



Managing People for Success

Management is commonly defined as “getting things done through other people.” Good management involves an honest and respectful relationship between managers and employees. The most important principles that managers can follow in establishing and maintaining these relationships are the clear establishment, communication, and provision of performance feedback regarding job and organizational expectations.

Establishment of Clear Expectations

Managers need to understand and be able to clearly articulate the expectations they have for each staff position reporting to them, in terms of **productivity** (i.e., how many clients, hours of direct service, classes taught), **technical ability** (i.e., skills in family engagement and assessment, teaching, writing, computers), **conduct** (i.e., attendance, timeliness, teamwork, interactions with peers, customer service), **policies and procedures** (i.e.,

paperwork, confidentiality, child abuse reporting, after-hour emergencies, required meetings), and others that might apply.

In thinking about expectations, managers also need to consider reasonable timelines for meeting job expectations. For example, you might immediately expect a new employee to demonstrate appropriate conduct such as timeliness and good interpersonal relationships, while it may be reasonable to give three months to meet documentation and productivity expectations. The more specifically you can articulate your expectations the better able you will be to communicate them to your employees. If you cannot or have not established clear expectations, it is unfair to assume that staff will understand or know how to meet them.

Exercise: Think about one of the positions that report to you. Pretend you are a new employee entering that position. What are all the things

you need to know to be successful? What would you need to do to please your boss (which is you)? Write down your ideas; categorize them, using topics like productivity, conduct, technical skills, or others that apply in your setting. Then assign timelines for when you would expect to see these behaviors and skills in a new employee.

Communication of Expectations

Once clear on what you expect, you are ready to develop strategies for communicating your expectations. Formal times for communicating expectations are:

- ◆ Hiring interviews
- ◆ Orientation
- ◆ Individual supervision meetings
- ◆ Staff meetings
- ◆ Performance reviews

Continued on next page.

Less formal opportunities also exist, and the more diverse the methods used, the better. Some of these are:

- ◆ Verbal feedback
- ◆ Memos
- ◆ Personal role modeling (Do not assume, however, that just because you behave in a certain way, others will too!)
- ◆ Rewards and public recognition
- ◆ Paying attention to, and measuring, that which is important and aligned with your expectations

Exercise: During the course of the next week, find an opportunity to positively reinforce an expectation with each one of your staff.

Performance Feedback Regarding Expectations

The most effective strategy is to take advantage of all opportunities available to reinforce expectations by recognizing when an employee meets them. However, even when you have done all the above, you will still have to deal with employees who are not meeting expectations. In these cases, you need to be honest and respectful, fostering cooperation and motivating employees to self-correct, while at the same time holding them accountable for expected performance. In a private meeting, here is a way to structure the conversation.

Step 1

“I need to give you some feedback.”

Step 2

“I have observed (objectively describe employee’s behavior that is not meeting expectations).

Step 3

“This is a problem because...(tie the reason to the achievement of your goals, impact on team or clients, agency reputation, etc.).

Step 4

Listen to employee’s response. Be reasonable and flexible, but careful to recognize artful excuses as to why this staff person cannot do what other similarly situated staff is able to do.

Step 5

“You need to ...(repeat the expectation and a timeframe for change).

Step 6

“Are you clear now what is expected?” (Ask them to rephrase the expectation).

While most managers still won’t end up loving this part of their job, it can be made much easier by following these simple preventative steps, catching problems early, and redirecting employees back onto a positive course.

Exercise: Try it!



— Sandy Sladen, LCSW
Sladen Consulting
Call (714) 538-9609
for more information

Office of Child Abuse Prevention



Hello, FRC staff,

Sandy Sladen's article on management sets the stage for understanding how important supervision is in a family resource center's continuous effort to provide high quality services and supports for families. Managers communicate the tone of a family resource center through their interactions with staff, and their supervision style is key to setting and maintaining program quality. One primary supervisory function is providing employees with the opportunity to develop skills to carry out their job duties to the best of their abilities. Whether you supervise administrative, support, or direct service staff, one of the most challenging tasks is to improve the performance levels of those you supervise.

