ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR AND TOOL BOX MEETING.
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Introduction

Supervising is like parenting. These are two of the most important jobs any one can do, but few people are adequately prepared or trained to do them. Most people learn by trial and error with varying degrees of success. But both jobs are far too important to be left to chance and the good news is that you can learn with some help and guidance how to be successful in them.

Construction Supervisor's Role

A role is a main activity that you are charged with undertaking, e.g.

- Provide leadership and collaborative direction to my group
- To be a team leader
- To ensure my group have the human and physical resources to undertake their work in an efficient manner at construction site

Construction Supervisor's Responsibilities

It can be divided under two main headings:

Job Related
- Cost Control
- Equipment
- Goals
- Materials
- Plans
- Procedures
- Productivity
- Quality
- Standards
- Training
People Related

- Coaching
- Communicating
- Delegating
- Disciplining
- Leadership
- Managing yourself
- Motivating
- Supervising others

New Ways of Construction Supervising:

Over the years, the role of a construction supervisor has changed significantly from being a top-down, autocratic order-giver to a team leader, coach and motivator.

- from ordering to asking; and consulting.
- from telling to listening and asking questions.
- from policing to coaching.
- from each person for himself to teamwork.
- from fear to mutual respect.

This change has come about, not because people are becoming "soft-hearted," but because it is now very clear that people are more productive if they are happy, motivated and upbeat. This takes place in an employee-friendly environment. The change is one of enlightened self-interest on the part of managers who decide what training is appropriate for their supervisors.

Guidelines for Construction Supervisory Behaviour

Without having a clear idea of what is acceptable behaviour for a supervisory, you are likely to model your behaviour after some role model in your life: a parent, a teacher, a boss. This could be good; but it could be disastrous if any of these people is dictatorial and demanding, or weak and indecisive.

A major benefit of construction supervisory training program is that it provides you with guidelines about what is acceptable supervisory behaviour, and what is not. It also provides you with the skills to bring about this behavioural change. Once you know this, you will be more confident in what you do, as you won't be wondering whether you are taking the right action.
Construction Supervisor's Self-Assessment Survey

The Self-Assessment of Construction Supervisory Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes survey below may look formidable but it effectively outlines the areas that you need to eventually master in order to become an outstanding supervisor. Don't be dismayed, you don't have to master all these areas in a month or two. It will take time and you will need to systematically work away at one or two areas at a time.

Most Construction supervisors get promoted because they are "good on the job." They are hard working, productive. Hopefully, they are also loyal to the company and a good team player. While this is a good start to being a good construction supervisor, there are other skills they need to develop in terms of leadership: how to inspire, motivate, coach, delegate, discipline, plan, team-build etc.

Leadership

- I have a clear understanding of the Company's goals and objectives
- I understand how my role fits into the goals of the Company
- I have a clear vision of the objectives of my construction area
- I communicate the Company and area goals to the people under my supervision (my team) on a regular basis
- I give frequent feedback to the people in my team to encourage their development and the achievement of their goals and objectives
- I recognize and celebrate the successes of those in my team
- I feel that the people in the Construction area are our most important assets
- I believe that I treat others as I would like to be treated myself
- I consciously work at setting an example of effective leadership
- I am actively working on developing a positive self-image
- My own enthusiasm is increasing the desire of my team to do better

Goal-setting

- I have a written annual plan and personal performance goals which have been agreed upon by me and the person to whom I report
- I work with my team regularly to help them set SMART goals that support their workplace development
- I break down my annual goals into shorter-term goals
  I review the progress of my goals regularly
  I have a method for measuring and keeping track of my goal achievement
- I ensure that the members of my team know on a regular basis the status of the Company's goal achievement
My goals for myself as a Construction Supervisor and for my team tie into the Company's goals
My goal is to achieve Zero Accident by removing Construction Hazards with possible safety measures at site
I set goals that stretch and challenge me
I achieve a high proportion of the goals I set
I enjoy challenges, and see them as opportunities for growth

**Personal Productivity**

- I clearly understand my priorities
- I spend only a small portion of my time in crisis management
- I delegate work to others in an effective manner
- My area of responsibility runs smoothly when I am not there
- I accept personal responsibility when I make a mistake
- I ensure that tool box meetings I run have a clear agenda and start and finish on time
- I plan my work in advance and work the plan
- I rarely procrastinate or leave things to the last minute
- I keep others informed, in advance, when I cannot meet their deadlines

**Motivating Others**

- I give feedback on a timely basis
- I know the people on my team well enough to understand what is important to them
- I believe in the abilities of people on my team and communicate my confidence in them
- I provide (or am instrumental in obtaining) training for the people on my team that they need to develop the skills necessary to do their job well
- I ensure clear goals and expectations are set with those people who report to me
- Morale in my department (team) is high
- I always share credit for success
- I ensure that people on my team are clear about what their responsibilities are.
- I ask questions and encourage people to find out answers to their concerns
- I listen to the ideas of others
- I am flexible in how things get done, providing the results are satisfactory
- When things go wrong, I question what I could have done differently. I share responsibility.

