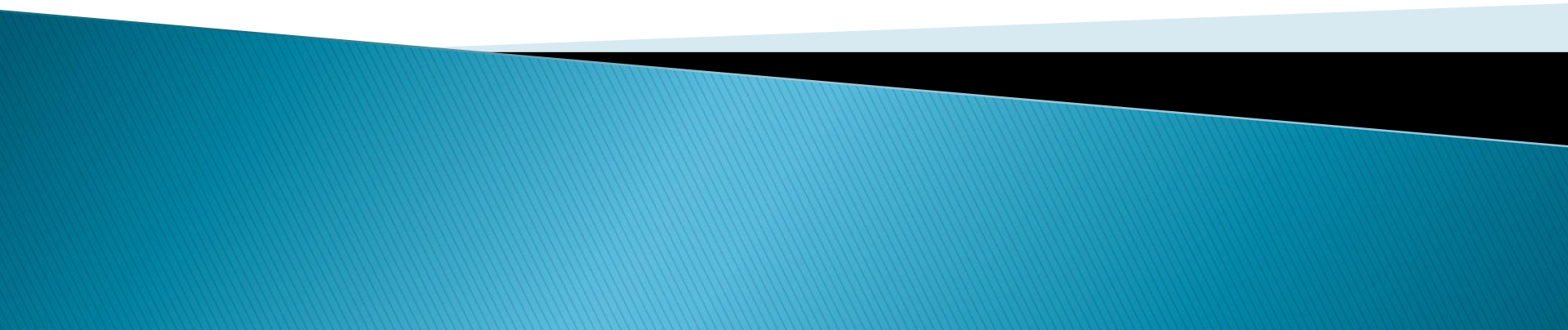


# **The Roles and Functions of The Social Work Supervisor**

**Ken Larimore, Ph.D., LISW-S**



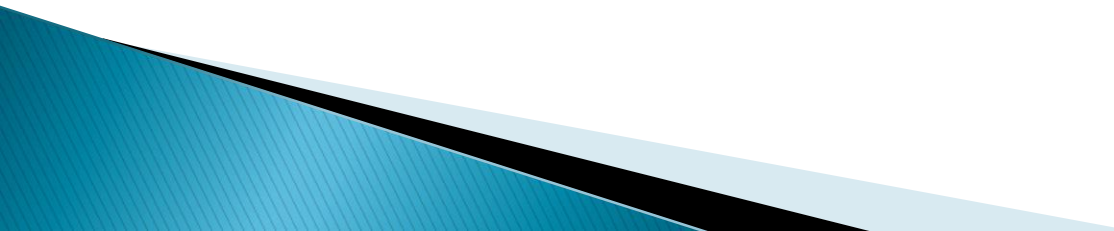
# **The Fundamentals of Supervision**



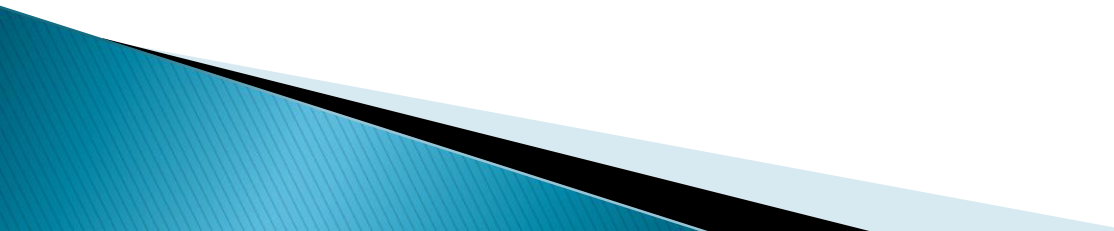
# Workshop objectives

- ▶ **provide an explanation of and procedures for supervising LISW and the LISW-S (Supervision designation),**
- ▶ **the need for supervision,**
- ▶ **a framework for understanding the basic three functions of supervision (Education, Administration, & Support),**
- ▶ **the role of the supervisor within these functions,**
- ▶ **the use of self in supervision,**
- ▶ **setting up a supervision contract, performance evaluations, ethics audit, and**
- ▶ **the doctrine of vicarious liability.**

