Texas Police Chiefs Association

New Supervisor Course #3737

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Texas Police Chiefs Association

Unit 4 Leading the Way: Navigating as a New Supervisor Part 1

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Learning Objectives Unit 4, Leading the Way: Navigating as a New Supervisor

Upon successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

(4.1) Recognize applicable employment laws and statutes.

(4.2) Identify sections of the Penal Code with direct impact on supervisory duties.

(4.3) Demonstrate strategies to minimize workplace liability.

(4.4) Identify solutions to common challenges of transitioning from peer to supervisor.

(4.5) Explain the process of delegation.

(4.6) Identify the process of goal setting.

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Learning Objectives Unit 4, Leading the Way: Navigating as a New Supervisor

Upon successful completion of the course the student will be able to:
(4.7) Identify effective time management strategies.
(4.8) Identify effective workload management strategies.
(4.9) Recognize the signs associated with the five stages of burnout.
(4.10) Discuss the role of a leader in promoting employee wellness.
(4.11) Discuss the basics of public information requests.
(4.12) Demonstrate leadership skills to critical incident response.

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Protected Classes

- Groups of people who are legally protected from discrimination under federal, state, or local laws
- These protections typically apply in contexts such as employment, housing, education, public accommodations, and access to government services.



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Protected Classes

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity)
- National origin
- Age (under ADEA)
- Disability (physical or mental, under ADA)
- Genetic information
- Citizenship or immigration status (under certain federal protections)
- Veteran status (under USERRA)
- Familial status (under Fair Housing Act)
- Retaliation for asserting rights under these laws.

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Harassment and Discrimination

- Harassment - unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, marital status, military or veteran status, or genetic information
- Discrimination - treating someone unfavorably because they are in one of the protected classes listed above
- Both can include derogatory jokes or comments, unwanted touching, intimidation, or bullying, as well as actions related to hiring, promotion, and job assignment.

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Your Responsibility

- **You** are accountable for fostering a safe and discrimination-free environment for all employees under your supervision
- **You** are responsible for creating a culture in which your employees feel comfortable reporting to you any incidents of discriminatory behavior, harassment, retaliation, bullying, or otherwise inappropriate behavior or comments
- Contact HR to help you resolve any situations.

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Hostile Work Environment

- A work environment that involves behavior that is discriminatory or harassing in nature
- May include verbal or physical conduct based on an individual's protected class
- The behavior must be pervasive (occurring frequently or over a prolonged period) or severe (extremely offensive or egregious)
- A single isolated incident must be particularly severe to establish a hostile work environment.

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Hostile Work Environment

- The discriminatory or harassing behavior creates an abusive or offensive work environment for the victim, which includes interference with an individual's work performance, psychological distress, or feelings of intimidation or humiliation
- It could also include discriminatory actions, such as unfair treatment in hiring, promotion, or assignments.

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Hostile Work Environment

- Examples of behavior that may contribute to a hostile work environment include:
  - Verbal harassment, such as derogatory remarks, insults, or offensive jokes
  - Physical harassment, such as unwanted touching or gestures
  - Displaying offensive images or materials in the workplace
  - Intimidation or threats based on protected characteristics.

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Employers **(YOU)** can be held liable for a hostile work environment if they **(YOU)** knew or should have known about the discriminatory or harassing behavior and failed to take prompt and appropriate corrective action. It is the employer's **(YOUR)** responsibility to maintain a workplace free from harassment and discrimination. Policies and procedures are in place to prevent and address inappropriate behavior and foster a culture of respect and inclusivity in the workplace.



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Workers' Compensation

- Provides wage replacement and medical benefits to employees injured in the course of employment
- Covers medical expenses, lost wages, and rehabilitation costs for employees who suffer work-related injuries or illnesses
- Provides benefits to dependents of workers who die because of a work-related injury.