**Coaching for Success**

- I coach my people to help them achieve success in what they do
- I provide one-on-one sessions with each person who reports to me
- I ensure that during coaching sessions the other person(s) talk more than I do
- I really listen to understand the concerns of others
- I help others to be self-aware of the areas in which they need to improve or develop
- I support the goals set by individuals on my team
- I help members of my team to be accountable for their goals and performance
- I deal openly, constructively and promptly with any negative performance issues
- I encourage and ask for feedback on my own performance from my team

Communications and Building Relationships

- I listen to understand the other person's perspective before I give mine
- I always wait until others have finished talking before I speak; I don't interrupt
- I spend time planning important communications, written or oral
- I develop strong business relationships with the people on my team as well as with suppliers and customers
- When people bring to my attention my own negative performance issues, I respond in a non-defensive manner
- I speak calmly to people, not raising my voice, regardless of the issue at hand
- If I have an issue with someone, I always deal directly with them, I do not talk behind their back
- I observe others' non-verbal communication to assess how they are really feeling
- I maintain an open mind in most discussions
- I seek and consider other people's opinions

Dealing with Performance Issues

- I deal with performance issues on a timely basis
- I allow others to explain their viewpoint before coming to a conclusion
- I see dealing with negative issues as an opportunity to train and develop people
- I make sure that clear expectations are set and agreed upon with the individual after a performance issue discussion
- I am willing to accept that my perception of an issue may not always be right
- I avoid argument, accusation and sarcasm
- I encourage others on my team to be open about their mistakes so that we can make corrections and learn

Team Building and Synergy

- I see my position as Foreman as being a team leader and that those I supervise are all members of my team
- I ensure that my team and its members have clear goals and expectations
- I am willing to delegate responsibility to team members
- I give regular feedback to the members of my team; not just about negative issues but I also regularly tell members of my team when they have performed well
Others see me as a team player
I follow through on commitments I make to team members
The results of team efforts are shared with members of the team (e.g. I do not take all the credit for my team's successes)
I actively promote team spirit and positive interpersonal relationships amongst the members of my team
As team leader, I move promptly to discourage behaviour by individual(s) in my team when such behaviour has a negative impact on team-building (e.g. “turf wars”, “inner circles”, “behind-back gossip” etc.

Managing Stress

I am aware of what causes me stress on the job and I manage those situations
I notice when team members are under stress and help them to deal with the situation
I discuss my concerns and problems with the person to whom I report
I do not take my work problems home, nor do I bring my home problems to work
I use small amounts of stress as a motivator
I enjoy most of the work I do
I strive to maintain a good balance between my workplace life and my home life
I eat a balanced diet
I exercise regularly

Enhancing Future Results

I am continually upgrading my skills
I am aware of areas I need to improve
I ask advice from people with more experience
I admit when I do not know something
I invest time in training or coaching others
I spend time weekly to study or read
I ask others regularly how they think I could improve
That is the conclusion of this article which I hope you have found helpful and informative.

Construction Supervisory Responsibility for Safety

The Supervisor is in a key position in the organizational structure to carry out management’s safety policy and to prevent injuries to workers. While the importance of this part of the Supervisor’s job depends upon how much it is stressed by management, a conscientious Supervisor is always aware of his duty to keep the employees under his direction away from harm and injury.
In order that a Supervisor may be most effective in maintaining safe conditions and promoting safe work methods, there are a number of details of the safety programme which he should know.

The Construction Supervisor should know

1. What the safety policy is, and what it specifies as to its responsibility and authority.
2. What his total responsibilities are and how he is expected to integrate safety with them; which areas, operations, machines, personnel he directs; what is to be done about maintenance and repairs, working conditions, provision of guards and protective devices.
3. What he is to do about determining qualifications of workers in his area; what disciplinary action is permitted and under what circumstances.
4. Who is to instruct and train worker in safety, first aid, and fire prevention and protection.
5. What the safe work methods are for each job, and where information about them is obtainable.
6. What safety devices and personal protective equipment are to be used on each job, and procedures for making them available.
7. What his relationship it to be with the safety committee.
8. What commitments he may make to correct unsafe conditions and the cost limit below which he does not need additional authority.
10. What reports are required – inspection, accident, accident investigation, corrective actions taken.

