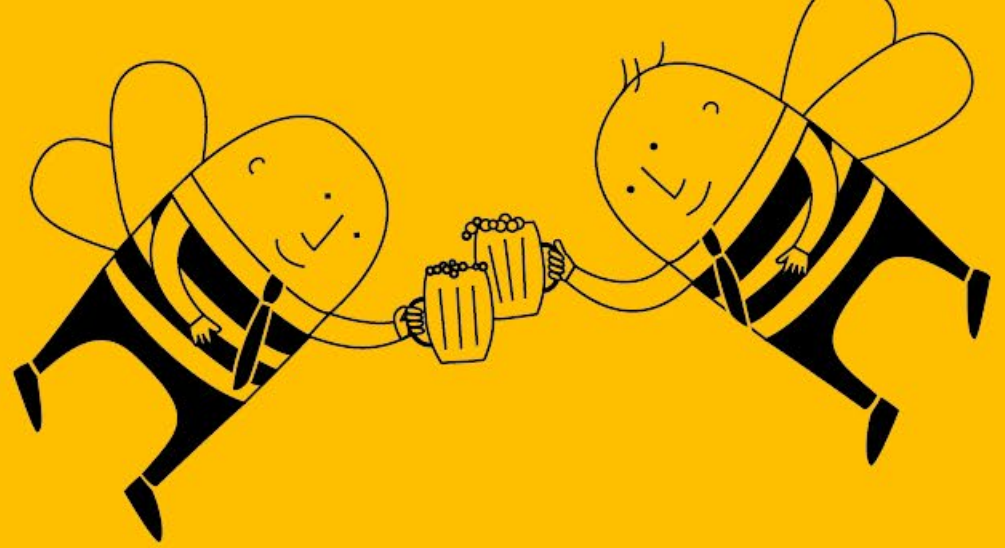


10 resource

MANAGING PEOPLE AND THEIR WORK



This material is created as part of the Next Gen initiative. Next Gen is a joint initiative of the Active Citizens Fund Operator in Bulgaria and the Active Citizens Fund Operators in Slovakia and Lithuania to enhance the capacity of young leaders of civil society organizations. The Active Citizens Fund Operator in Bulgaria is the Open Society Institute – Sofia Foundation in partnership with Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation and Trust for Social Alternative Foundation.

Sofia 2023

This material is created with the financial support of the Active Citizens Fund Bulgaria under the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area. The entire responsibility for the content of the document carried by the Active Citizens Fund Operator in Bulgaria and under no circumstances can be taken to reflect the official opinion of the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area.

MANAGING PEOPLE AND THEIR WORK

Effective management of paid staff or volunteers is a combination of common sense, flair, trust and good management practice in all areas of work. Some people just seem to be able to do it, others need to acquire skills and flair.

This resource looks at:

- what is the management of people and their work;
- people management responsibility;
- employee motivation;
- supervising and evaluating paid staff and volunteers;
- indicative terms of reference of the executive personnel committee.

Resource 9 looks at recruitment and induction of staff and volunteers; Resource 11 looks at staff and volunteer training, Resource 12 looks at managing differences and conflict and Resource 13 looks at the effect of stress on individuals and the organization.

What does personnel management mean?

Human resource management is often referred to as human resource management (HRM). It includes:

- Ensuring the organization has clear, appropriate and enforceable policies and procedures for all areas of staff and volunteer recruitment;
- Ensuring that the organization's policies and procedures comply with legal requirements and are updated as the law changes;
- All staff, whether paid or volunteer, are properly recruited, inducted, supervised, trained and supported;
- All employees feel like a valued part of the team and the organization;
- Involving employees in discussions and decisions that affect their job or work setting and checking that they have adequate information and time to participate;
- Employees know what they are expected to do, how to do it, and how to get involved in the overall work of the organization;
- Helping employees to plan their work and assess priorities;
- Helping employees to recognize and overcome intellectual, technical and personal difficulties that affect their work;
- Employees are given opportunities to learn, change and develop in their work;
- Setting deadlines and informing employees of them, implementing monitoring procedures to meet deadlines, changing when required;

- Setting performance standards (quality of work and/or behavior) and implementing monitoring procedures;
- Addressing poor time allocation, unsatisfactory job performance and other potential or actual disciplinary issues;
- Creating and maintaining a safe and pleasant environment;
- Creating and maintaining a good emotional environment;
- Helping to avoid conflicts within the group;
- Addressing employee concerns and complaints.