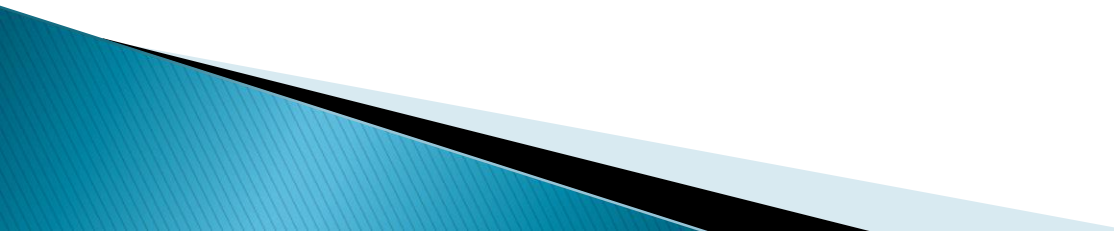
# The Need for Supervision

- ▶ **Accountability to the agency**
  - ▶ **Oversight**
  - ▶ **Accountability to the agency's governing body, public, & society.**
  - ▶ **Reassurance of profession's competence**
  - ▶ **Shared Responsibility**
  - ▶ **Provision of services "behind closed doors"**
- 


# The Need for Supervision

- ▶ **Assurance of Quality**
  - ▶ **Protection of Client Well-being**
  - ▶ **Education and Socialization**
  - ▶ **Social Control**
  - ▶ **Standardization**
  - ▶ **Support of the individual Social Worker**
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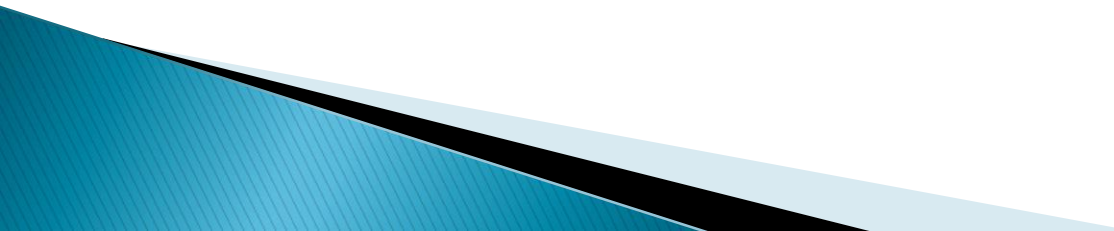
# History of Social Work Supervision

- ▶ **The Administrative roots of social work supervision**
  - ▶ **Change of context: A shift in the educational function**
  - ▶ **The influence of practice theory & methods**
  - ▶ **Debate between interminable supervision & autonomous practice**
  - ▶ **A return to the Administrative roots in the age of accountability**
- 

# **The Development of Social Work Supervision**

- ▶ As supervisors, we need to pass on our experience and wisdom to the next generation.**
  - ▶ Social work supervision should be perceived as a continual learning effort for both the supervisors and the frontline social workers to maintain the quality of service to their clients.**
  - ▶ Supervision is a bridge across the education-practice gap.**
  - ▶ The most important task of a supervisor is to convey the mission and vision with passion to supervisees.**
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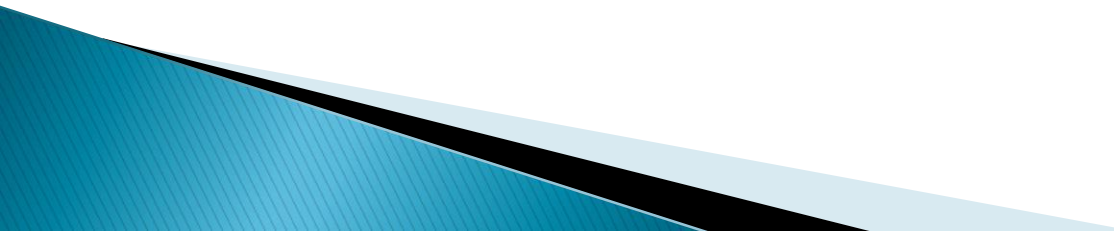
# Definitions of Social Work Supervision

- ▶ **There are three approaches to defining social work supervision: normative, empirical, and pragmatic.**
  - ▶ **Our focus is on organizational supervision in the social work field, which should not be confused with field work supervision for the social work student or with clinical supervision for counselors.**
- 



# Normative Approach

- ▶ **The normative approach searches for a norm or standard, and focuses on two basic question:**
- ▶ **1. What should supervision be?**
- ▶ **2. What should the supervisor do?**
- ▶ **Barker (1995) defined social work supervision as “an administrative & educational process used extensively in social agencies to help social workers further develop and refine their skills & to provide quality assurance for the clients.”**

