Certified Public Manager Project:

Providing More Specific Human Resources Training
to
Department of Health and Human Services’ Supervisors

Cynthia Linguard Gore
Department of Health & Human Services
CPM Candidate 2005 - 2006
Problem:

In June 2002, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) took over the Medicaid eligibility determination function of the state from the Department of Social Services. This meant that DHHS transferred over 580 new employees, which included approximately 115 more supervisors. This increased the number of supervisors at DHHS to nearly 300. The transition of so many new employees was a major task and some things did not receive as much attention as needed. One of the things was the training that was needed for supervisors. When one has the title of "supervisor" – it is often assumed that they know proper policies and procedures and the correct way to handle situations. Oftentimes, workers were immediately promoted to the supervisory level without the benefit of mentoring or training. Due to quick turnover, they quickly needed to shift from having technical expertise to instead having leadership and managerial expertise. That was noticed by Agency Director, Robert Kerr in 2003 when he took his position. He realized that supervisors were the foundation of this organization and that many needed the proper training and information to help them perform better in their jobs, coach their employees better, which would in turn help the agency. In 2004, DHHS finalized an agreement with the Budget and Control Board – Office of Human Resources to provide specialized Supervisory Practices Training to all supervisors of DHHS. On March 4, 2004, the first 4-day Supervisory Practices class was implemented for DHHS supervisors. Class topics included interviewing and selection, Employee Performance Management System, goal setting, problem performance diagnosis, and assessing performance, motivating employees, training and developing employees, delegating to employees and using and implementing progressive discipline. As Mr. Kerr stated in his
memo to supervisors regarding the training class (ATTACHMENT 1), “Because you are a valued member of the Health and Human Services team, I am committed to equipping you with the necessary tools to do your job well as a supervisor.” He also explained that this course was developed by the Budget and Control Board to assist supervisors in all aspects of employee management techniques. He further stated, “Your job as a supervisor can be one of the most difficult jobs you may ever incur but if done correctly, it may also be one of the most rewarding opportunities you will ever experience. He looked at this training as the first step that would lead to a more productive and more accountable workforce at DHHS. Many supervisors appreciated and welcomed the training, commenting that they learned a lot about state government procedures; but, many also commented that they would also benefit from more specific information dealing with practical ways to administer DHHS personnel procedures. Some frequently asked questions posed to the DHHS Human Resources staff included: “When is counseling appropriate and when is a reprimand necessary?” “How do you write a position description?” “What should be included in a job announcement?” “What format should I use to write a reprimand?” “When should the Family Medical Leave Act apply?” “When should Worker’s Compensation apply?” Additionally, the Human Resources staff received documents from supervisors that were not researched properly, completed properly, nor were procedures followed properly.

What is the best way for DHHS HR staff to manage such specific questions for so many supervisors? DHHS supervisors are spread over 46 counties throughout the state, so getting information where it needs to be is a difficult task. If the above-mentioned questions and issues are managed over and over on an individual basis, many supervisors
would slip through the cracks and duplicating the effort would be an inefficient use of resources. DHHS’s Office of Human Resources just needs a better way to provide specific policy and procedure information to supervisors.

**DATA COLLECTION:**

Knowing that DHHS supervisors had questions was obvious, but knowing exactly what questions and concerns to address was not so obvious. The best way to collect this data was by asking the supervisors to complete a survey/questionnaire (ATTACHMENT 2). This survey/questionnaire asked specific questions and was by no means all-inclusive and nor will it ever be. Supervisors are always encouraged to submit questions and concerns to the HR staff at any time. The survey/questionnaire was the first step in formally collecting data of items the supervisors wanted more information about. For the sake of this project, this survey was given to a pilot group of DHHS supervisors. The pilot group included supervisors from each of the five (5) major program areas of DHHS (ATTACHMENT 3). It included supervisors from 1) the Office of General Counsel (pilot group from the Bureau of Compliance and Performance Review), 2) the Office of Medicaid Eligibility & Beneficiary Services (pilot group from the Bureau of Eligibility Processing), 3) the Office of Finance and Administration (pilot group from the Bureau of Fiscal Affairs), 4) the Office of Information Technology (pilot group from the Bureau of Information Systems); and 5) the Office of Medical Services (pilot group from the Bureau of Health Services). There were approximately 54 supervisors included in this pilot group. To ensure that the supervisors of this pilot group understood the importance of collecting this information, I asked their respective Bureau Chiefs to give the survey to them. I met with the Bureau Chiefs of each pilot group on January 13, 2006, to explain
why I was collecting the information which were to address supervisors’ issues and concerns and for my CPM project. I gave the Bureau Chiefs a copy of the survey with a return addressed inter-agency envelope attached to provide each of their supervisors. The survey deadline was January 20, 2006.