Human Resource Management in the context of work

Personnel management is only one part of the overall management function, which includes:

- Management of organizational policies, overall objectives and long-term planning;
- Managing the day-to-day work of the organization: deciding what needs to be done, when and to what standards, and ensuring it is done;
- Managing people who do the work;
- Managing the organization's resources: checking that there are sufficient funds, space, equipment and materials to carry out the work.

These features are discussed in more detail in Resource Material 1 of this book. It is not possible to manage staff – whether paid or voluntary – effectively if the work of the organization as a whole is not well managed.

Whose responsibility is it?

Responsibility for the management of paid staff is often unclear, constantly shifting between:

- the entire Board of Directors;
- the executive personnel committee;
- the executive committee responsible for a particular area of staff work (e.g. finance executive committee for finance staff; youth projects executive committee for youth staff, etc.);
- the Executive Director;
- indirect or direct supervisors;
- supervisors who monitor performance but have no other management responsibilities;
- individual employees who often have significant responsibility to self-manage.

In organizations that use volunteers, there may be clear boundaries between the volunteer organizer and the allocations officer, the manager of the department or team where the volunteer is allocated and the person responsible for overseeing the volunteer's day-to-day work.

Confusion may also arise if staff are on temporary secondment (loan) from another organization or department. In this case, it may not be clear who controls the work and priorities of the employees, to whom the employee reports and who handles problems. In the case of some temps, it may not even be clear who their legal employer is.

Similarly, when work is outsourced to freelancers or external agencies, it may not be clear who is responsible for managing the work. Such employees are, by their very nature, outside the direct management structure of the organization.

The boundaries between the staff and the board, or between different levels of the staff structure, should be clear but flexible. They change as managers and staff grow in experience and confidence, or as staff leave, and managers and the board need to offer more guidance to new staff. However, the section on executive HR committee responsibilities later in this Resource Material can help organizations to assign responsibilities.

Clarifying accountability

There is no right model, but every employee needs to know who they report to and what that means in practice. Where there is a defined staff structure, this is usually clear.

Where it is not clear, one way to achieve clarity is to ask:

“In the event that this employee wants to do something new or wants to make a significant change in the way her or his job is done, with whom should the change be coordinated?”

If the answer is “with no one”, the question follows:

“If that employee’s performance was inadequate or unacceptable, who would talk to him about it?”

If the answer is still “no one” (or the equally bad “everyone,” which basically means no one), ask:

“Who is going to deal with issues like this individual employee?”

Finally, every employee of a civic organization, whether paid or volunteer, is accountable to the board or other governing body as a whole. Although accountability to a large group is quite difficult to manage. It is usually better if each employee reports directly to one or two people.

Similar questions should be asked in relation to part-time staff, temporary and incoming staff, trainees, temporary secondments, freelance staff and others who may not be part of the formal staff structure but who should nevertheless be accounted for within that structure.

Critical points

Accountability and responsibility for personnel management can be particularly problematic at certain points in an organization's development:

- when a group of board members who have been doing everything themselves hire staff to do some of the work for them;
- when an employee who has been doing a job takes on the responsibility of managing other people to do it;
- when an organization appoints a manager or executive for the first time;
- when the organization reaches key developmental moments, which can mean significant changes in how people communicate and relate to each other (typically for about seven employees, 16 to 20 employees, and 35 to 40 employees);
- when the people responsible for governance (board, managers or members of non-hierarchical teams) fear appearing authoritarian or that they will be perceived wrongly if they perform their governance functions;
- when a confrontational relationship develops between employees and the governing body or between employees and the governing board.

When any of these situations occur, the board and managers, ideally in consultation with paid staff and volunteers, need to clarify responsibilities and make sure that staff continue to receive support to enable them to get on with their work. If problems are avoided or ignored, the result is likely to be lowered morale, internal disputes and conflicts, and a job badly done.

Management style

Organizational culture and the styles of key management figures would have a significant impact on the way people are managed. An organization run from the top down with a dominant chairman and an authoritarian director will treat employees very differently from an 'everyone does everything' type organization with a coordinator whose main concern is to behave well and meet everyone's needs. Neither organization can get the best out of its employees.