- ▶ **Supervision is perceived as an interactional process in which a supervisor assists & directs the practice of the supervisee through**
  - ▶ **Teaching**
  - ▶ **Administration**
  - ▶ **Helping**
- 


# Objectives

- ▶ **The short-term objective is to improve the workers capacity to do the job effectively by providing a good work environment, professional knowledge, practice skills, & emotional support.**
- ▶ **The ultimate objective is to provide effective and efficient service to clients by ensuring the satisfactory job performance & professional competence of front-line social worker.**
- ▶ **The normative approach is not concerned with what is going on in the field but rather what supervision should be and aims at.**

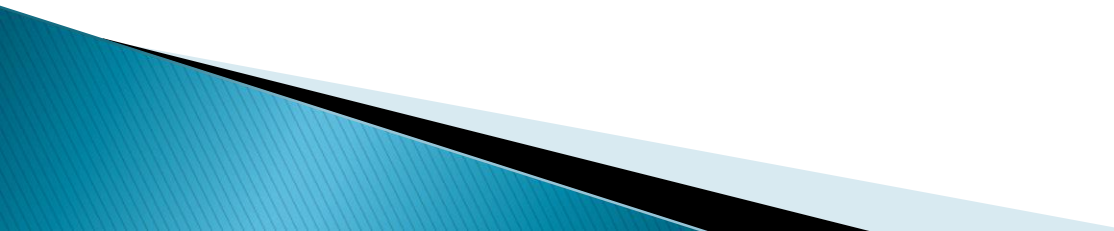
# Empirical Approach

- ▶ For those who take the empirical approach, the major question is, “What does supervision really do?”
- ▶ Kadushin (1974, 1992) concluded that the supervisor is a member of the administrative staff offering an indirect service, which includes administrative, educational, & supportive functions.
- ▶ He recognizes that all three approaches overlap.


# Administrative Supervision

- ▶ **The social work supervisor will....**
  - ▶ **Explain & support implementation of agency policy & procedure, effective & efficient agency structure, & effective performance of job duties**
  - ▶ **Provide agency orientation, explanation of job descriptions**
  - ▶ **Assignment to job duties, delegation, monitor, review, coordinate, & evaluate staff**
  - ▶ **Advocate for supervisee, act as a buffer to administration, and act as a change agent**
- 


# Educational Supervision

- ▶ **The social work supervisor.....**
  - ▶ **Supports a competent staff with knowledge & skills to perform job duties successfully**
  - ▶ **Identifies training needs & staff development plans**
  - ▶ **Mentors and provides on the job training**
  - ▶ **Provides formal education and training**
- 

# Educational Supervision

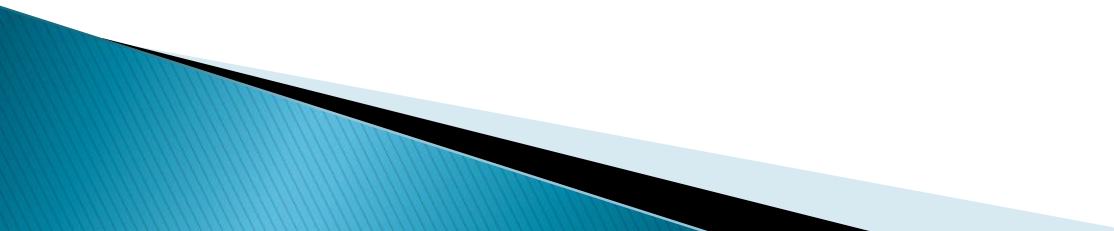
- ▶ **Will provide supervisee with.....**
  - ▶ **A better understanding of the client**
  - ▶ **More awareness of their reactions & responses to clients**
  - ▶ **An understanding of the dynamics of their interaction with their clients**
  - ▶ **The ability to identify appropriate interventions & an understanding of the results of interventions**
- 

# Supportive Supervision

- ▶ **The social work supervisor will....**
  - ▶ **Create a comfortable safe environment that promotes effective performance. Safety is job one!**
  - ▶ **Promotes achievement of agency & staff goals**
  - ▶ **Supports morale & job satisfaction**
  - ▶ **Provides positive reinforcement for effective performance**
  - ▶ **Listening**
  - ▶ **Being safe, available, & approachable**
- 




