

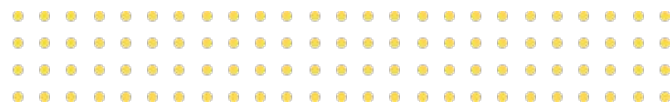


Agency-Building for Middle Managers

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Welcome



- Our topic today is being a supervisor/manager at a library.
- Raise your hand if you are...
- What is one thing that you want to think more deeply about supervision and management today?
- What makes managers/supervisors' work tricky?

Topic: Being a Middle Manager



- In the Middle receiving:
 - Asks from above & Asks from below
- Daily problem-solving, work planning, negotiation, conflict resolution, tending to work culture and team dynamics ...
- Being pulled into many directions.
- A feeling of lacking power and agency.

It is All about People.



- Roles, responsibilities, and expectations
- People's unique contributions and needs
- Motivation
- Guidance and coaching
- Accountability



I. Pre-Exercise & Small Group Discussion (8 min)



Pre-Exercise Warm-Up (8 min)



1. Get to know folks at your table. Share what brought you here.
2. What style(s) of supervision/management (yours or others') have you experienced so far?
3. What do you find particularly challenging in being a middle manager?
4. What would be one aspect of management/supervision, with which you would like to become more familiar?




II. Exercise #A & Interactive small-group activity (10 min)

Exercise #A (10 min)



1. What **responsibilities** do you have as a manager/supervisor?
2. What **privileges** do you have as a manager/supervisor?
3. Reflect on your **positionality** as a manager/supervisor.
4. How does that affect the way you play your role at work?
5. Are there **any areas of tension**? Describe.



III. Exercise #B & Interactive small-group activity (10 min)

Exercise #B (10 min)




1. What do **you** expect from your supervisee (=direct reports) as their supervisor/manager?
2. What does **your direct reports** expect of you as their supervisor/manager?
3. What do **you** expect from your own supervisor/manager?
4. What does **your supervisor** expect of you as their supervisee?

Exercise #B (10 min)



<p>1. What do you expect from your supervisees (=direct reports) as their supervisor/manager?</p>	<p>2. What does your direct reports (=supervisees) expect of you as their supervisor/manager?</p>
<p>3. What do you expect from your own supervisor/manager?</p>	<p>4. What does your supervisor expect of you as their supervisee?</p>



IV. Exercise #C & Interactive small-group activity (10 min)

Exercise #C (10 min)



1. Reflect on Exercise #B on Supervisor-Supervisee relationship.
2. Where do you see a match? Where do you see a mismatch?
3. Does the traditional idea of an organization as a linear hierarchy adequately capture the nature of this relationship across a library?
4. What other ideas may describe people's relationships with various parties in your library more accurately? (*Stable & Dynamic*)



V. Share-out & Closing

Share-Out



1. How did you experience these exercises and conversations?
2. Was there anything new or unexpected?
3. Has your understanding of *management/supervision* become a bit more nuanced and less rigid during this session?
4. How do you think you may use some of what was discussed in this session in your work?

The Origin of These Exercises



- These exercises were created as an aid for my IT division leadership retreat to facilitate my IT division's department directors' conversation.
- Backdrop: The library leadership group has been working on the systems analysis at the University of Michigan Library and selected the Manager/Supervisor system as the first one to address.

Supervisor-Supervisee Relationship

- All supervisors are supervisees.
- The supervisor-supervisee relationship is a bi-directional and dynamic partnership, not a one-directional/dimensional hierarchy.
- As much as supervisees (=employees) need guidance, direction, support, and resources from supervisors, supervisors need collaboration, reliability, open-mindedness, and active/timely communication from supervisees.

Supervisor-Supervisee Relationship

- Both supervisors and supervisees (=employees) have the power and agency to manage and shape the relationship to be a mutually productive and rewarding one over time.
- Accountability in this relationship flows in both directions.
- The better a supervisor and a supervisee understand each other's unique goals, strengths, needs, preferences, and pressures and the more collaborative approach they take in their working relationship, the better they can solve problems together, mutually benefiting each other.



Thank you!

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