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Workers' Compensation

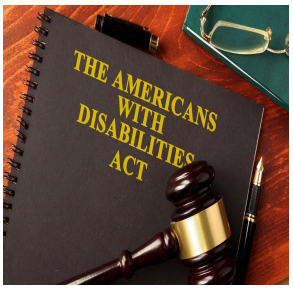
- Follow your HR's rules for filing workplace injuries at the time they occur
  - Do not go to the doctor unless it has been approved or it is an actual medical emergency
  - Do not wait to file an injury report, as time constraints are critical and the delay may result in the claim being denied
  - Do not pay with your insurance
  - Do not discourage employees from filing a claim.



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Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990



- Prohibits the previous practice of denying employment to someone because of their disability without determining if they could do the job
- Prohibits discrimination by limiting an employer's knowledge of an applicant's disability to a later stage of the job application process.

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Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990

- Prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities regarding:
  - Job application procedures
  - Hiring
  - Compensation
  - Job Training
  - Advancement
  - Termination
  - Other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

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Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990



- Disability is defined as a person who has a:
  - Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities
  - A record of such an impairment
  - Or is regarded as having such an impairment.

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Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990

- A qualified individual is defined as an employee or job applicant who meets legitimate skill, experience, education, or any other requirements of a position they hold or seek
- They must be able to perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation
- The essential functions must be included as a part of the job description.

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Reasonable Accommodation

- Making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities
- Job restructuring, modifying work schedules, or reassignment to a vacant position
- Acquiring or modifying equipment or devices, adjusting or modifying examinations, training materials, or policies, and providing qualified readers or interpreters
- The test is effectiveness and whether the accommodation will enable the person with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job without creating undue hardship for the employer.

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Undue Hardship

- An accommodation that would be
  - unduly costly
  - extensive
  - substantial
  - disruptive, or
  - fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the business.



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Medical Examinations and Inquiries

- You may not ask job applicants about the existence, nature, or severity of a disability
- You may ask about the ability to perform specific job functions
- You may only ask about a disability or require a medical exam after having made a conditional job offer
- The offer can be conditioned upon passing the medical examination
- The examination must be one that is required of all persons for that job.

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The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

- Employees, if they have worked for the employer for at least 12 months and at least 1,250 hours in the past year, may qualify for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for:
  - Birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child
  - Care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition
  - The employee's own serious health condition
  - Certain military-related exigencies or caregiving needs (up to 26 weeks for military caregiver leave).

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The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

- Supervisor's Responsibilities:
  - *Proactively Provide FMLA Information.* As soon as you become aware of an employee's qualifying event, you must provide them with FMLA information, even if the employee hasn't specifically requested FMLA.
  - *Timely Response.* Within five (5) business days of learning about the possible FMLA-qualifying event, you must notify the employee of their eligibility and provide the required FMLA rights and responsibilities notice.

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The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

- Supervisors' responsibilities
  - *Accurate Leave Tracking*. Supervisors must accurately document and track all absences that may qualify as FMLA, as well as other types of leave such as sick time or paid time off (PTO), according to agency policies and procedures
  - *Job Restoration Requirement*. Employees returning from FMLA leave must be reinstated to the same position they held before the leave, or to an equivalent position with similar duties, pay, and benefits, unless a specific legal exception applies.

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The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)



- Legal Risks to Avoid:
  - Denying or discouraging legitimate leave
  - Requesting unauthorized medical details (e.g., asking for a diagnosis instead of proper certification)
  - Disciplining employees for absences protected by FMLA.

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Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

- HIPAA establishes strict rules for safeguarding an employee's personal health information (PHI)
- Not just applicable to HR
- Supervisors have important day-to-day responsibilities to ensure confidentiality and protect both employees and the organization from liability.

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Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

- What Counts as PHI
  - Medical diagnoses, treatment information, and test results
  - Prescription medication details
  - Mental health conditions or counseling records
  - Doctor's notes, FMLA paperwork, or Workers' Compensation medical documents
  - Any health information that can be tied to an individual employee.