# Supportive Supervision

- ▶ **Instilling confidence in the supervisee**
  - ▶ **Share responsibility for some decisions**
  - ▶ **Provide some protection from job stress**
  - ▶ **Provide recognition of achievements, encouragements, & recommendations**
  - ▶ **Foster personal responsibility in supervisee**
- 

# Pragmatic Approach

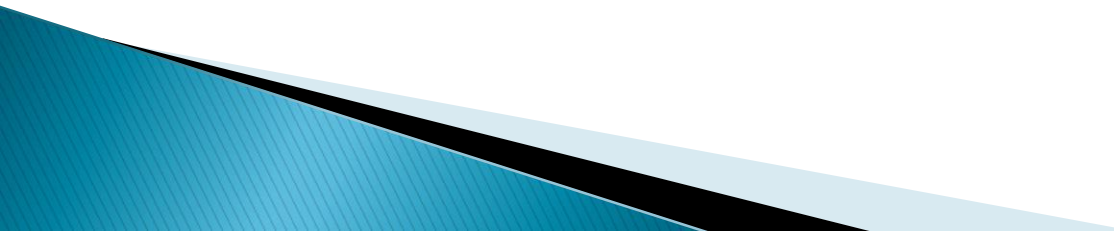
- ▶ **Its aim is to provide action guidelines for social work supervisors & to identify the functions & tasks of social work supervision.**
- ▶ **There has always been a debate on which is the most important – educational or administrative supervision. Supportive has always come third.**
- ▶ **Although supervisors spend most of their time on administrative functions (Poertner & Rapp, 1983), they rank the educational function as the most important aspect of social work supervision (Kadusin, 1992).**

# Three important questions

- ▶ **First, can the supervisor continue to combine the administrative and educational functions in view of increased specializations?**
  - ▶ **Second, if the administrative and educational functions are separated and assigned to different people, can a new effective division of labor be achieved?**
  - ▶ **Third, can professional social workers assume more responsibility for their own work and take the initiative to seek consultation rather than receive continual supervision passively?**
- 

# USE OF SELF

## Supervisory Emotional Intelligence

- ▶ **Self-knowledge**
  - ▶ **Self-control**
  - ▶ **Self-motivator**
  - ▶ **Empathic**
  - ▶ **Effective**
  - ▶ **Interpersonally**
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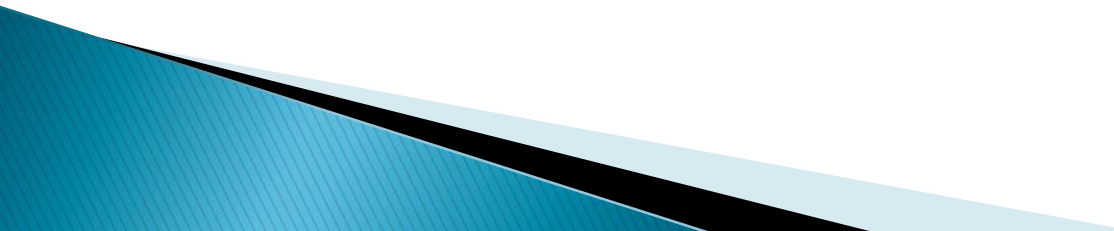
# Setting up a Supervision Contract Guidelines

- ▶ The purpose is to protect the rights of the less powerful - supervisee & client.
- ▶ Make a commitment. Create a supervision contract.
- ▶ Negotiate the contract with the supervisee but know in advance what is not negotiable for your standards & the organizations. Clarify the lines of authority within the supervisory relationship & organization.
- ▶ Specify **time**, **place**, & **duration** of supervision meeting.

