively. If circumstances prevent you from completing a job, notify your supervisor immediately. You should balance your work between completing a task as quickly as possible and producing the highest quality of work you can. An inexperienced worker may have some difficulty understanding how to achieve this balance. Ask your supervisor for feedback about how well you are meeting these priorities.

1. What obstacles might make it different or impossible for you to do your job?

- ◆ **Be Cooperative.** Be cooperative when your supervisor asks for your assistance. When someone can't work a scheduled time, be willing to change your schedule if possible. Help with a task that is not normally your responsibility. In special situations your supervisor will need more help from everybody. Cooperation is a mutual thing and most supervisors will remember your help the next time you need a day off for a special reason. Thus, cooperation benefits you and also creates a more pleasant work atmosphere.

1. What are some reasons for cooperation?

## Module 9 v Activity 24 v COOPERATION

- ◆ **Be Adaptive.** Be willing to adapt to new situations. This means you are willing to change when necessary. The organization you work for will need to change as the world around it changes. Employees sometimes resist change because of poor self-esteem, threats to personal security, fear of the unknown, a lack of trust, or inability to see the larger picture. When you understand the reason for resistance, you can work to resist it. You must be willing to adjust to change. Supervisors probably don't want to make changes any more than you, but it is their responsibility to do so and they need your cooperation. It may help to think about all the positive things that will result from the changes.

1. What are some typical reasons for change within an organization?

- ◆ **Take the Initiative.** You need to take the initiative to find ways to help your supervisor. There is probably always a lot of work to do. After your own work is completed, look around your work site for other tasks to do. However, it doesn't help anyone if your work suffers because you were trying to help with something else.

1. How can you take the initiative to help your supervisor?