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Supervisor Responsibilities

- Confidential Storage
  - Keep all health-related documents in a secure, locked file, separate from general personnel records
  - TCOLE medical files stay with individual TCOLE files
  - Never store medical information in shared drives or unsecured locations
- Restricted Access
  - Only HR or others with a legitimate, work-related need should access PHI
  - Supervisors should not share health details with peers, other employees, or subordinates.

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Supervisor Responsibilities

- Professional Communication
  - Avoid mentioning medical conditions when discussing work assignments or accommodations
  - Example: Instead of saying, *Officer Jones can't be on night shift because of his back injury,* say, *Officer Jones has been assigned to day shifts per approved accommodations*
- Appropriate Disclosure
  - Only disclose the minimum necessary information to those who need it to do their jobs.

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Supervisors Responsibilities

- Common Pitfalls to Avoid
  - Discussing an employee's medical situation in front of others, even casually
  - Leaving medical documents on desks, in unlocked cabinets, in email chains, or in personnel software
  - Mixing PHI into performance evaluations or disciplinary paperwork
  - Speculating about an employee's health condition in conversation with colleagues.



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Supervisor Responsivities

- Consequences of Mishandling PHI
  - For the Agency: Fines, lawsuits, and loss of public trust
  - For the Supervisor: Personal liability, disciplinary action, or termination
  - For the Employee: Loss of privacy, stigma, and damaged trust in leadership.



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Supervisor Responsibilities

- Tier 1, 2, or 3 Violation, fine up to $68,928 per violation
  - Supervisor accidentally files a medical document in the wrong folder but corrects it once discovered
  - Medical stored in an unlocked cabinet, accessible to unauthorized staff
  - Supervisor repeatedly discusses medical conditions openly; the agency only acts once a complaint is filed
- Tier 4 violation, minimum fine $68,928 to maximum $2,067,813 per violation
  - Agency ignores repeated HIPAA complaints and never changes practices.



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Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

- Prohibits discrimination in all aspects of employment, including hiring, firing, promotions, pay, training, and workplace conditions, based on an employee's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), or national origin
- Title VII is a daily leadership responsibility
- Supervisors must apply policies, administer discipline, and provide opportunities in a manner that is fair, consistent, and free from even the appearance of bias.

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Supervisors Responsibilities

- Apply Policies Consistently
  - Rules, benefits, and discipline must be enforced the same way for everyone
- Base Decisions on Job-Related Criteria
  - Promotions, assignments, and discipline should be tied directly to objective performance measures or policy standards
  - Avoid decisions based on subjective impressions or personal preferences, which can unintentionally create patterns of discrimination.

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Supervisors Responsibilities



- Avoid Retaliation
  - Retaliation is one of the most common Title VII violations
  - It is unlawful to punish or disadvantage an employee because they filed a complaint, participated in an investigation, or opposed discriminatory practices
  - Example: A Sergeant who cuts overtime or demotes an officer after they file an EEO complaint, even if the original complaint wasn't upheld.

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Examples of Discriminatory Actions

- Unequal Discipline: A Sergeant gives harsher punishment to one officer than another for the same violation because of race, gender, or religion is an issue
- Allowing Harassment to Go Unchecked: Supervisors who ignore racial jokes, sexist remarks, or religious slurs create a hostile work environment under Title VII
- Promotions and Assignments: Favoring certain employees for choice assignments or advancement opportunities while consistently excluding others of a protected class.

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Key Takeaways for Supervisors

- Discrimination doesn't always have to be intentional—disparate treatment (treating people differently) and disparate impact (policies that unfairly affect a protected group) are both violations
- Supervisors are the first line of defense against Title VII violations because they directly manage daily assignments, discipline, and evaluations
- Maintaining fairness, consistency, and documentation protects both the employee and the agency.

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Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) of 1967

- Protects individuals who are 40 years of age or older from workplace discrimination based on age
- Does not protect younger workers under the age of 40
- Does not prohibit employers from favoring an older worker over a younger one, even if both are over the age of 40.