Nineteen Ways a Good Construction Supervisors Puts Safety to Work

1. Takes the initiative in telling management about ideas for safer layout of equipment, tools and processes.
2. Is a professional when it comes to taking care of equipment and keeping it safe.
3. Knows the value of safety guards and makes sure that proper guards are provided and used.
4. Takes pride in knowing how to use his equipment safely.
5. Takes charge of operations that are not routine to make certain that safety precautions are determined and observed.
6. Arrange daily Tool Box Meeting as a group activity discussing the safety related activities for 10-15 minutes.
7. Arranges for adequate storage and enforces good housekeeping.
8. Know which materials are hazardous and how to handle them safely.
9. Becomes an expert on waste disposal for good housekeeping and fire protection.
10. Keeps his eyes open for the employee who may be a safer worker in another job.
11. Continues to “talk safety”, and impress safety upon his men.
12. Works with every man under him without favouritism and helps them work together.
13. Establishes good relations and union stewards and with the safety committees.
14. Sets the example in safety.
15. Uses judgment in criticizing or praising, and knows the value of public praise.
16. Not only explains how to do a job but shows how and observes to ensure that it continues to be done safely.
17. Studies the seemingly unimportant accidents and takes corrective measures.
18. Keeps everyone informed of the safety policy.
19. Knows which personal protective equipment is necessary on each job and sees that such equipment is used.

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**TOOL-BOX MEETING**

**TOOL-BOX MEETING** is a brief safety talk on a specific subject at the beginning of the shift. It can be done in a variety of ways but are typically a brief (10-15 minute) on-the-job meetings held to keep employees alert to work-related accidents and illnesses. It is group activity with interactive discussion meeting on safety with day activity of specific topics. Toolbox Topics are used to cover a variety of short safety training subjects and to remind employees each day before they go to work, the importance of being safe. It is a quick and easy way to impart safety information to employees. Toolbox talks are good options for small group more than one number, or when there isn’t time to put on a full-scale safety meeting with slides, charts, and graphs. Tailgate or Toolbox safety meetings are 10-15 minute. This meeting is called tool box meeting as the meeting is conducted prior to start the work with having tool box.

Tailgate/toolbox safety meetings can be used to address actual problems on the job or in the shop. The site supervisor leading the meeting can draw on the experience of workers, and use that experience to remind all employees –especially newer ones – of the dangers of working with particular kinds of machinery, tools, equipment and materials and monitored. Tool Box meeting is on the job safety training.

When presented properly, a toolbox talk grabs listeners’ attention and holds their interest. Toolbox talks should be clear and concise, addressing just a handful of key points. To ensure comprehension and retention, the person delivering the toolbox talk should end it with a recap of the main points. The more appropriate location for conducting tool box meeting is the work location.

**What to Talk About?**
Talk about work practices, machinery, tools, equipment materials, attitudes, and anything else that may cause or contribute to a work-related accident or illness. Keep the topic relevant to the job or tasks at hand. The purpose of Tool-Box meeting is to plan day to day activities with adequate Safety measures in advance for the benefit to achieve safe working method.

**How to Run a Good Meeting**
1. Hold the meeting on the job, preferably where everyone can sit and relax.
2. Hold meetings at the beginning of shift or after a break.

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3. Choose the topic carefully. Topics should be about health and safety problems on the job. Research the problem before the meeting. For machinery, consult the manufacturer's operations manual. For handling toxic substances, get a copy of the material safety data sheet. Your company's insurance carrier is another good source of information. Cal/OSHA also supplies a wide range of printed material on worksite safety and health.
4. Don't choose too broad a topic.
5. Encourage employee participation at work place - keep your meeting short.
6. Practicing everyday tool box meeting get better productivity, better quality and better safety in a work area.

Preparing for a Toolbox Talk
Here are some steps for preparing for a toolbox talk:
Observe and make notes of conditions in the workplace, such as potential hazards and worker carelessness.

- Jot down an outline of three to five main safety points for the toolbox talk
- Come up with a "punchline" a short sentence or phrase that sums up the toolbox talk and is easy to remember

Sample Topic for Tailgate/Toolbox Safety Meetings:

1. Power Tool Safety

Portable electric power tools are just what their name implies, power tools. Because they're powerful, workers need to be aware of their limitations and potential hazards.