DATA ANALYSIS:

As listed in the “Results Survey” (ATTACHMENT 4), of the 54 surveys that were given out, 43 were returned. Per the data collected,

- The average number of employees each of the 43 supervisors supervise is approximately 6.
- Thirty-eight of the 43 attended the 4-day specialized supervisory training offered by the agency.
- Regarding the five items that the supervisors were asked to list their knowledge level, the responses were varied. On 4 of the 5 items, the “somewhat comfortable” response garnered the most responses.
- With question five, regarding other human resources issues/items that the supervisors would like to know more about, the two that were mentioned quite regularly were regarding interviewing procedures, hiring, securing raises and salary decisions and knowing the HR staff better (who does what).
- With question six, regarding the best way to get the information out to supervisors, classroom training with practical application/case studies was the top choice, with on-line training, procedural manual and mentoring following. Some other suggestions that were given were to have the legal staff brief supervisors on
employer/employee rights and continued, consistent training so the supervisors would not forget.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:**

The information that was collected was very helpful in giving me an idea of what supervisors wanted to know more about and how they wanted to learn it. After collecting the data and going over the information with my supervisor, we decided that the best, most economical way to provide specific information to agency supervisors would be to implement classroom training sessions that would include practical application/case studies. Also, to accommodate county employees that oftentimes can’t take advantage of training classes offered at the agency, we would video tape personnel modules and send them to the county offices.

Instead of the content of these classes and videos being taught by outside entities, they would instead be taught by our own Human Resources staff. Within the DHHS Human Resources staff, we have 13 employees that bring to the table their own specific expertise that would surely benefit agency employees. These classroom training sessions would include subject matter that would not only assist supervisors of the agency, but also administrative staff. The classes would pertain to the proper way to fill out agency personnel documents, what all needs to be included in a substandard performance document, what all should be included in a reprimand document, how to handle worker’s compensation cases, the in’s and out’s of the Family Medical Leave Act, etc. These classes will not only include what should be included in each personnel issue, but also current legal updates regarding the issues. The title of these classroom sessions will be DHHS Human Resources Concepts, with the subtitle being what the class is about.

**Agency Classroom Training for Personnel Concepts**

Our training schedule at DHHS for classes that are held at the agency include computer classes and employee development classes (both of which are taught by outside contractors). During every 6 month period, we have 15-20 classes scheduled (see ATTACHMENT 5).

The plan is to include two DHHS Human Resources Concept classes in with the regular training classes during every 6 month period, with the first 2 classes being scheduled for some time during the time of July through December 2006. These classes will be included on the regular schedule that is sent out to the agency and listed on the Intranet. Some of the classes will have a designation of for “Supervisors Only”.

As stated before, the classes will be facilitated by the DHHS Human Resources staff person with the most expertise on the subject matter. This person or these persons will prepare a detailed outline of the subject matter that includes practical application, role play and/or case studies. This information will be reviewed by the Human Resources Director and legal staff before it is presented to staff. The length of the class will be dependent upon the subject matter and detail needed to explain. For instance, a class dealing with the proper way to fill out a the agency’s official personnel transaction document (the 114), will probably be 1 hour and a class dealing with the various types of disciplinary actions and how to complete them would probably be 3 hours.
**Video Modules Training**

With any training that is offered in a classroom setting, one of the biggest problems you run into is participants that can find the time to come. Another problem that DHHS encounters as an agency with offices in various county locations is getting the information out to county employees. Some county offices are more than 3 hours away and for employees to travel to this central location to attend a 1-3 hour training class is not feasible. Also, having personnel staff visit these 46 counties is not a feasible idea either. This is where the video module process falls into place. My thought was to somehow videotape the DHHS Human Resources Concepts training class and send this information to the county offices so they could review.