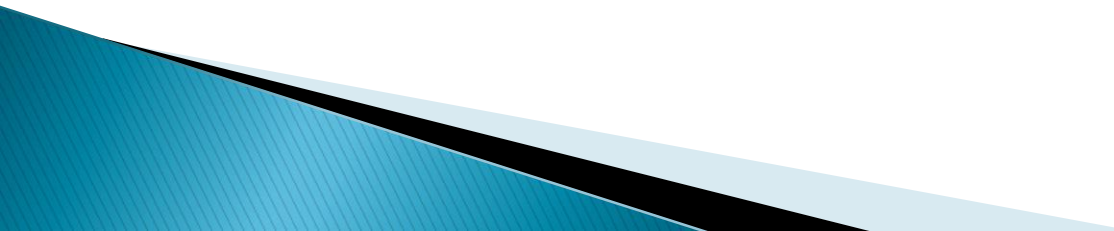
# Setting up a Supervision Contract

- ▶ **Always clarify the role and purpose of supervision.**
- ▶ **Create agendas & supervision logs for each meeting.**
- ▶ **Develop a learning structure such as study materials, introduction & orientation to new skills or responsibilities, joint interviews, video taping, & consultation.**
- ▶ **Develop mutual (supervisor/supervisee/ organization) expectations for confidentiality & self-determination**

# Setting up a Supervision Contract

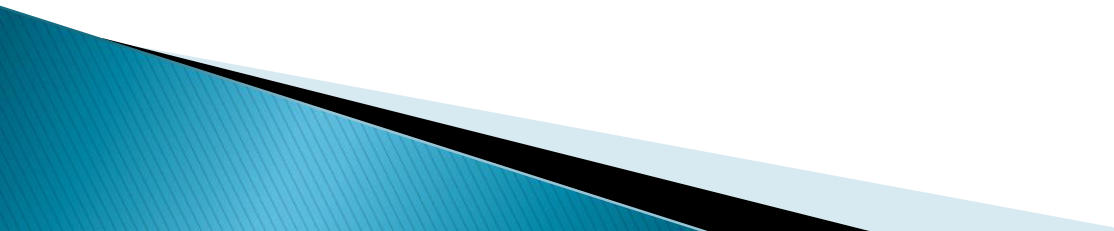
- ▶ **Clarify the process of decision making and implementation.**
  - ▶ **Periodically review and revise the contract**
  - ▶ **Client informed consent should include knowledge of the supervisor.**
  - ▶ **Specify a fair and clear performance evaluation process of the supervisee.**
- 

# Setting up a Supervision Contract

- ▶ **How do you promote safety & honesty in a supervisory relationship when honesty may mean that the supervisee reveals professional weaknesses/inadequacies knowing that the supervisor has the power to evaluate the supervisee?**
  - ▶ **Clear process for supervisee feedback**
  - ▶ **Agency support for supervisee priority**
- 



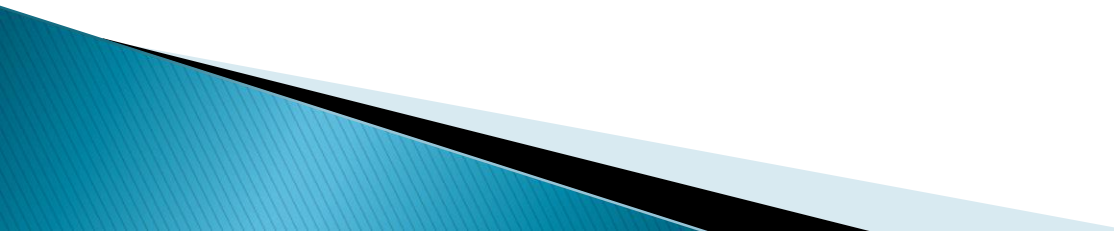
# Record Keeping

- ▶ **Supervisee information**
  - ▶ **Disclosure statement**
  - ▶ **Current licensure information**
  - ▶ **Supervision log**
- 

# Ethics Audit

- ▶ **Used to evaluate a supervisory practice on a regular basis to ensure adequate standards of practice.**

# Performance Evaluation


- ▶ **Continuous process**
  - ▶ **Knowledge of performance evaluation process in advance**
  - ▶ **Shared, mutual process**
  - ▶ **Positive structure**
  - ▶ **Plan for change**
- 

# Performance Evaluation

## content areas

- ▶ **Ability to establish & maintain meaningful, effective, appropriate professional relationships with client system.**
- ▶ **Social work process – knowledge & skills.**
- ▶ **Orientation to agency administration – objectives, policies, procedures.**
- ▶ **Relationship to & use of supervision.**
- ▶ **Staff & community relationships.**
- ▶ **Management of work requirements & work load.**
- ▶ **Professionally related attributes & attitudes.**
- ▶ **Evaluating for cultural competence.**