Resource material 4 explores issues of management styles. Because there is no one right approach, people usually take well to managers who know what they are doing, who are consistent, fair, firm in their positions without being intransigent, and understanding without being soft. They work best in an environment where expectations are clear and flexible and where people are genuinely valued, trusted and treated with respect. But there's great variety in that, too. Some people learn best if they are told and shown exactly what to do, others prefer to work independently. Some want to be left to their task, others want to discuss each stage with colleagues or the manager.

The secret of a good enough manager is to be right more or less of the time for most of the employees and not to be expected to be right all of the time for everyone.

Motivation

Good managers understand that people work with or without pay in civil society organizations for a variety of reasons.

These include:

- For the money;
- Commitment and idealism: belief in what the organization does or wants to do, willingness to help or support people, willingness to apply skills or knowledge for a 'good cause';
- Personal development: learning and applying new skills, gaining confidence, building self-esteem;
- Creativity: applying imagination, self-expression, taking on challenges;
- social contact: communication with people;
- Convenience: because the workplace is close to the employee's children's home or school.

There are other people who have less positive motivations:

- Guilt: because employees think they will “betray the organization” if they leave;
- Selfishness: they believe they are indispensable and the organization cannot survive without them;
- Coercion: if a person is threatened with being stripped of their welfare benefits if they do not start work or volunteer;
- Fear of moving to another job or type of work;
- Inability to find another job.

Understanding why a staff member or volunteer takes on this particular job in this particular organization, why he or she sticks with it and how he or she takes to the job are the starting points for properly supporting staff and dealing with problems in job performance or ‘attitude’ towards it.

Motivation is not something linear or static. An employee whose personal relationships have just broken down might be looking for a routine job that provides money and social contacts without the need for creative expression; another in the same situation might want something quite different. Until two years ago, the first employee may have been better off financially and emotionally established and may have been bored and dissatisfied if the job offered no challenge or creativity; the second employee may have been exhausted and looking for something easier for a while.

Many people join civic organizations because of their dedication to a cause or type of work. Over time, that dedication may wane, but that doesn't necessarily mean they become worse employees. On the other hand, over time, dedication can become an addiction and the employee may need to be helped to step back.

Managers who expect 100% unconditional commitment from their employees, or expect all employees to be willing to be creative and dynamic all the time, or scoff at people who admit they work for money, have no real judgment. Good management means accepting the needs and motivations of individuals and making an effort to ensure that the job can meet all those needs in a realistic way.

Realistic is a key word. Work is usually the main criterion by which people define themselves, but it should not be the only one. Employees (and managers) who have no life outside of their work are on their way to becoming overwhelmed (see Resource Material 13). They harm themselves, and the organization, with their unrealistic expectations of other employees.

Managers should also always be open about their motivation. It is no secret, even in the civil sector, that people aspire to management positions because they want more money or because of the power they believe comes from those positions.

Executive Personnel Commission

Full responsibility for the recruitment of staff and volunteers always rests with the board or other governing body (see Resource Material 2). In many organizations, some staffing responsibilities have been transferred to the executive personnel committee. It includes at least one member of the managers, the board chair or other senior professional, another board member, at least one person with a legal or HR background, and perhaps someone external to the organization who can bring new perspectives.

In a small organization, personnel responsibilities may be handled not by the executive committee but by a board member, along with ad hoc groups formed as needed to contract employment, recruit and select new employees, or resolve disciplinary issues. In larger organizations, responsibilities may be delegated to the CEO or line managers, a specialist or the HR department. In any case, it should always be clear who can take decisions on various HR management issues.

Key Responsibilities

The most important responsibilities of the executive personnel committee are:

- Ensure that members of the board or other governing body understand their responsibilities as employees and the main points of the organization's employment contracts and policies;
- Ensure that the organization has a clear personnel policy (see Resource Material 21).

Recruitment and selection:

Specific responsibilities include:

- receive qualification and training in recruitment and selection (see Resource Material 9) and ensure that the organization has and follows correct procedures;
- draft job and personal characteristics in consultation with relevant people and, if appropriate, present them to the Governing Board for approval;
- determine appropriate salary ranges and submit them to the board or other governing body for approval;
- select a pre-selection panel and conduct an interview to ensure that board members and staff involved understand the legislation and good practice;
- submit appointments to the board or other governing body for confirmation.

Conditions of work

Contractual terms of employment are the responsibility of the board of directors or other governing body. Except in actual worker cooperatives, it is inappropriate for employees to participate in management decisions regarding their pay and contracts. If employees participate in the governing body, they should not participate in any decisions or vote on these matters.