I met with DHHS Eligibility Training Supervisor, Bobby George, regarding my project and idea. Not only did he understand my concept, but he has done this type of video/DVD training for eligibility information and sent it to the eligibility county offices. He explained it as a video training, with Powerpoint applications that lasts usually from 5-8 minutes (the attention span for an adult learner is 8 minutes). What would happen is that the Human Resources employee would outline pertinent and specific points regarding the human resources issue. This information would be put into Powerpoint format. The Human Resources employee would then be videotaped reading the Powerpoint information. The Powerpoint information would be included with the videotaped information on a DVD and this information would be sent to all county offices to include in a DVD library for reference purposes. Bobby showed me the videotaping area and the DVD duplicating machine. A sample copy is attached of how the final product of a video module explaining Medicaid (ATTACHMENT 6).
EVALUATION METHOD:

I am currently working with Human Resources staff to develop the content of the classroom training and video modules. The plan is to kick both processes off during the next fiscal year when we have a new training schedule. I will obtain feedback from the participants of the classroom training as well as county offices that receive the video modules. This will be an ongoing process, but I am confident that the classroom training sessions as well as the video training modules will be welcomed tools to assist supervisors and all DHHS employees do their jobs better.

Some tangible outcomes I will look out for and monitor after the training are

- Fewer calls and e-mails to Human Resources regarding basic personnel issues
  On average, each Human Resources staff person receives about 3 calls/e-mails per day from supervisors/employees who have questions about basic personnel policies and procedures. I am looking for this number to decrease when the classroom sessions and video modules are in place.

- Fewer personnel forms that have to be returned to supervisors due to errors –
  More often than not, disciplinary action, substandard performance, EPMS and many other personnel forms have to be sent back to supervisors due to errors or pertinent information that was omitted. This slows down the process of these documents being presented in a timely manner. These classroom sessions and video modules will give instructions of what should be and should not be included in these documents, as well as the format and proper way to prepare the documents. This should cut down tremendously on documents that have to be returned.

- Fewer complaints from employees on how they feel a supervisor didn’t handle a situation correctly –
  One of the biggest complaints that me as the Employee Relations Manager and the Assistant Employee Relations Manager receive is that they had no idea they were doing poorly in their job
performance because this was not communicated to them by their supervisor until they received their EPMS. Another complaint is that employees concerns or issues have not been addressed by the supervisor. I am expecting this training to decrease the number of complaints by employees because proper documenting issues will be discussed (when, what and how to document).

- Fewer grievances and State Human Affairs Commission complaints - Although the agency doesn’t receive many grievances and SHAC complaints, any amount of these types of complaints is too much. Oftentimes the claims by the employees that file these complaints are claims of discrimination, unfair treatment, etc. Although many times these complaints by the employees are unwarranted and proved to be untrue, the research and time that goes into proving this is tremendous. With this training, we’ll instruct supervisors how to dot their “i’s” and cross their “t’s” to ensure that necessary documentation is kept, there is open communication with employees and that across the board treatment to all employees is documented properly.

- A more informed and confident workforce where correct information is passed on to supervisors and their subordinates on the correct way to do things –

  Oftentimes the supervisors that have been here the longest do not know what to do during certain personnel situations, so of course they can’t instruct the other supervisors in their chain of command. If they do instruct them on what to do, it’s sometimes wrong. So, this classroom training and these modules will produce a more informed and confident staff of supervisors that can pass correct information along to their staff.
ATTACHMENTS
MEMORANDUM

To: All Supervisors  
From: Robby Kerr, Agency Director  
Date: March 23, 2004  

Subject: Supervisory Practices Training

Because you are a valued member of the Health and Human Services team, I am committed to equipping you with the necessary tools to do your job well as a supervisor. On March 4, 2004, your co-workers began the first round of participating in a course called, Supervisory Practices. These sessions will continue throughout the year. The course was designed by the Budget and Control Board to assist supervisors in all aspects of employee management techniques. Topics in the course include interviewing, selection, Employee Performance Measurement System (EPMS) goal setting, problem performance diagnosis, and assessing performance, motivating employees, training and developing employees, delegating to employees, and using progressive discipline.