# The Doctrine of Vicarious Liability

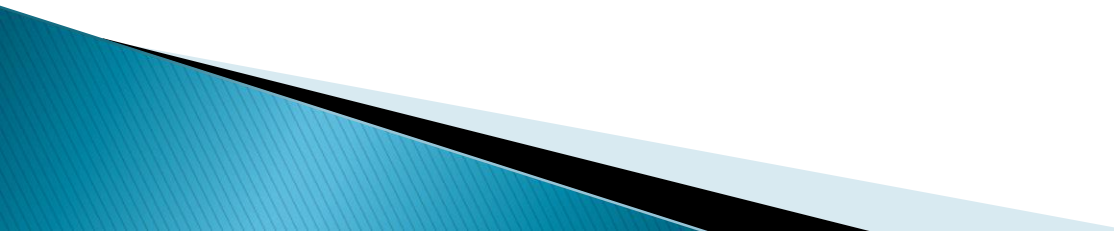
- ▶ **Supervisor & supervisee should review & understand the NASW Code of Ethics & Board rules**
  - ▶ **Regular supervision should occur**
  - ▶ **Supervision should be documented with both the supervisor & supervisee signing off & keeping copies of this document**
  - ▶ **Supervise only in your scope of practice. Maintain updated disclosure statements**
  - ▶ **Utilize agency policy & procedures**
- 

A malpractice suit or formal complaint filed by an injured party is for a wrong or negligent act or inaction on the part of a social work professional, which deviates from the standards of professional care and results in an injury.

▶ **Reasons for lawsuits:**

- **Incorrect treatment**
- **Sexual misconduct**
- **Suicide or attempted suicide**
- **Dual relationships (nonsexual)**
- **Reporting of abuse to authorities**

# Typically, clients sue when the following occurs:

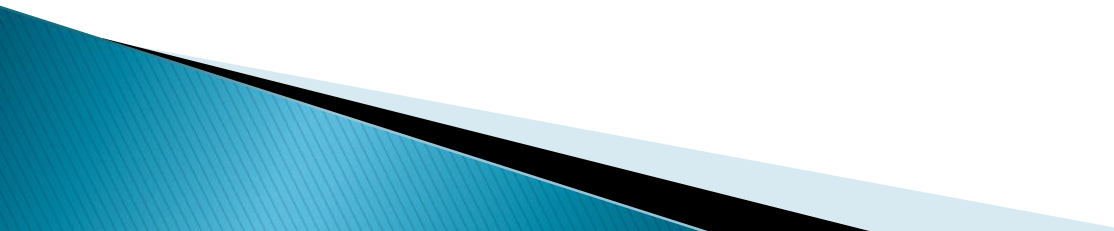
- ▶ They are disappointed with treatment
  - ▶ They blame a negative outcome on incompetence or neglect
  - ▶ They get a bill larger than expected
  - ▶ They believe they have been exploited (dual relationship)
- 

# Record Keeping: Helpful website

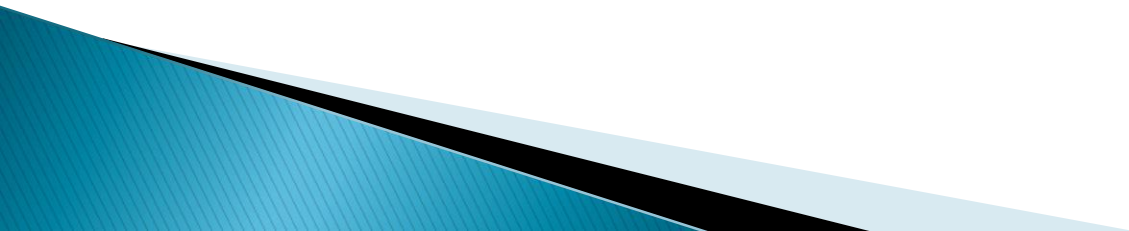
- ▶ **National Association of Social Workers: Ohio Chapter**
- ▶ **[www.naswoh.org](http://www.naswoh.org)**



[www.naswoh.org](http://www.naswoh.org)