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What ADEA Prohibits

- Hiring – Refusing to hire someone because they are *too old* or choosing a younger applicant based solely on age
- Promotions – Overlooking qualified older employees for advancement opportunities in favor of younger ones
- Training and Development – Denying access to professional training, mentoring, or development programs because of age
- Termination/Layoffs – Using age as a reason to fire, force into retirement, or select for layoff
- Compensation and Benefits – Offering lower pay, fewer benefits, or reduced opportunities based on age.

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Penal Code Violations

- Penal Code § 37.10 – Tampering with Government Records
  - Tampering occurs when someone alters, falsifies, destroys, or conceals an official record with the intent to defraud or mislead
  - Examples in Supervision
    - Changing dates on evaluations
    - Backdating counseling records
    - Shredding complaint reports
    - Editing incident details to help an employee avoid discipline.

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Penal Code Violations

- Supervisor Responsibilities
  - Follow records retention schedules—never destroy or alter required documents
  - Ensure all evaluations, counseling notes, and incident reports are accurate and complete
  - Never alter records to protect the department's reputation or shield an employee from accountability
  - Reinforce to staff that falsifying or destroying records is not just a policy violation, it's a crime.

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Penal Code Violations

- Penal Code § 37.02 Perjury
  - Knowingly making a false statement under oath or in an official proceeding. This includes false testimony, affidavits, or sworn reports
  - Even small inaccuracies in reports can be used to impeach credibility in court, damaging both the case and the agency's reputation.

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Penal Code Violations

- Supervisor Responsibilities
  - Train employees that accuracy and truthfulness in reports, depositions, and testimony are non-negotiable
  - Review reports carefully for completeness, consistency, and accuracy before approval
  - Address inaccuracies immediately—correct errors before they become credibility issues in court
  - Take corrective action if employees deliberately falsify or misrepresent information.

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Penal Code Violations

- Penal Code Chapter 9 – Justification Excluding Criminal Responsibility
  - Chapter 9, Texas Penal Code, establishes the legal circumstances under which the Use of Force, or even Deadly Force, is justified and therefore not considered a criminal act
  - The law recognizes that in some situations, individuals, including peace officers, may be required to use force to protect themselves, others, or to carry out lawful duties.

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Penal Code Violations

- Key areas covered include:
  - Law Enforcement Duties (§9.51): Peace officers are justified in using force to make an arrest, prevent escape, or maintain custody — provided the force is reasonable and consistent with law and policy
  - Deadly Force (§9.32, §9.34, §9.51): Deadly force is only justified under more restrictive circumstances, such as when the actor reasonably believes it is immediately necessary to prevent death, serious bodily injury, or certain violent crimes.

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Penal Code Violations

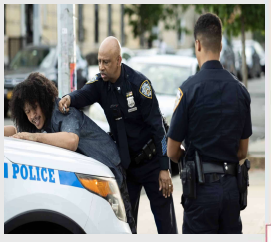
- Excessive or Unlawful Force: Even if an officer believes force was justified, improper application can still lead to civil rights lawsuits (§1983 claims), criminal charges, or agency liability
- Documentation Gaps: Failure to properly document the justification for force can undermine legal defenses, even if the force itself was reasonable
- Pattern of Misuse: Repeated unaddressed violations (e.g., excessive takedowns, poor de-escalation practices) can expose the agency to *deliberate indifference* claims
- Public Trust: Each force incident is judged not only in court, but also in the court of public opinion. Supervisors play a critical role in reinforcing both legal compliance and professional standards.

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Penal Code Violations

- Promptly review force incidents for both legal sufficiency and adherence to departmental policy
- Provide corrective action, coaching, or discipline when force is misapplied
- Recognize that failure to intervene or correct misuse of force can make the supervisor — and the agency — directly liable



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Penal Code Violations

- Reinforce ongoing training on the use-of-force continuum, de-escalation, and reporting requirements
- Promptly review and critique all use-of-force reports; ensure documentation matches policy and law
- Address deficiencies immediately—failure to correct bad practices can be seen as *deliberate indifference*
- Provide scenario-based training so employees practice decision-making under stress
- Communicate clearly that lawful force is not only a legal standard but an ethical one.