Specific responsibilities of the Executive Personnel Committee include:

- Agree terms of employment with the trade union or employees and submit the agreed proposals to the governing board or other governing body for approval;
- Compile a written statement of the details of employment and/or the contract of employment (terms and conditions) and submit to the Board for approval;
- Ensure that staff and the board understand the contract and its implications;
- Recommend changes in pay, recalculations or changes in the staffing structure to the board or other governing body;
- Ensure that the organization's redundancy procedures are lawful, clear and enforceable; make employees, formal trade unions and the full board or other governing body aware of possible redundancies; present proposals to the board for agreement; develop redundancy procedures.

Training

The executive committee is not responsible for setting the work and priorities of the organization, but it must make sure that the staff has the necessary skills and knowledge to take on the work.

Responsibilities include:

- Put together an induction programme for new staff (see Resource Material 9) or to ensure that they are inducted correctly;
- Inform the full Governing Body of the terms of the trial recruitment and induction;
- Make sure that the organization provides the right training and other development opportunities;
- Ensure that adequate procedures are in place to assess training and career development opportunities.

Supervision and staff support

In a broad sense, the Executive Personnel Commission may be responsible for the following:

- Ensure appropriate supervision procedures for all employees;
- Provide appraisal procedures for all staff, including the CEO;
- Ensure that staff receive adequate support.

Supervision and appraisal are usually carried out by those responsible for monitoring the performance of employees. In some situations, it may not be appropriate for them to provide support due to potential conflicts in disciplining and supporting at the same time. However, the Executive Committee has a responsibility to ensure adequate support procedures are in place.

Grievances and disciplinary matters

A grievance is a complaint by an employee and a disciplinary matter is a complaint by the employer.

The Executive Personnel Board's responsibility includes:

- Ensure that the organization's grievance and disciplinary procedures are legal, clear and enforceable and that changes are presented to the Board for approval;
- Receive information about any disciplinary matter or complaint;
- Depending on the organizational procedures, to take initial steps to overcome these problems or fulfil the role of an appeals committee;
- Depending on the organization's procedures, determine the most appropriate way to inform and/or involve the entire governing board.

One of the advantages of an Executive Personnel Committee is that it deals with complaints and disciplinary matters with the utmost confidentiality. If the employee then wants to appeal, he or she goes to the entire governing board. If the whole board deals with an issue at the outset, there will be no body for the employee to take his appeal to.

Volunteer management

The Personnel Executive Committee may only deal with matters relating to the hiring of personnel and with employees or volunteers. In some organizations, volunteers (unpaid employees) are treated just like paid employees, regardless of pay.

Organizations adopting such an approach should be aware that if they provide something material to volunteers (even if it is not cash), they are inadvertently creating an employment relationship where volunteers would have the same legal rights as salaried employees (see Resource Material 9).

In most organizations that use volunteers, it is wise to keep issues concerning their work separate from issues concerning employees. Unpaid volunteer services, in which the volunteer receives no payment or material remuneration other than reimbursement of travel and substantive expenses, are relationships based on commitment and trust. Unlike employer/employee relationships, they are not contractual and therefore have no legal force. Voluntary policies and procedures should recognize these differences.

The Executive Personnel Committee or a separate group that deals solely with volunteer issues is responsible for the following:

- Determine the most appropriate ways to recruit, select and allocate volunteers;
- Draw up agreements for volunteers and ensure that they do not inadvertently create a tenancy relationship;
- Ensure procedures are in place for volunteer induction, supervision, support and training;
- Ensure that procedures are in place to address unsatisfactory performance of volunteers and to respond to complaints and grievances by or about volunteers.

Performance management

“She’s always late...”

“Every time he does something, I have to redo it”

“We can’t send out a brochure like this. She never bothers to do anything right, does she?”

“I don’t think she really understood the recent changes about the supplements. I’m sure she’s giving incorrect advice....”

“He should have been ready months ago with his archive and none of us can find the documents we need ...”

“She is a true perfectionist, always wanting everything to be done to absolutely impossible standards...”