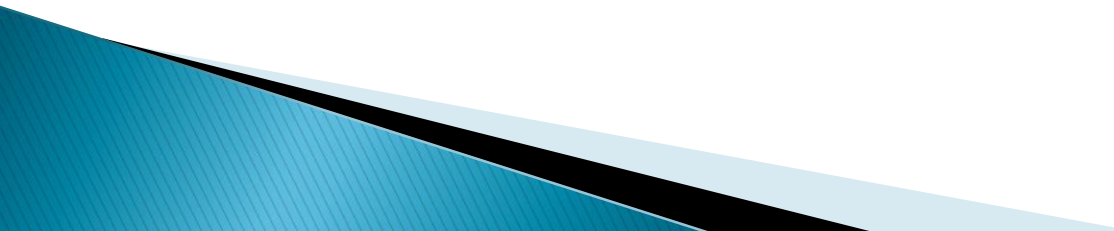
# **The Role & Function of the Supervisor**



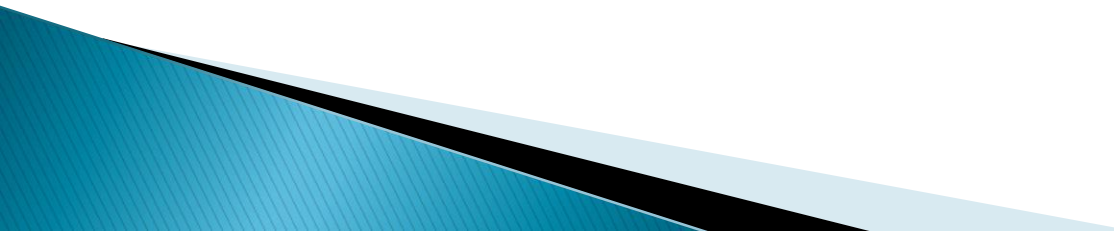
# Administrative Function

- ▶ **Most social workers practice in a bureaucratic setting. Bureaucracy has six features:**
- ▶ **1. It depends on the specialization of functions & tasks, with a high level of division of labor.**
- ▶ **2. It creates hierarchy of authority.**
- ▶ **3. Staff members exercise authority based on their position.**
- ▶ **4. People are recruited, selected, & assigned to positions in the organization on the basis of objective, technical qualifications.**
- ▶ **5. There are rules & procedures applied to all staff members.**
- ▶ **6. All organizational activities are deliberately & rationally planned to achieve the organizations objectives.**

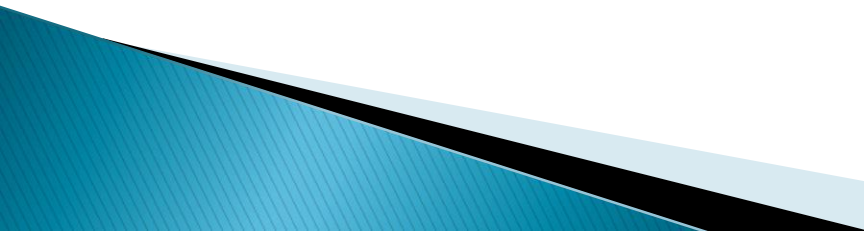
# **Supervisor must fulfill eleven administrative functions: (Stages of human resource management)**

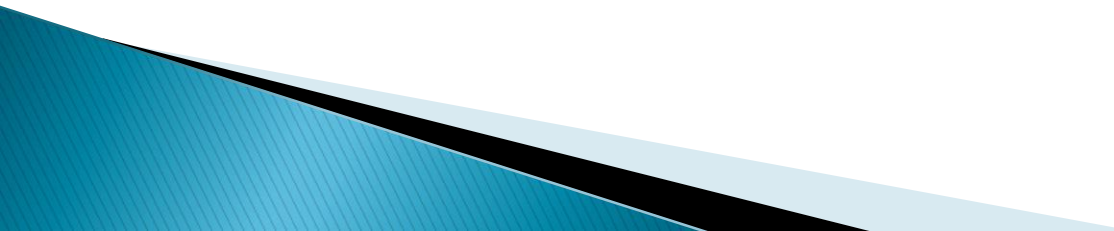
- ▶ **Staff recruitment and selection**
  - ▶ **Job induction**
  - ▶ **Work planning**
  - ▶ **Work assignments**
  - ▶ **Work delegation**
  - ▶ **Monitoring**
  - ▶ **Reviewing**
  - ▶ **Evaluating work**
  - ▶ **Coordinating work**
  - ▶ **Communication**
- 

