



INCREASING FOCUS ON HIRING AND DEVELOPING COMPETENT SUPERVISORS

The profitability of a forest business depends, in part, on supervisors' ability to take an orderly approach to making sure everything is following an established plan. Controlling the business, minimizing loss, sustaining safe production all contribute to increased safety and productivity.

Gone are the days when the employer would default to a person with the most operational or technical experience and absorb the cost of learning by trial and error.

Today's supervisors have objectives to achieve and need to respond to changing situations. The successful supervisor must be able to anticipate and plan for possible variation and upset conditions, recognize a change in risk and be adaptable under pressure.

The forces of change are constant in workplaces. When selecting supervisors, consider:

CREATIVITY:

Effective supervisors must have the ability to come up with new responses to situations and recognize good ideas that come from other sources.

MENTAL AGILITY:

The supervisor must have the ability to grasp problems quickly, to think of several things at once and assess the whole situation quickly.

LEARNING HABITS:

Effective supervisors are independent as learners and take responsibility for what is learned.

In order to be effective, supervisors also need a combination of four key managerial skills.

1. TECHNICAL SKILL: Proficiency in an activity that involves methods, processes, procedures or techniques. Individual performers expect their supervisor to be able to help and guide them with technical problems.

2. HUMAN SKILL: The ability to work with, understand, motivate, and communicate with individuals and groups. Human skill also includes the ability to resolve conflict, and to discipline when appropriate.

3. CONCEPTUAL SKILL: The ability to understand abstract or general ideas and apply them to specific situations. For example, understanding how the total forestry operation can be affected by a specific activity.

UPDATED

Did you know?

**COMPANIES HAVE
3 DAYS
TO REPORT AN INJURY**

Industry has worked hard to reduce its prior average of 21 days to 12 days in the past year, but more needs to be done. When there is an injury at work, an employer *must* file that information with WorkSafeBC within 3 days. Prompt claim filing means the best outcomes for the injured worker and the company, saving industry tens of millions of dollars in costs. **Safety is good business.**

Learn more at www.bcforestsafesafe.org



BC Forest Safety



4. DIAGNOSTIC SKILL: The ability to analyze the nature of a problem with people, ideas, things or events. Supervisors are frequently called on to size up a problem in order to take appropriate corrective action.

Diagnostic skill overlaps with the other managerial skills. An experienced supervisor once expressed it to me this way: "Figuring out what's wrong is why I am here, seeing the risk and taking care of it before it causes a negative impact such as an injury. If all problems had a ready solution, you wouldn't need a supervisor."

Now more than ever, the employer must use a combination of strategic selection, formal training, and on-the-job coaching in order to transition an employee into a competent and qualified supervisor. The challenges during transition are many. The most critical is recognizing that people who were their peers are now their subordinates. Additionally, they will have to work hard to build trust, gain credibility and earn respect from both their superiors and subordinates.

THREE WAYS TO TRAIN NEW SUPERVISORS

Here are three things you should do

to train and prepare new supervisors for success.

- 1 Conduct a personality assessment, so new supervisors can better understand themselves and how they need to adapt their behaviors with others. It increases their self-knowledge: how they respond to conflict, what motivates them, what causes them stress and how they solve problems, and manage their crews more effectively by understanding the characters and priorities of their direct reports. For more information about DiSC Profiles, visit <https://www.discprofile.com/>
- 2 Determine the level of skill required and make a competency matrix. Use the competency matrix as the benchmark to rate the level of performance and identify any skills gaps. Supervisors should complete a self-assessment and also be verified by their managers who observe their actual performance on the job.
- 3 Develop a training plan and schedule supervisor education to close the skills gap. This is usually accomplished by attending in-house or off-site seminars and workshops. The BC Forest Safety Council currently

delivers three supervisor modules, each module a day long: Due Diligence, Communications and Leadership. Learn more about the three modules and scheduling here: <http://www.bcforestsafef.org/node/98>

A fourth module is scheduled to be developed and tested in 2016 and this module will focus on managing employee performance. Content will cover integrated topics such as managing employee safety and fatigue; alcohol and drug policy; managing quality of work; and, how to successfully and proactively address any potential performance issues to ensure highly motivated workers as well as safe and productive workplaces.

There is also a falling supervisor course, learn more here: <http://www.bcforestsafef.org/node/2216> which is a prerequisite training course prior to falling supervisor certification.

WorkSafeBC also offers an online training course specific to supervisors' responsibilities regarding safety in the workplace: Supervising for Safety: <http://www.supervisingforsafety.com/>. ▲

Russel Robertson is the Director of Programs and Training for the BC Forest Safety Council.

CANNON®
BAR WORKS LTD.

"The Best Bar - Bar None!"®

CANNON HARVESTER 404
.404" pitch / 80 gauge

CANNON HARVESTER 750
3/4" pitch / 122 gauge

Offering a Full Line of .404" and 3/4" Pitch Harvester Bars

MADE IN BC

We Also Repair All Brands of Bars

Dealerships Available

60 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE
1955 - 2015
CANNON

Come See Us at Booth 103 of the TLA 2016 Convention and Trade Show
1-888-604-9990 | www.cannonbar.com | info@cannonbar.com