One supervisory tool that might help is a book by George T. Fuller ~~titled~~ *The Supervisor's Big Book of Lists*. This book provides practical problem-solving tips and techniques for every aspect of supervision—from delegating, to managing crisis situations, to supervisory self-improvement practices. One of the particularly interesting chapters is chapter three, "Strategies to Improve Individual Employee Performance."

This chapter addresses areas of performance evaluation, constructive feedback, motivation, giving instructions, follow-up, and employee development and training. While each of these topics relates to quality performance, one area that often gets overlooked in the bustle of everyday work is employee development. It can be challenging to find the time to pay close attention to developing an employee's existing skills as well as encouraging them to learn new ones. Mr. Fuller reminds us that, "Failure to develop employee skills is a two-edged sword. On the one hand, improving skill levels will help increase productivity, both on an individual and group basis. The flip side of neglecting training is that it tends to send a subtle message that you have no interest in seeing workers develop their individual abilities." A related principle is that, just as supervisors support the development of those they manage, it is important that the continued development of supervisory staff skills and aptitudes be developed as well.

OCAP's experience in the field shows that FRCs that invest in providing quality services to families both take the time to train employees on an ongoing basis and to provide consistent, quality, supervision. Mr. Fuller's book is a resource for the supervisor's toolbox.

Linda Hockman, Program Manager
CDSS, Office of Child Abuse Prevention



Department of Social Services
Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP)
744 P. Street, MS-19-82
Sacramento, CA 95814 Phone: (916) 445-2771

Lassen County CFC Links School Readiness and FRCs



A recent focus of the California State Children and Families Commission has been “school readiness” for children ages birth to five years. Their understanding that readiness includes not only well-prepared children but also families, schools, and communities, led the Lassen County Children and Families Commission to identify family resource centers as the ideal vehicle for addressing this issue in the distinct rural, communities of Lassen County. CompAC, a countywide not-for-profit based in Susanville, was chosen as the organization to help make this plan a reality.

With matching state and county Prop 10 School Readiness funds, Westwood Family Resource Center will open in May. Westwood is a community of approximately 2,000 people in the mountains west of

Susanville. As with many communities whose identity and economy were dependent upon the lumber industry, Westwood residents struggle with the cultural

and financial challenges of lost human, social, and employment resources. These struggles are most apparent in the ability of many families to adequately support the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the young children in their care.

Appropriately for a center with an educational focus, this FRC is located in the Community Center and shares a common entrance with the state preschool. While this partnership helps preschool parents feel a connection to the FRC, the preschool provides excellent child care space for evening and weekend activities. Among the programs that will be put in place at the Westwood FRC this spring are: a version of the “Bridges” program, which links preschool and school teachers in support of shared children and

families; support groups and trainings for the local domestic violence group; and several Americorps workers, who will work with the County Health Department to provide home visiting services and community outreach for the area surrounding Westwood.

The Westwood Family Resource Center is governed by a group of local residents and service providers, including the principal of the local elementary school. All the residents of Westwood will benefit from the activities, programs, and presence of this emerging family resource center. Based in a strong network of community and countywide collaboration, service providers, school personnel,



community residents, and parents/caregivers are optimistic about the capacity that the new family resource center will bring to the community as its work unfolds.



Region 1

Youth for Change, Paradise Ridge Family Resource Center

6249 Skyway Paradise, CA Phone: (530) 872-3896 Fax: (530) 872-4093 bgowan@youth4change.org

Counties Served: Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Yolo, Yuba

Staff

George Siler, Executive Director

Betsy Gowan, Project Director

Sylvia Doane, Project Specialist

Karen Davis-Brown, Project Specialist

The Community Building Process at Oakview FRC

Often we feature established family resource centers, or those that are ready to open their doors. This article is a snapshot of *the community building process* in Oak View, a small unincorporated and underserved town nestled in the Ojai Valley that is in the process of developing a family resource center.



Two years ago, Oak View residents came together after the local elementary school closed because they were loath to lose this open land to new development. They formed a group, originally known as *Save Our School*, to explore either purchasing the site or working with the school district to use it for community activities. This all-volunteer group included the Oak View Civic Council president, the operator of the local karate center, a parent, the honorary mayor, and a neighborhood activist.