Sound familiar? The reasons for such situations are always similar, whether the organization is large or small, rich or poor, old or new:

- individualism is given primacy (overtly or not): employees or volunteers think they can do what they want instead of what the organization as a whole wants or needs;
- no one is clear on what acceptable expectations and standards are, or everyone has their own idea of what is acceptable;
- no one is clear about who is responsible for setting expectations and standards or everyone has their own idea of whose responsibility it is;
- the people responsible for management may have little or no experience (or only poor experience) in carrying out management or of being managed in certain working conditions;
- managers feel isolated or unsupported and convey these feelings to the employees they are supposed to support;
- there is great embarrassment to criticize colleagues;
- many colleagues are also personal friends, so it's even harder to criticize each other;
- there is just as much reluctance to praise people.

Employees, paid or unpaid, do their jobs if they are motivated and enthusiastic, if they feel valued, if they know what and how they are expected to do, if they are allowed to make mistakes and learn from them, and if they receive recognition for duties well performed. This is more likely to happen if managers know the factors that motivate

and demotivate employees (see above) and if the organization has a clear development policy for employees and volunteers that is more than induction, supervision, support, appraisal and training opportunities. The policy should also apply where appropriate to board members or other councils.

Supervision of staff

The basics of managing work duties are rooted in:

- Clear procedures for hiring staff or for recruiting and assigning volunteers based on the needs of the organization and the ability and willingness of individuals to do perform;
- Planned induction of all hired staff and volunteers based on their knowledge of the job, the organization and the work as a whole;
- clear procedures for providing this information to the people who will be doing this work;
- clear procedures and responsibility for monitoring the work to make sure it is done and done properly;
- clear procedures and accountability for dealing with work that has not been done or has been done incorrectly;
- training and support to help employees do their jobs and do them better.

Resource 9 deals with recruitment, selection and induction and Resource 11 with training.

Supervision

In many organizations, a variety of structured opportunities have been created that allow employees and volunteers to discuss their work with their supervisors. An employee hardly ever sees their supervisor. Or it happens that conversations between employees and supervisors take place, but rather haphazardly, “when we get a chance to sit down and talk.” There is no clear procedure for resolving potential or minor problems before they become major ones. And the bigger and more real the problems, the more reluctant people are to sit down and talk about them – until they cause a crisis.

The civil sector is full of stressful situations and people need to talk about how they affect them. All employees at all levels of the organization should have regular opportunities to discuss their progress, current or potential problems and attitude to work. These opportunities are often called supervision sessions. Where the term “supervision” is inappropriate, the sessions are referred to as: direct management, performance review, performance update, or others.

For the majority of employees, it is best to hold such sessions every four or six weeks (more often in the first few weeks of new employees’ employment) and to work out a schedule. Depending on the type of organization and job, sessions can last from 15 minutes to an hour or more. Sessions should not be cancelled except in urgent circumstances, and if cancelled or missed, should be rescheduled.

“I keep thinking that the better way to prepare for supervision is to do what you promised last time instead of carrying an apology note from your mother.”

“Supervisor” – one who conducts a performance review of the employee

Who supervises whom?

In traditionally structured organizations, the supervisor is usually the direct supervisor.

Situations in which it is not very clear who will do the monitoring and performance appraisal include:

- organizations with only one employee;
- organizations or teams with non-hierarchical structures;
- when a manager feels responsible for managing the work but not the people doing it;
- when there is no one to supervise those in positions at the top of the hierarchy.

In these cases, supervision may be carried out by a member of the board. In groups that work non-hierarchically, employees can supervise each other (joint or peer supervision, i.e. intervision), individually or in small groups.

Another option is external or non-managerial supervision, which is discussed later in this resource.

Objectives of the supervisions

The main objectives of the supervisions are:

- monitoring the work and its performance;
- evaluation of work and its performance;
- helping employees improve their performance;
- clarification of priorities;
- sharing information about the work;
- providing an opportunity to discuss what employees and supervisors think about the job;
- naming and overcoming existing or potential problems;
- discussion of external factors affecting performance;
- providing a framework for discussion and agreement on changes.

Monitoring the work and its performance is looking at what has been done, what needs to be done and how it needs to be done. This involves checking that staff have done everything as intended (and to the agreed standards) in the last session, clarifying what needs to be done before the next session, holding staff to account (holding them accountable to someone for their actions) and helping them to build a view and sense of direction for their work and that of the team and the organization as a whole.

Evaluation means to indicate whether the set expectations and standards have been met. This may include reflecting on whether employees are performing their duties well and whether the job or tasks have been worth the effort, pointing out strengths and weaknesses, encouraging employees, and identifying training and support needs.

Establishing a framework for change can mean limiting workload and helping employees set priorities, identify potential or current problems, and find ways to prevent or solve them, as well as fostering a sense of responsibility and commitment to the organization and the work.