- Use and maintain tools with care.
- Keep them sharp and clean for their best and safest performance.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for lubricating and changing tool accessories.
- Use the right tool for the job.
- Don't force a small tool or attachment to do the job of a heavy-duty tool. It overstrains the tool and overloads the motor.
- Keep guards in place and follow lockout/tagout procedures.
- Unless it's designed for it, never use a portable electric tool where there are flammable vapors or gases present.
- If the tool is equipped with a three-prong plug, it should be plugged into a three-hold electrical receptacle. If an adapter is used to accommodate it to a two-prong receptacle, the adapter wire must be attached to a known ground. Never remove the third prong.
- Keep the cord in good condition.
- Keep it away from heat, oil, and sharp edges.
- Never carry a tool by its cord, or yank the cord to disconnect it from a receptacle.
- Never carry a plug-in tool with your finger on the switch.
- Report any defective or broken plugs and insulation on cords.
- Take the tool out of service to be repaired or replaced.
• The greatest hazard of power tools is electric shock, so make sure the tool is properly grounded before it's turned on.
• It is dangerous to use power tools in damp or wet locations or if the worker is perspiring. Moisture helps electricity to flow easily through the body. Rubber gloves and footwear are recommended when working outdoors where it's damp.
• Wear proper clothing and personal protective equipment when working with power tools.
• Do not use Loose clothing or jewelry that can get caught in moving parts.
• Safety glasses or goggles can protect against flying particles or chips from entering the eye. Keep others out of the plane of rotation so they won't be hit by flying particles.
• Keep your balance and proper footing when working with power tools, being careful not to overreach.
• When you've finished with the tool, put it down or store it so that it can't cause an injury to another worker.
• Keep the work area well lit and clean. Cluttered areas and benches invite accidents.

![Safety Recommendations:](image)

Date:

2. Housekeeping

• Floors, platforms, stairs, and walkways must be kept in good repair. Keep them free of slipping and tripping hazards.
• Do not allow waste materials and spills to accumulate in working areas. Maintain an ongoing program of waste disposal.
• Work areas must be well-lit.
• Place, stack, or store materials and equipment so they will not cause injury to workers.

The area within and surrounding the construction site can be very hazardous to workers if debris is allowed to build up.

National Safety Council, India
• Use a waste bin to prevent buildup of rubbish. Ensure there are no protruding nails on loose or fixed materials.
• Use danger or caution tape where open trenches or excavations could present a hazard.
• Ensure all ground areas are firm and level where scaffolding or ladders are to be placed.

National Safety Council, India
Project: ______________________________
Address: ____________________________________________
Employer:____________________          Supervisor:__________________________
Date:______________      Time:_____________      Shift:___________________________
Number in crew: ___________      Number attending:__________________________

Other safety issues or suggestions made by crew members:
____________________________________________________________________________
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Record of those attending
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Manager's remarks:
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Manager:______________________________          Supervisor:__________________
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3. Excavation

- Excavation slopes and/or supporting systems must be inspected daily for erosion or deterioration.
- Excavated material must be kept back at least 600 mm (2 ft.) from the edge of any trench excavation and 1.2 m (4 ft.) from any other excavation.
- When necessary, excavations must be covered, or substantial guardrails or barriers must be erected around excavations to prevent workers or other persons from falling into them.

An example of typical guardrail or barrier: Vertical supports must extend above the ground level a minimum of 300 mm (1 ft.) and must be no more than 600 mm (2 ft.) up from the bottom of the trench.

The top waler must be set at 600 mm (2 ft.) down from ground level.

The bottom waler must be set at 600 mm (2 ft.) up from the bottom of the vertical support.
A ladder must be provided when workers are required to enter excavations more than 1.2 m (4 ft.) deep.

The ladder must extend from the bottom of the excavation to at least 1 m (3 ft.) above ground level and be placed so that it is protected by the shoring.
Project: ________________________________
Address: __________________________________________
Employer: __________________ Supervisor: _______________________________
Date: _______________ Time: _______________ Shift: _______________________________
Number in crew: ________ Number attending: ______________________

Other safety issues or suggestions made by crew members:
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Manager's remarks: _______________________________
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Manager: __________________ Supervisor: __________________
  (signature)  (signature)
4. Sloping and shoring requirements

No worker may enter an excavation more than 1.2 m (4 ft.) in depth unless:
- The sides of the excavation are sloped to a safe angle no steeper than three horizontal to four vertical, OR
- The sides have been supported by use of sheet piling or shoring and bracing, OR
- A combination of both sloping and shoring is used, OR
- The sides of the excavation have been sloped or supported in accordance with the written instructions of a professional engineer.

Unshored trench and excavation walls must be sloped flatter than the angle of repose, but in no case steeper than three horizontal to four vertical unless specified in writing by a professional engineer.

This is an example of combined sloping and shoring.
Project: ________________________________
Address: ________________________________________
Employer: ___________________ Supervisor: ________________________
Date: ____________________________
Time: ___________ Shift: __________________________
Number in crew: ___________ Number attending: __ ____________________

Other safety issues or suggestions made by crew members:
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Record of those attending:
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Name: (please print)
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Manager's remarks: __________________________
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