Soon they saw their role as larger than simply saving the school; they saw it as being a catalyst for

making Oak View a better place for children and families. The group changed its name to *Community Works!* to reflect this expanded mission, and decided to turn the school into a family resource center.

Community Works! has faced many obstacles but has been relentless and creative in its pursuit of this dream. With the assistance of County Supervisor Steve Bennet they have been able to get a \$49 per household Benefit

Assessment Parcel Tax on the June ballot in Oak View. This tax would fund the ongoing maintenance of the facility. Community polling indicates a strong level of support for this initiative. Meanwhile, the county may purchase the property and lease it back to the community.

The local library made an initial pledge of \$100,000 toward the project, and a branch library will be on site. Ventura County Parks and Recreation Department allocated \$500,000 toward the purchase of the property, and the extensive grounds will be used for activities such as the youth soccer leagues. With these high profile

fund-raising efforts, the group has sponsored a range of local fund/awareness-raising activities, including an art show in which local children drew their visions for the site, garage sales, car washes, and the Oak View Pony Express celebration.

Community Works! is currently planning a community assessment process, seeking funding for on-site services, and developing partnerships with local service providers. *Community Works!* has partnered with Interface Children Family Services to help manage the facility and to provide fiscal oversight. All indications are that their name was prophetic: *Community Works!*

For information, contact:
Leigh Melander: (805) 649-4247



Pictured: Oak View Pony Express celebration (above left); The friendly staff of Oak View (above).



Region 2

Interface Children Family Services

1305 Del Norte Rd., Ste. 130 Camarillo, CA 93010 Phone: (805) 485-6114 Fax: (805) 983-0789 frcstrategies@hotmail.com

Counties Served: Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Monterey, Mono, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, Tulare, Tuolumne, Ventura

Staff

Chuck Watson, President

Annette Marcus, Project Director

Sandra Gutierrez, T&TA Specialist

Elaine Martinez-Curry, T&TA Specialist

School Achievement and Parental Involvement

Building Bridges Among Fathers, Teachers, and Children



Does fathers' involvement in their children's education matter? A 1998 Issue Brief from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) stated, "In two-parent households, children are more likely to do well academically. Half of them get mostly A's and enjoy school according to their parents when their fathers are highly involved in their school compared to one-third of students when their fathers have low levels of involvement. Students participate in extracurricular activities and enjoy school more. They are less likely to have ever repeated a grade, (7 percent versus 15 percent) or to have been suspended or expelled (10 percent versus 18 percent) if their fathers have high as opposed to low involvement in their schools." NCES has also found that "The involvement of fathers in their children's schools is important for children's achievement and

behavior. In two-parent households, fathers involvement in their children's schools has distinct and independent influence on children's achievement over and above that of mothers."

Further research by NCES supports the correlation between father involvement and family structure. Parent involvement was measured by participation in school meetings, parent-teacher conferences, school or class events, and school volunteering. Low involvement was participation in none or one of these activities, while participation in two activities was considered moderate, and three or more was considered high. Their findings show that, where there is a stepmother, both stepmother and father increase their involvement, while in single parent homes mothers and fathers are involved equally. What we can surmise from this is and the findings stated above, is that when parental responsibility falls on fathers they do get more involved, and that when it falls on mothers but the father is present in the household, that children do better in school.

Other findings from this study show that:

- 1) "Children are more likely to have mothers and fathers who are highly involved in their schools as household income increases. 68% of children living in two-parent families with household incomes over \$75,000 have highly involved mothers compared to 42 percent in households earning less than \$25, 000."
- 2) "Most children in elementary school have parents who are involved in their schools, but by the time children reach high school, a much smaller proportion have parents who remain highly involved. Part of the decrease is attributed to schools offering parents fewer opportunities for involvement parents too are stepping back as their children grow older." Other research suggests that adolescents benefit when their parents are involved (*U.S. Department of Education, 1997*).

The conclusion of this article, including research and discussions regarding Latino students and their teachers, as they relate to father involvement in education, will be presented in the next issue of the *Strategies* newsletter.



