

PERSON-CENTRED SUPERVISION AND PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL



What is person-centred supervision and performance appraisal?

'Person-centred supervision and performance appraisal' uses familiar human resource management terminology, but with a slightly different meaning than we might be used to.

In a person-centred organisation, supervision and performance appraisal are inextricably linked, so they are treated as an ongoing series of activities.

Person-centred supervision and performance appraisal has the following qualities:

- Is a person-centred approach
- Invites a foundation of shared power and respect
- Focuses on developing and maintaining a positive, supportive and productive working environment
- Supports an environment of performance achievement and wellbeing

The process of supervision and performance appraisal is best understood as a continuation of person-centred job design, grading, position description development, recruitment and selection, and induction.

All of these set the scene for healthy supervision and performance appraisal, and also infuse a culture of person-centred service delivery in the organisation.

In this context, supervision and performance appraisal is suitable for all employees, in all positions, throughout their employment with the organisation.

For the rest of this Info Sheet, person-centred supervision and performance appraisal is simply referred to as 'supervision'.

Why is it important?

Effective supervision establishes a positive working relationship and workplace climate with the supervisor, staff member and wider team early in the working relationship.

Supervising in a person-centred way supports staff members to think about how they are providing person-centred service delivery. This is because supervision meetings model:

- Ways of discussing and exploring issues as they arise
- Ways of understanding personal needs and preferences
- The use of tools that team members can use to respond, explore and problem solve with service users

Therefore, supervision effectively links person-centred people management and person-centred service delivery. In the process, it becomes a significant lever for transforming organisational culture.

Supervision meetings can be time-consuming. The time investment can be larger at the outset if there is a historically difficult work climate or staff members are not familiar with person-centred supervision.

It can be difficult to prioritise this time in the current financial climate, however the benefits are:

- Strengthened service quality and person-centred service delivery practices
- More engaged workers
- More productive workers working more in-line with strategic objectives
- Reduced costs by meeting the needs of service users (so they don't switch to an alternative provider)
- Reduced staffing costs in relation to turnover, personal leave and inappropriate behaviours

How is it different from performance management?

Person-centred performance management is in addition to, and builds on, the supervision and performance appraisal discussions. However, this conversation is specifically focused on job performance in relation to agreed goals and targets.

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For more information on this, see the performance management information sheet in this series.

How does it work?

Person-centred supervision is structured, one-on-one time between a supervisor and a member of their team.

It is a partnership process that creates an ongoing climate of respect and enables people to understand and support each other well. It should:

- Be positive and productive for everyone involved
- Reflect shared power and ownership
- Assist managers and staff members to keep their performance on track

Person-centred supervision meetings are well-rounded sessions using person-centred tools. The focus is on how the staff member is feeling about and performing in relation to:

- Their responsibilities
- What supports they want or need from their manager, supervisor or others
- What they have learned since the last supervision meeting
- Any difficulties or issues they are experiencing
- Any upcoming training and development opportunities they want or need

Organisational supports

Effective supervision is supported by the following person-centred processes:

- Job design
- Designing, analysing and grading jobs
- Understanding the relationship between job design, pay and performance
- Position Description development
- Recruitment and selection

These processes are supported in turn by the disability sector Workforce Capability Framework and person-

centred people management tools (see links below).

Before the meeting

Before you meet, ensure there is:

- A clear agenda
- A clear purpose
- Shared expectations
- Contributions from both people
- Enough information to work on
- A time and place where both parties can be equal and present

During the meeting

- Begin with a positive (develop a culture of appreciation)
- Balance the content for a well-rounded session which includes wellbeing
- Use person-centred tools, available from the person-centred people management website below:
 - ‘4+1 questions’ is a reflection tool for any ongoing issues
 - ‘What’s working / what’s not working’ is a structured conversation tool to focus performance, work, wellbeing
 - ‘Stress and support’ is a discussion framework for when stress is an issue
 - ‘Praise and trouble’ provides balanced and valued feedback
 - ‘Good day, bad day’ helps understand what is happening in the workplace for the employee

After the meeting

- Follow up by:
 - Sending an action plan via email
 - Progressing with a phone call or another email
 - Checking in with one another by an agreed date
- Have a standing agenda item to follow up on previous actions

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- Look regularly at what is working and not working with supervision and the process you are using to make sure it stays relevant and useful to both people

If you want to know more:

www.carecareers.com.au/person-centred-people-management-resources

NDS, in partnership with Helen Sanderson and Associates (a global leaders in person-centred practices), has developed a range of person-centred people management resources. These include tools, tips, techniques and templates to support disability providers to implement this approach.

www.carecareers.com.au/page/workforce-capability-framework-resources

The disability sector Workforce Capability Framework is a helpful for understanding the capability level required for various roles. This framework can also be used as the basis for job design, position description development and job grading.

helensandersonassociates.co.uk

Stirk, S. and Sanderson, H. (2012) 'Creating person-centred organisations: Strategies and tools for managing change in health, social care and the voluntary sector'. Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London, UK.

Sanderson, H and Lepkowsky, M.B. (2014) 'Person-centred teams: A practical guide to delivering personalization through effective team-work'. Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London, UK.

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