I am happy to be able to provide an uninterrupted opportunity for you to attend this hands-on, interactive course that focuses on the best practices of supervisors. I encourage each of you to challenge yourselves in applying what you learn in this four-day training once you return to the Department. At the end of the course, your instructor will allow you time to complete an “Action Plan.” The Action Plan may help you identify areas of improvement and help you reach the goal of applying those learned best practices.

Your job as a supervisor can be one of the most difficult jobs you may ever incur but if done correctly it may also be one of the most rewarding opportunities you will ever experience. We are a team and every member of the team is involved in the success of our organization. I see this training as a positive first step that will lead us to a more productive and more accountable workforce at the Department of Health and Human Services.
ATTACHMENT

2
Supervisor Survey

Name (optional) ________________

Please take a few minutes to answer the questions listed below. Your name is not required. This survey is for the Department of Health and Human Services’ supervisors. The goal is to assist supervisors in their day to day supervisory role by determining what information needs they may have when administering supervisory policies and procedures related to personnel. After completion, please place the survey in the attached envelope and send to my attention in Human Resources before January 20, 2006.

The results of this survey will be used in my Certified Public Manager project. I will also use the results of this survey to provide specialized/topic trainings for supervisors.

Cynthia Linguard Gore
(803) 898-2653

1. In what bureau and/or division are you employed? (optional)

2. How many employees do you supervise?

3. Did you attend the 4-day specialized Supervisory Practices training for DHHS employees? (If not, please contact Marsha Brown in Human Resources as soon as possible to attend the next scheduled class.)

4. For each item below, please list your knowledge level. For the items you feel you are an expert, please select “4”; for the items you are not comfortable with, please select “1”.

   1 – not comfortable with;
   2 – somewhat comfortable
   3 – very comfortable
   4 – an expert

   a. Americans with Disability Act issues – How to handle employees that have a disability? How to recognize an employee’s request for an accommodation?

      _____1    _____2    _____3    _____4
b. Worker's compensation issues – What happens if an employee is injured during work hours? How do I manage their leave?

   ____1   ____2   ____3   ____4


c. How to write up disciplinary actions – what should be included, what are my immediate steps, how do I investigate the incident, what are my responsibilities as a supervisor?

   ____1   ____2   ____3   ____4


d. How to write up a substandard performance – what should be included, what is a work improvement plan, how do I administer, when should it be administered?

   ____1   ____2   ____3   ____4


e. Proper procedures for posting a job, filling a position, interviewing do's and don'ts, how to determine a fair salary?

   ____1   ____2   ____3   ____4


f. Family Medical Leave Act – who should be involved, what documentation is necessary, what is my responsibility as a supervisor?

   ____1   ____2   ____3   ____4


5. What are some other human resources issues/items that you would like to know more about?


6. What do you think is the best way for you to receive this information – on-line training, classroom training with practical application, mentoring, procedural manual, etc.?
ATTACHMENT 3
BUREAU OF HEALTH SERVICES
92000

GIESE
PROGRAM MGR II
025488
AH50-0003-08
WF

RABERT
ADMIN ASST
093099
AA75-0015-04
WF

DIVISION OF HOSPITALS
92300

DIVISION OF CARE MANAGEMENT
92400

DIVISION OF PHARMACY AND DME SERVICES
92500

DIVISION OF PHYSICIAN SERVICES
92600
ATTACHMENT

4
Name (optional) ________________

Please take a few minutes to answer the questions listed below. Your name is not required. This survey is for the Department of Health and Human Services' supervisors. The goal is to assist supervisors in their day to day supervisory role by determining what information needs they may have when administering supervisory policies and procedures related to personnel. After completion, please place the survey in the attached envelope and send to my attention in Human Resources before January 20, 2006.