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Direct Liability

- Occurs when the supervisor's own actions, or failure to act, cause harm
- A supervisor ignores multiple citizen complaints about an officer's aggressive behavior and fails to investigate or coach the officer
- Your responsibility is to act immediately on concerns to avoid being seen as complicit.



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Vicarious Liability

- An employer or supervisor is responsible for the wrongful acts of an employee when those acts occur within the scope of employment and are connected to the employee's official duties
- In law enforcement, this can mean that your agency or **YOU**, as a Supervisor, may share liability if an officer's misconduct stems from:
  - Inadequate or improper training
  - Weak or inconsistent supervision
  - Failure to enforce policies or procedures.

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Vicarious Liability

- Key Elements of Vicarious Liability
  - There was an employment relationship, and the person who committed the misconduct was acting as an employee, officer, or agent of the agency
  - The act of misconduct occurred within the officer's scope of employment; in other words, the act occurred while the employee was performing their official duties or using their authority as an officer
  - The act of misconduct can be connected to supervisory oversight, meaning poor training, lax supervision, or failure to enforce existing policy.

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Deliberate Indifference

- A government official (such as a police officer, jailer, or supervisor) knows of a substantial risk of serious harm to a person's rights, safety, or well-being and consciously disregards that risk
- It requires proof that the official was aware of the risk and chose not to take reasonable steps to prevent harm
- Can arise in training, supervision, and policy contexts under *City of Canton v. Harris* and related cases.

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Deliberate Indifference

- Key Elements of Deliberate Indifference
  - Knowledge of the Risk – The supervisor knew (or should have known) of a substantial risk of harm to an individual's constitutional rights
  - Disregard of the Risk – The supervisor failed to take reasonable measures to prevent or address the harm
  - Causation – The inaction directly contributed to the harm suffered.

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Strategies to Minimize Liability

- Warning Signs of Potential Misconduct
  - Repeated complaints
  - A high number of force incidents, especially when reports lack strong documentation or policy compliance
  - Behavior such as racial or derogatory remarks, unnecessary aggression, or disrespect toward the public or colleagues
- You should track and document patterns of behavior over time. A series of small issues can reveal underlying problems that would not be visible if each incident were viewed in isolation.

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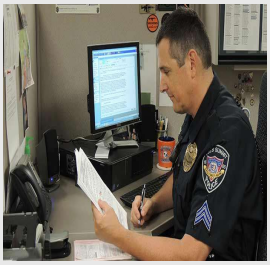
Strategies to Minimize Liability

- Address concerns early through one-on-one, informal conversations and provide clear feedback on what needs to change
- Errors are opportunities for growth. Assign targeted training or policy refreshers to reinforce correct procedures and prevent repeat mistakes
- For situations likely to draw media attention or community concern, coordinate with senior leadership and the PIO. Ensure the response is timely, accurate, and consistent with agency policy to maintain public trust and minimize misinformation.

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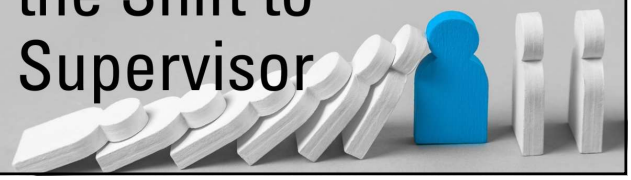
Strategies to Minimize Liability



- Accurate documentation serves as proof that the supervisor identified a problem, took appropriate action, and followed policy
  - Record Facts Only
  - Include All Relevant Statements
  - Reference Policies or Laws
  - List Follow-Up Measures.