The purpose of these sessions is not to enable supervisors and managers to insult or criticize employees, but to enable two people to take the time to consider together what are the best ways to get the job done in the organization and what is the best help for employees to do that.

Overcoming common difficulties

The most common problem with supervision is that people, especially those new to management, don't know how to do it or don't want to do it.

This problem can be overcome if:

- the supervisor has adequate information about the employee's performance;
- have clear standards against which to monitor or evaluate performance and its delivery;
- the organization has agreed procedures for organizing and conducting sessions, for taking notes and acting on recommendations made at the session, and a clear confidentiality policy;
- there is a commitment from the organization to make time for such sessions;
- a clear distinction is made between monitoring/supervision and disciplinary procedures.

There is often a lack of consistency in approach from session to session or between supervisors. A broad framework of questions makes it easier to standardize approaches (see below).

If there is no accurate way to record the recommendations, the session can easily turn into a friendly conversation that changes nothing and achieves nothing. A one-page form with headings ("Priorities for Next X Weeks," "Tasks for Employee," "Tasks for Supervisor") would facilitate standardized note-taking. This form thus becomes the starting point for the next session. If desired, the employee and supervisor can sign the form.

Sometimes changes agreed in a supervisory session involve other people and this makes it impossible to implement them immediately. Therefore, it is very important to decide in the session who is responsible for passing information to the relevant people.

Information obtained through a supervisory session should not be passed on to others without the consent of the employee and supervisor. Discretion is expected. For supervision to be effective, employees must be assured that information provided during the session will not be misused.

If supervision is not given sufficient priority in the organization, people will not put the energy into it and the performance of the organization as a whole will suffer. It is best to create a schedule that is flexible enough to allow an increase in the number of sessions in case of changes or individual or organizational problems. (This does not mean that sessions can be cancelled when all is going well!) Sessions that need to be postponed should always be scheduled for another date.

Because people in civil society organizations are reluctant to implement disciplinary procedures, they may issue veiled warnings during supervision and then explain that these constitute the first stage of formal disciplinary action. If a disciplinary warning is issued, it should be clearly identified as such. A statement such as “you’re really going to have to be on time in the future” made to an employee during supervision does not constitute a verbal disciplinary warning.

Overcoming resistance

In organizations where supervision is not practiced, there may be resistance to its introduction, especially by employees well established in their positions. As with all planned changes, introducing a structured approach to supervision should involve discussion and consultation. Some organizations have found it helpful to photocopy all or part of this resource material and circulate it as a discussion document.

For staff who are well established and perhaps too conservative and concerned about the changes, a regular one-to-one session would provide an opportunity to voice their concerns in a place where they will be listened to carefully. In this way, the manager gets valuable insights from the perspectives of people long tied to the organization.

For managers who think they don't need supervision or are too busy, the sessions can be a breath of fresh air from the daily grind, an opportunity to step back, grasp the big picture and discuss issues in more depth.

Managers and staff sometimes think they do not need to hold these types of sessions for part-time associates or for caregivers, clergy, or others not directly involved in service delivery. For these associates, sessions can be held less frequently and be shorter. But regular face-to-face sessions are a way of keeping up morale, revealing the values of the organization to all its staff and checking that people who are undervalued in the organization are given a full opportunity to contribute.

Preparation of the supervision

Supervision sessions are much more helpful if the employee and supervisor have thought through the situation beforehand.

Employees could request consideration of issues such as:

- What did I do after the last session that I'm happy with? How has my work improved? What factors helped me improve my work?
- What have I done since the last session that I'm not happy with? Why did I do it that way? What would help me do it differently in the future?
- Did I do what I promised in the last session? If I didn't, why not?
- What do I want to do before the next session? What will be the focus and priorities of my team and the organization?
- Am I satisfied with the amount and type of work I have to do and the conditions in which I work? If I am dissatisfied, what would improve the situation?
- Is there someone or something at work that is giving me a problem? How can this be overcome?
- Do circumstances or people in my personal life affect my work? Do I need support to deal with their impact on my work or with the circumstances themselves?