The results of this survey will be used in my Certified Public Manager project. I will also use the results of this survey to provide specialized/topic trainings for supervisors.

Cynthia Linguard Gore
(803) 898-2653

OUT OF THE 54 SURVEYS THAT WERE GIVEN OUT, 43 WERE COMPLETED AND RETURNED. 29 GAVE THE AREA THEY WORKED IN. 16 PUT THEIR NAMES ON IT.

1. In what bureau and/or division are you employed? (optional)

   FISCAL – 12
   CENTRAL ELIGIBILITY – 7
   HEALTH SERVICES – 7
   COMP AND PERF REVIEW – 2
   INFORMATION SYSTEMS - 1

2. How many employees do you supervise?

   AVERAGE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES DIRECTLY SUPERVISED IS SIX (6).

3. Did you attend the 4-day specialized Supervisory Practices training for DHHS employees? (If not, please contact Marsha Brown in Human Resources as soon as possible to attend the next scheduled class.)

   5 DIDN’T ATTEND THE SUPERVISORY TRAINING
   38 DID
4. For each item below, please list your knowledge level. For the items you feel you are an expert, please select “4”; for the items you are not comfortable with, please select “1”.

1 – not comfortable with;
2 – somewhat comfortable
3 – very comfortable
4 – an expert

a. Americans with Disability Act issues – How to handle employees that have a disability? How to recognize an employee’s request for an accommodation?

   _10_1  _21_2  _10_3  _2_4

b. Worker’s compensation issues – What happens if an employee is injured during work hours? How do I manage their leave?

   _17_1  _24_2  _2_3  _0_4

c. How to write up disciplinary actions – what should be included, what are my immediate steps, how do I investigate the incident, what are my responsibilities as a supervisor?

   _7_1  _18_2  _13_3  _5_4

d. How to write up a substandard performance – what should be included, what is a work improvement plan, how do I administer, when should it be administered?

   _7_1  _16_2  _15_3  _5_4

e. Proper procedures for posting a job, filling a position, interviewing do’s and don’ts, how to determine a fair salary?

   _4_1  _9_2  _26_3  _4_4
f. Family Medical Leave Act – who should be involved, what documentation is necessary, what is my responsibility as a supervisor?

11_1  18_2  11_3  3_4

ALL RESPONDENTS DID NOT ANSWER QUESTIONS 5 AND 6. BELOW IS INFORMATION FROM THE RESPONDENTS THAT DID. SOME ARE DIRECT QUOTES, WHILE OTHER ARE JUST TOTALED.

5. What are some other human resources issues/items that you would like to know more about?

1. “I HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF GENERAL INFORMATION. I FIND THAT THE SPECIFIC PROCESSES AS RELATED TO DHHS ARE OFTEN UNCLEAR OR INCONSISTENT. THE SPECIFIC ISSUE WOULD BE AROUND THE VARIOUS WARNINGS.”

2. PANEL INTERVIEWS – WHAT CAN AND CAN’T BE DISCUSSED WITH PANEL

3. MORE EMPHASIS ON FMLA AND WORKER’S COMP

4. “MORE TRAINING NEEDS TO BE TAKE PLACE ABOUT THE DO’S AND DON’TS SPECIFIC TO OUR AGENCY DEALING WITH ALL NECESSARY PAPERWORK WE REQUIRE SUPERVISORS TO COMPLETE (I.E. 114’S, LWOP, ETC.)”

5. ESTABLISHED STANDARD FOR HIRING DECISIONS, SALARY DECISIONS.

6. “MAYBE A LISTING OF EVERYONE THAT WORKS IN HR AND WHAT EXACTLY THEY DO SO WHEN STAFF COME TO ME WITH QUESTIONS AS TO WHO THEY SHOULD CALL IN HR, I CAN TELL THEM.”