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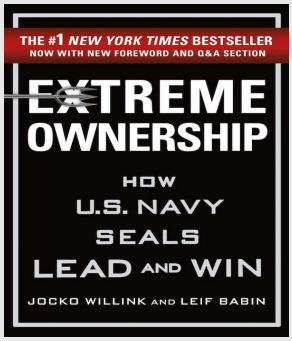
Navigating the Shift to Supervisor



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Leadership Principles from *Extreme Ownership*

- Extreme Ownership
- Cover and Move
- Simplify, Prioritize, Execute



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Leadership Principles From *Extreme Ownership*



- Leaders own outcomes — good or bad
- No excuses, no blame shifting
- Credibility comes from responsibility

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Leadership Principles From *Extreme Ownership*

- Cover and Move
  - Teamwork between units/divisions is essential
  - Silos and *not my job* attitudes kill the mission
  - Leaders build bridges, not walls
  - Detectives frustrated with incomplete patrol reports. The Sergeant collaborates, creates checklist and weekly check-in. Patrol and detectives support each other resulting in smoother cases.

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Leadership Principles From *Extreme Ownership*

- Simplify, Prioritize, Execute
  - Clarity and focus drive action
  - Too many tasks create confusion and inaction
  - Leaders set clear priorities and execute decisively
  - A multi-vehicle crash scene overwhelms officers. The Supervisor directs scene safety first, then medical, and reports are last.
  - Focus prevents mistakes and ensures safety.

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Leadership Principles From *Extreme Ownership*

- Leadership Habits to Model
  - Own outcomes — no excuses
  - Build teamwork across divisions
  - Provide clarity and prioritize under pressure.



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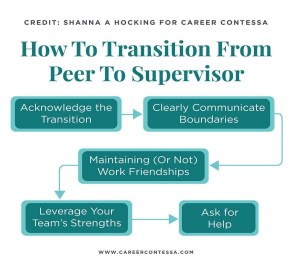
Moving From Peer to Supervisor

- You are no longer just contributing as part of the group. You are now accountable for the group's performance
- This involves conducting evaluations, addressing performance issues, ensuring policy compliance, and making decisions that may not always be popular
- Your success will be judged not just on your individual work, but on how well your team performs and follows standards.

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Moving From Peer to Supervisor



- The people you once worked alongside will likely see you differently now. Some may:
  - Test boundaries to see if the rules apply the same
  - Expect special treatment because of past friendships
  - Question your decisions more than an outsider would.

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Moving From Peer to Supervisor

How you navigate the early stages of your new role will set the tone for your leadership going forward

- If you establish clear expectations, enforce them consistently, and treat everyone fairly, you will earn trust and respect
- If you show favoritism, avoid addressing problems, or overcompensate by becoming overly harsh, it will be much harder to rebuild credibility later.

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From Peer to Supervisor

Common Challenges and Solutions

- Feeling uncomfortable enforcing policies or holding friends accountable. Professional leadership requires separating personal relationships from supervisory duties
- Focusing on daily tasks rather than seeing the bigger picture by remaining heavily engaged in routine operational tasks because those duties feel familiar and safe.

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From Peer to Supervisor

New supervisors must also consider how their decisions and actions affect:

- Mission alignment
- Agency reputation
- Risk management
- Employee development
- Focusing solely on immediate tasks without considering these elements can lead to missed opportunities, unresolved issues, and diminished organizational performance.

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From Peer to Supervisor

- To be successful, you must adopt a long-term mindset
  - Every decision has ripple effects. Short-term solutions may ease an immediate problem, but can create unintended consequences if they ignore policy, precedent, or team morale
  - Thinking long-term means asking:
    - *Will this decision reinforce the kind of workplace culture we want in six months or a year?*
    - *Could this choice increase or reduce the agency's legal or reputational risk?*
    - *Am I setting a standard that is sustainable and consistent with our mission?*

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From Peer to Supervisor

Common Pitfalls for New Supervisors
- Slipping into old habits. This might include:
  - Venting frustrations about leadership or policies to subordinates
  - Overlooking minor policy or procedure violations to *keep the peace*
  - Standing back instead of stepping in when the workload spikes, assuming *that's not my job anymore*
- Eroding trust through inconsistency. Credibility is quickly lost when employees notice that leaders say one thing but do another.