The supervisor would have similar questions:

- What has the employee done since the last session that particularly pleases me? How has her/his performance improved? What factors might have helped him/her work even better? How can I help the employee build on this success?
- What has the employee done since the last session that I am not happy with? Why did this happen? What could I or others have done to prevent this or make it better? What can we do to prevent this in the future?
- Did the employee do what was decided in the last session?
- Am I satisfied with the quantity and quality of the work?
- What should the employee focus on before the next session? How would this fit with the employee's personal priorities?
- Is the employee working overtime or not trying hard enough? Are there problems meeting deadlines? Does the employee comply with administration, maintenance and other routine tasks?
- Am I aware of any problems relating to this employee in his work or home that I should mention?

The attitude should always be positive. Accusations, rumours and gossip have no place in good governance.

Supervision is much easier if the organization has clear shared goals and priorities, and the employee and supervisor know what they are and how they affect the employee's work. The supervisor should be able to evaluate the employee's job performance, make suggestions for improvement, and be able to build on the employee's suggestions for change. The supervisor must also be able to accept criticism.

At the end of the session, follow-up actions and a date for the next session should be agreed.

Clarifying responsibility for problem areas

Problems at work are usually rooted in:

- poor personnel management;
- inappropriate or insufficient skills, knowledge or abilities;
- lack of motivation or commitment to the job;
- violation of conditions or rules;
- mismanagement of the organization;
- factors beyond the control of the people or organization.

For the first three items, responsibility is shared between the supervisor and the employee as they try to point out what the problems are, why they are occurring, their consequences, and what can be done to improve the situation.

When rules are broken, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to explain the rule and what was done wrong and to listen to the employee's explanation for his/her actions. They should then consider together the reasons for imposing that rule and the consequences of breaking it and decide what to do next.

Problems arising from mismanagement of the organization should not be the responsibility of individual employees. If no one is clear about standards and expectations, or there is simply too much to do and no one is willing to set priorities, it is not fair to blame individuals. In this case, the purpose of supervision will be to identify the causes of the problems and agree actions that can be taken by supervisors and other managers.

When factors beyond the control of individuals or the organization affect employees and their work, the supervisor's role is to provide the necessary support to enable individuals to cope with the situation.

Overcoming typical problems

In overcoming performance issues, it can be helpful for the supervisor to have relatively clear (but flexible) overall goals for what needs to be accomplished in the long term and in session. For example, if the problem is insufficient reliability, systematic tardiness, or lack of an open attitude toward work, the long-term goals are those that might prompt the employee to continue with the job. Supervision goals can serve to clearly identify the problem, discover why it has occurred, enforce the need for reliability, encourage the employee to take responsibility for his or her actions, discuss and agree how to avoid this problem in the future, and explain what would happen if the situation did not improve.

Or, if the problem is poor planning, poor work organization, or difficulty in setting priorities, long-term goals can serve the employee to plan his work, to set his priorities against those of the team and the organization. Goals for a session can also serve to identify the need for organization and planning, to identify the employee's specific problems, to discuss whether the workload is realistic, necessary, or important, to discuss strategies such as work plans and to-do lists (see Resource Material 22), and to agree on a strategy.

If the problem is unclear job responsibilities or work assignments, substandard duties, excessive workload, inadequate job performance, work under pressure, or unreasonable demands, long-term goals would serve to clarify who should do what, deadlines, priorities, and expected standards. Session objectives should clarify what an employee and others are expected to do, clarify the standard of work expected, discuss whether expectations are reasonable, discuss necessary action for problem areas (e.g., clarify professional expectations, agree on deferral or transfer of work), and identify necessary steps.

If an employee has difficulty dealing with certain people (customers, consumers or co-workers), long-term goals can smooth them over. Session goals may be to recognize and accept the problems, interpret why it has become a problem, discuss possible lines of action to improve the situation, and agree on initial measures.

Notice that the supervisor does not come to the session with definite ideas about what needs to happen to fix the problems, but has a clear idea of the measures needed to achieve a coherent plan.

Support

Supervision and support are separate but overlapping management functions. The object of supervision is the work itself and the object of support is the employees. In reality, of course, they cannot simply be separated.

Objectives of support

A support session aims to:

- Give employees the security and opportunity to express themselves, blow off steam and discuss their feelings about the job;
- Help employees explore job and career development opportunities;
- Monitor how external circumstances affect performance and help staff consider appropriate support.

Overcoming common difficulties

Some of the most common problems in providing work-related support are a reluctance to accept “personal” problems as work-related, a supervisor’s reluctance to discuss issues not directly related to work, unclear boundaries between work-related and people-related support, actual or potential conflicts between support and supervision, and confidential issues.