7. SEXUAL HARRASSMENT ISSUES

8. APPOINTING AUTHORITY AND DOCUMENTATION
9. "AS FYI, AFTER HR FINALIZED THE NEW EMPLOYEE 101 FOLDER, MY BUREAU WOULD REVIEW ONE TOPIC AT EVERY MONTHLY MANAGERS MEETING. SUPERVISORS WOULD THEN SHARE IT AT THEIR DIVISION LEVELS. THIS HAS BEEN VERY HELPFUL FOR NEW AND "OLD" EMPLOYEES. SUGGESTION: HIGHLIGHT ONE OF YOUR 101 TOPICS ON POWERPOINT ON A MONTHLY OR QUARTERLY BASIS FOR THE ENTIRE AGENCY."

10. "HOW TO WRITE JUSTIFICATIONS TO SECURE RAISES FOR EXEMPLARY EMPLOYEES AND STRESS MANAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION"

11. "BENEFIT PACKAGES – THE DATES AND TIMES OF THESE PRESENTATIONS WERE LAST MINUTE SO SOME WERE MISSED BY STAFF"

12. "NEG. SALARY FOR NEW HIRES, REQUESTING INCREASES FOR CURRENT STAFF, THE RATIO/BREAKDOWN OF SALARIES FOR DHHS STAFF (I.E. MEN, NO MEN, ETHNIC GROUPS, ETC.)"

13. "WHO IN HR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT DUTIES OR QUESTIONS THAT MAY ARISE FROM THE ABOVE SITUATIONS (OR OTHERS). IF WE KNEW WHO HANDLED WHAT, IT COULD ELIMINATE SOME UNNECESSARY PHONE CALLS"

6. What do you think is the best way for you to receive this information – on-line training, classroom training with practical application, mentoring, procedural manual, etc.?

   **TOTALS**

   1. CLASSROOM TRAINING WITH PRACTICAL APPLICATION/CASE STUDIES - 22

   2. ON-LINE TRAINING – 12

   3. PROCEDURAL MANUAL – 8

   4. MENTORING – 1
OTHER SUGGESTIONS

5. “BRIEFINGS FROM THE LEGAL DEPT. ON EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE RIGHTS WOULD BE HELPFUL”

6. “ON-LINE TRAINING IS VERY CONVENIENT, BUT I PREFER CLASSROOM TRAINING WITH PRACTICAL APPLICATION”

7. “TASKS YOU DON’T HAVE TO DO ON A REGULAR BASIS ARE TRAINING ITEMS EASILY FORGOTTEN”

8. “A LOT OF THIS INFO IS UNDER THE INTRANET UNDER OUR WEBSITE. SO, A MANUAL WON’T BE PRACTICAL. I THINK THE BEST WAY WOULD BE CLASSROOM TRAINING WITH PRACTICAL APPLICATION.”

9. “CLASSROOM WITH PRACTICAL APPLICATION, MENTORING, GUIDANCE FROM HR DIRECTOR. *I THINK YOU ARE MORE COMFORTABLE WITH ISSUES YOU’VE HAD TO DEAL WITH PERSONNALLY.”

10. “WOULD DEPEND ON WHAT I AM BEING TRAINED ON. IN REGARDS TO QUESTION 5 N/A.”

11. “MAINTAIN FLEXIBILITY IN HOW THE TRAINING IS DELIVERED. HOW IT IS DELIVERED MAY DEPEND ON THE SUBJECT MATTER AND THE TARGET AUDIENCE, I.E. NEW SUPERVISOR VS. MORE EXPERIENCED SUPERVISOR”
Training for February 2006 - May 2006

Training Course Descriptions

- Word Level I - Thursday, February 16
- Groupwise - Thursday, February 23
- Excel I - Thursday, March 2
- Power Point Level I - Thursday, March 9
- Word Level II - Thursday, March 16
- Time Management - March 22
- Successful Goal Setting - the Key to Productivity - Wednesday, March 29
- Groupwise - Thursday, March 30
- Business Grammar - Wednesday, April 5
- Excel II - Thursday, April 6
- Power Point Level II - Thursday, April 13
- Word Level I - Thursday, April 20
- E-mail Essentials - Wednesday, April 26
- Excel I - Thursday, April 27
- Power Point Level I - Thursday, May 4
- Excel Level III - Thursday, May 11
- Communicating for Results - Wednesday, May 17
- Word Level III - Thursday, May 18
ATTACHMENT

6