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From Peer to Supervisor

To be successful, you must:
- Model the expected behavior consistently
  - Demonstrate professionalism in communication, punctuality, and adherence to policies. Avoid gossip, shortcuts, or exceptions; your actions set the tone for the team
- Lead by example during high-demand periods
  - Helping with urgent tasks during crunch times shows you understand the demands of the work and will share the load
  - Hold yourself accountable to the same rules and expectations
  - If you make a mistake, acknowledge it openly.

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From Peer to Supervisor

- Navigating New Relationships - Overly Close Relationships
  - Creates resentment among staff, undermines morale, and causes employees to question the fairness of promotions, assignments, or discipline.
  - Base promotions, assignments, and evaluations on measurable performance indicators, documented achievements, and established procedures
  - Socializing occasionally as a group is fine, but avoid private, exclusive friendships that exclude others and could be misinterpreted.

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From Peer to Supervisor

- Balancing new relationships - Overly Distant Relationships
  - Keeping staff at arm's length can make a supervisor seem cold, unapproachable, or disconnected from the realities of daily work
  - It discourages open communication and reduces trust
  - Use informal conversations, ride-alongs to stay connected
  - Ask for perspectives before making decisions that affect the team, reinforcing that their opinions are valued
  - Be approachable.

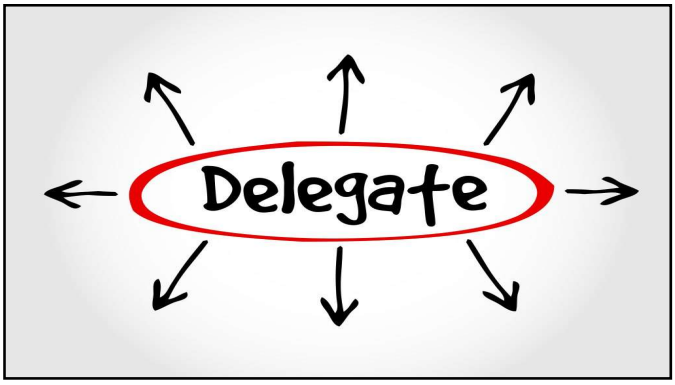
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From Peer to Supervisor



The most effective supervisors strike a balance: they are firm, fair, and friendly, but they refrain from becoming personal friends with their subordinates. This balance fosters respect while maintaining a clear professional relationship.

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Delegation

- Effective delegation involves:
  - Selecting the right person for the job based on skills, experience, and developmental needs
  - Communicating expectations clearly so the team member knows the desired result, deadlines, and standards
  - Providing the necessary authority and resources to complete the task successfully
  - Following up appropriately without micromanaging, ensuring accountability for the outcome while allowing autonomy in execution.



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Benefits of Delegation

- Allows Supervisors to focus on big-picture priorities
- Builds skills, confidence, and decision-making abilities and prepares employees for future leadership roles
- Distributes responsibilities, ensures faster completion of work, and allows tasks to be handled by the person best equipped to do them
- Encourages a collaborative team culture where everyone contributes to shared goals.



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Risks of Poor Delegation

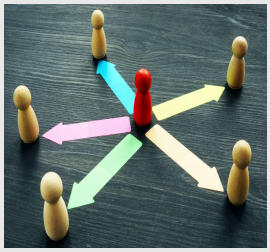
- Micromanagement - Supervisors who delegate but constantly monitor and override decisions send the message that they don't trust their team
- Supervisor Overload - The *it's easier to do it myself* attitude leaves the supervisor bogged down in tasks others could handle
- Low Morale and Disengagement - Lack of opportunities to take ownership of projects can lead to reduced motivation and higher turnover risk.



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Delegation

Delegation is the transfer of responsibility for a task to another person while retaining accountability for results. Supervisors don't just hand off work; they must assign, support, monitor, and follow up.



