

## Training helps supervisors

"Many people are promoted into positions as first-line supervisors because they have technical knowledge, they get along well with people, and they show up for work every day," says Robert Priester, an instructor with the Madison Area Technical College's Supervisors Management Program. "All of a sudden they are responsible for other people's productivity, and that's a challenge."

Most new supervisors who have no training make three common errors, Priester says:

- They're too autocratic. Without knowing how to assess other workers' styles, new supervisors often try to control them too closely. "Instead of improving productivity, this approach gets in the way," says Priester. Training helps in understanding about styles of supervision and of working.
- They don't know what a manager is supposed to do. "Workers see a manager staring into space, and they think she or he is goofing off," says Priester. "What they're probably doing is thinking and planning." Planning, organizing, and facilitating worker involvement in planning are important skills that managers need to learn.
- They don't understand the impact of what they do on the people they supervise. Very commonly the same person who complained about supervisors not listening, being insensitive to the worker's situation, and never giving praise or credit, will be guilty of that behavior when they're promoted to supervisor. "A supervisor needs a good understanding of the work requirements," says Priester, "and of how to provide training, tools, and accountability for getting it done."

Vocational Technical campuses across the state offer a variety of supervisory management training courses, usually in the evenings, to help new, first-line supervisors. Class

participants generally have work experience and most are currently employed. The courses are designed to be immediately applicable in daily supervisory situations.

Twenty-six courses are offered. You can take individual classes to meet a specific need or accumulate them for an Associate Degree. Courses can also be offered at a work site through special arrangements with the school.

### CPM program for middle and senior managers

UW-Madison's Governmental Affairs Unit offers the Certified Public Manager program—a nationally accredited program that provides training in planning, supervision, problem analysis, public policy, quality improvement, and other management topics for people with several years' experience. "The people who come to our programs are mid-career, mid-level managers with strong experience and educational backgrounds," says Susan Paddock, CPM Program Director. "They bring their management problems to the classroom and that becomes part of the course content." Managers need not be officially enrolled in the degree program to take individual classes as they need them, Paddock says.

One-day CPM courses are offered around the state and throughout the year. Some of this spring's offerings include: **Problem Analysis and Problem Solving**, Apr 10–Madison, Apr 17–Menasha; **Productivity and Quality Improvement**, Apr 17–Wausau, Apr 18–Menasha, May 13–Madison; **Working with Councils, Boards and Commissions**, May 3–Madison; **Reengineering Your Organization**, May 18–Eau Claire; **Organizational Performance Measurement**, May 22 –Madison; **External Relations**, May 22–Menasha; **Supervising Supervisors**, Jun 4–Wausau.

For information on first-line supervisor training, call your nearest VTAE campus. For information on CPM courses, call the CPM Program Office at 608/262-3830.

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