# **Supervisor must fulfill administrative functions: (Managerial roles)**

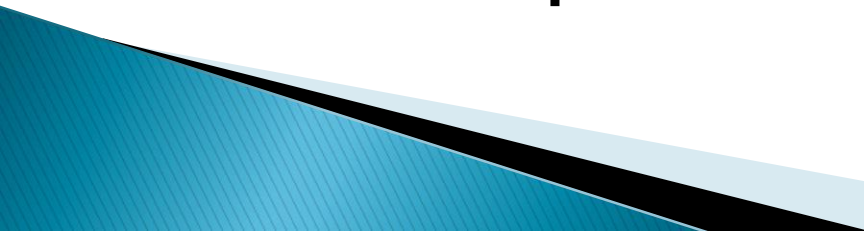
- ▶ As an advocate – fight for the rights of the staff**
  - ▶ As an administrator – the supervisor must act as a buffer between top management and the frontline staff.**
  - ▶ The supervisor should also act as a change agent for agency policy and community environment.**
- 

# The Transition from Frontline Worker to Supervisor

- ▶ **Austin (1981) suggested that new supervisors must ask themselves several questions:**
  - ▶ **Why did I become a supervisor?**
  - ▶ **Why do my former colleagues treat me differently?**
  - ▶ **Why do I feel caught in the middle – between my workers and top management?**
  - ▶ **How do I use the skills acquired in helping clients in my new job of helping workers?**
- 

- ▶ **The use of authority: The shift from professional to organized authority.**
  - ▶ **Decision-making style: From pursuing the optimal to supporting the acceptable.**
  - ▶ **Relationship orientation: From helping to monitoring.**
  - ▶ **Outcomes Orientation: From service to effectiveness to cost effectiveness.**
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# **Educational & Supportive Functions**

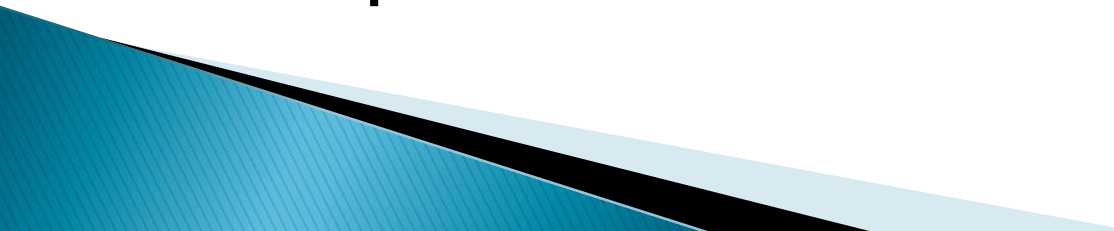
- ▶ **The educational function can be identified in activities referred to as “teaching,” “training,” “staff development,” “coaching,” and “mentoring.”**
  - ▶ **The supervisor also uses supervision sessions to identify the training needs of the staff and discuss clinical skills in handling cases.**
  - ▶ **Supervision also provides a time and place for the supervisor to support their supervisees.**
  - ▶ **It allows supervisors to show their appreciation.**
- 



# Characteristics of Educational Supervision

- ▶ Educational supervision is a teaching and learning process in which there are two partners. Both of them should be ready to give and take.
- ▶ In the process a shared meaning will develop. There will be a readiness to share and a motivation to learn.
- ▶ The focus of educational supervision is on the knowledge, skills, & attitudes of direct service.
- ▶ The supervisor acts as the resource person, giving advice & guidance. Feedback has an important place in educational supervision.
- ▶ Administrative supervision focuses on what the frontline worker should be. Educational supervision focuses on what the frontline workers are.

# Giving Feedback

- ▶ **Feedback should be offered tentatively for consideration and discussion rather than authoritatively for agreement & acceptance.**
  - ▶ **Feedback should be tied as explicitly as possible to what you want the supervisee to learn.**
  - ▶ **Good feedback involves sharing ideas rather than giving advice, exploring alternatives rather than giving answers.**
  - ▶ **Feedback needs to be selective in terms of the amount that a person can absorb.**
- 

# **Diversity: Issues in cross-cultural supervision**

- ▶ **The supervisor must be aware of cultural differences, which may include differences in the concept of space & time, worldviews, & even beliefs.**
  - ▶ **These cultural variations must be explored in relation to supervision.**
  - ▶ **As culture, ethnicity, & social class may determine the patterns of help-seeking behavior on the part of clients, the supervisor & the supervisee would pay close attention to these issues.**
  - ▶ **\* The attitude necessary to deal with the diversity issue is cultural sensitivity, respecting each other's background & views.**
- 