Region 3

Children's Bureau of Southern California

50 S. Anaheim Blvd., Ste. 241 Anaheim, CA 92805-2908 Phone: (714) 517-1900 Fax: (714) 517-1911 strategies5@all4kids.org
3910 Oakwood Pl. Los Angeles, CA Phone: (323) 644-3900 Fax: (323) 644-3907

Counties Served: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego

Staff

Anthony Guillean, Project Director
Daphne Quick, Program Specialist
Alejandro Moreno, Program Specialist
Laura Chavez, Program Assistant

Building Bridges

Ujirani Center: "Making a difference where we live"



In September 1994, statistics showed that nearly 16% of the African-American children in Santa Clara County were receiving some form of child protective service intervention, while the African-American population of the county was estimated to be only approximately 4%. This alarming figure compelled the County of Santa Clara Social Service Agency Department of Family and Children's Services African American's Employee's Committee to develop a Strategic Plan which included the idea for a family resource center that would primarily target the African-American children and families. The County Social Service Agency responded positively to this recommendation, and Ujirani Family Resource Center was formed. The name Ujirani was derived from a Swahili term which means "neighborhood."

With a strong commitment to building family strengths, and a value on personal development, diversity, and mutual respect. Ujirani thrives as a supportive, nurturing environment for the achievement of self-sufficiency and

well being. Having served 12,862 individuals and families since it opened, Ujirani or "the neighborhood" continues to hold these values while providing services efficiently and effectively.

Services range from Afrocentric Parent Education to Mental Health Services and Programs, and are free of charge. Other services and collaborative partnerships include: Grant Makers, "Basic Addiction," Black Infant Health Program, Domestic Violence & DV Drop In Services, Grandparents Support Group (both English and Spanish), Impulse Management, MZAA Single Women's Support, and Sista 2 Sista Breast Cancer Support. Ujirani is also working in partnership with the Healing Institute to sponsor the Intel Computer Clubhouse.



Ujirani is proud of its diverse staff, which includes a program manager, social work supervisor, social workers I, II, and III, a mental health therapist, program service aide, youth advisors, receptionist, customer service technician, community liaison, child supervision workers, and the Intel Computer Clubhouse staff and mentors.

The staff fervently believes in the center's mission to preserve, support, and empower primarily African-American families, while building self-esteem and enhancing individual strengths and kinship bonds. However, Ujirani provides culturally appropriate services to all children and families who walk in the door, regardless of cultural background.

Ujirani is located at 1023 East Brokaw Road, in the City of San Jose, CA. Their hours of operation are:

Office

Monday thru Thursday 8am – 9pm
Friday 8am – 8pm
Saturday 10am – 5pm

Intel Computer Clubhouse

Monday thru Friday 3pm – 8pm
Saturday 3pm – 5pm

For more information call the Ujirani Family Resource Center at (408) 452-6560, or check out our website at: www.members.tripod.com/Ujirani/index.htm.

Pictured: Ujirani entrance (top left); and it's friendly staff (bottom).

Strategies Out and About



Wednesday, April 10, was a beautiful day on the west steps of the State Capitol building in Sacramento, and Strategies was there. The California Department of Social Services Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) sponsored an information fair in honor of Child Abuse Prevention month,



where a diverse and inclusive group of programs were represented. From school children, to state employees on their lunch break, to legislative aides, passersby stopped to pick up brochures and freebies, watch the Strategies video, and ask questions. An estimated 80 people stopped by the Strategies

booth, including staff from many of the other programs represented at the fair. This is one more example of the word being spread about family support in our state.



Youth for Change

Paradise Ridge Family Resource Center
Working Strategies
6249 Skyway
Paradise, CA 95969

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For information about trainings, workshops, conferences and more, contact your region.

Region 1 Sylvia Doane (530) 872-3896 ext. 147

Region 2 Sandra Rodriguez (805) 485-6114 ext. 676

Region 3 Daphne Quick (323) 644-3900 ext. 208

We are continually updating our mailing list. If you no longer want to receive this newsletter, please let us know. Thank You!

*Funded by the California Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention
to promote a statewide network of community-based family resource centers*