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What Can You Delegate

- Tasks that don't require a supervisor's signature, formal decision-making power, or the authority to commit resources beyond what's already authorized
- Examples:
  - Preparing draft reports or presentations for your review
  - Conducting initial research or fact-gathering for a project
  - Coordinating schedules, logistics, or supply orders already within approved budgets
- These types of tasks keep operations moving and free you to focus on higher-priority leadership responsibilities. They also help team members build competence and confidence in their roles.

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What Can You Delegate

- Tasks that provide growth opportunities and stretch an employee's skills, while still being achievable
- Examples:
  - Letting a senior employee lead a small project or training session
  - Involving a newer employee in cross-department collaboration to develop communication skills
  - Giving someone a chance to manage a task they've expressed interest in learning
- Strategic delegation develops future leaders, improves morale, and builds a deeper bench of capable staff.

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What Can You Not Delegate

- Tasks that involve confidential decisions (discipline, hiring/firing)
- Examples:
  - Deciding on disciplinary penalties or termination
  - Determining eligibility for promotion
  - Addressing sensitive employee complaints or grievances
- These tasks require the supervisor's authority, confidentiality, and judgment to protect both the agency and the individuals involved.

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What Can You Not Delegate

- Tasks that involve strategic decision-making, balancing competing priorities, or interpreting policies in ways that set precedent
- Examples:
  - Approving budget allocations or reallocating resources
  - Making operational decisions during a critical incident
  - Setting performance standards or agency priorities
- These responsibilities are directly tied to your role as a leader, and delegating them could create inconsistency, risk, or legal exposure.

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How To Delegate

- Select the Right Team Member
  - Consider the employees' current workload. Delegation should empower an employee, not overload them
  - Consider developmental opportunities. Sometimes, the *right* person is not necessarily the most skilled, but rather the one who will benefit the most from learning the task under guidance
  - Keep in mind the long-term benefits of delegation. Used correctly, it can prepare employees for leadership roles, cross-train them, and enhance bench strength.

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How To Delegate

- Provide clear instructions about outcomes, deadlines, and quality standards (expectations)
  - Define what needs to be done, by when, and to what standard
  - Avoid vague instructions like *handle it* or *ASAP*, which create confusion and can lead to mistakes
  - Ask the team member to repeat back their understanding of your expectations. This technique identifies misunderstandings before they lead to delays or errors.

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How To Delegate

- Use the 5 Levels of Authority to determine independence
  - Level 1 - Follow directions exactly. The employee executes the task as instructed without deviation (e.g., processing a standard form)
  - Level 2 - Research and report back. The employee gathers information and presents findings for you to review and make a decision (e.g., gathering quotes from vendors)

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How To Delegate

- Use the 5 Levels of Authority to determine independence
  - Level 3 - Research and recommend a solution. The employee analyzes options, suggests the best choice, but you make the final decision (e.g., recommending a new software vendor)
  - Level 4 - Decide and report back. The employee makes the decision, then informs you afterward (e.g., selecting a training provider within budget)
  - Level 5 - Act independently. The employee is trusted to handle the task completely without further involvement from you (e.g., managing a recurring project from start to finish).

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How To Delegate

- Establish set times to review progress. This could be daily for short-term projects or weekly for ongoing tasks. Check-ins help catch small issues before they become major problems
- Coaching means offering guidance, resources, and encouragement while allowing the employee room to make decisions.
- Keep the focus on support and problem-solving, not interrogation.

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How To Delegate

- Recognize and acknowledge accomplishments publicly and consistently when appropriate.
- When errors occur, focus on improvement rather than blame. Address mistakes constructively, aiming to understand the cause and prevent them from recurring
- Treat errors as case studies for developing stronger processes, skills, or communication.

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Delegation Challenges

Common Delegation Challenges

- The supervisor's reluctance to let go, believing that delegating tasks may lead to lower-quality work or take longer than doing it themselves
- As a supervisor, recognize that leadership is not about doing everything personally; it's about guiding, empowering, and developing others.

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