The blurred distinction between the employee’s work and personal situation is always a problem. When and how should a supervisor intervene if an employee is clearly drinking heavily but his or her performance of duties is apparently unaffected by it? When and how should the supervisor intervene if an employee is jealous, jerky, or has a bad temper? The blurred distinction is compounded when colleagues are also friends, lovers or exes and personal lives largely overlap with work lives.

Personal issues should only be considered if they directly affect the job. If discussed in a work setting, the goal will be to help the employee find outside support and/or resolve the issue in some way. With the exception of a few specific self-help groups, civic organizations do not exist to provide therapy or counseling to their employees.

One way to visualize this distinction is to place personal (non-work) and work life in separate circles and imagine supervision as a square enclosing these circles.

Traditional management sees supervision as only concerning the duties that the employee must perform.

There is such a reluctance to manage in some civilian organizations that supervision is concerned only with the employee's personal situation.

Or the employee's personal and professional lives are so inextricably intertwined that any discussion of one applies fully to the other.

Obviously personal life affects work life and quality supervision takes this into account. It includes in its scope those aspects of personal life that directly affect work life, but excludes other personal factors:

If people are reluctant to talk about their personal lives, or if everything is going well, there may be a bit of overlap; if an employee is going through a big problem, it can impact significantly for a while. In any case, it should be clear that the supervisor's role is not to deal directly with personal problems. His or her role is to help guide the employee to other sources of help.

Even when related problems are disentangled, there can be an inherent contradiction between job supervision (which is very strict about performance) and support (which seeks to discover why personal performance is inadequate). Care must be taken to distinguish between the functions of support and supervision or, if not separated, to always be mindful of this potential conflict.

Confidentiality

If the issue of confidentiality arises, for example if an employee has serious personal problems and does not want their colleagues to know the reasons, this should be discussed and agreed between the supervisor and the employee. A plan may be needed to implement changes without telling other people directly why this is being done.

In some cases, however, the supervisor will not be able to guarantee confidentiality. For example, if an employee does not want it known that she is pregnant. If she wants one to two weeks in which to decide whether to terminate the pregnancy before telling anyone, there is no problem in terms of confidentiality. But if she is already in her fourth month of pregnancy and the organization needs to start looking for a replacement for the duration of the maternity, the request for confidentiality is unreasonable in terms of the organization's needs.

Issues that greatly affect performance need to be discussed with the superintendent's supervisor, the executive personnel committee, or the chair of the board or other governing body. Each should learn only as much as is necessary to overcome the job-related consequences of this situation.

Crisis support

A crisis or serious problem in an employee's personal life inevitably affects his or her work.

It is the manager's responsibility in this situation:

- be ready to listen;
- If appropriate, offer opportunities for support, advice or practical help;
- to help the employee decide what and how other employees should be notified;
- if appropriate, to propose a reduction or change in duties, sick leave, family or other leave, or other work-related changes.

When an employee is very worried, it is important that the supervisor recognizes the seriousness of the situation rather than ignoring it or not giving it the attention it deserves. The supervisor should be absolutely confidential about personal problems that do not directly affect work and be extremely discreet in disclosing matters that do affect work.

Many managers feel uncomfortable when employees bring their personal crises to work. It's important to accept the importance of offering a sympathetic ear, a box of tissues, a cup of tea and reassurance that it's okay for the employee to disclose personal information.

Non-management supervision

The supervision described above is often referred to as management supervision because it is directly related to the management of the organization as a whole and to the management of individual work in the organization.

Non-managerial supervision involves a supervisor who is not directly involved in managing the individual's work and may not even have a direct relationship with the organization. Another model of non-managerial supervision is a support group whose function is to provide support to the employee rather than manage his/her work.

The situations in which non-management supervision is appropriate are:

- Providing support to staff in high stress occupations where it may not be appropriate for this to be carried out by the manager or board (sometimes called external supervision);
- Providing support to managers where and when there is no able or willing board member to do so;
- Providing professional support, especially in situations requiring complex, in-depth, social support and especially when the supervisor lacks the necessary professional experience (sometimes called therapeutic supervision or social support);

Instruction and preparation are sometimes seen as forms of non-managerial supervision. These are discussed in Resource Material 11.

Even when there is no non-management oversight or social support, management oversight is still needed. Without it, the work of individuals is completely unmanaged. This may not cause problems in the event that the work is done well, but difficulties can arise in the event of unsatisfactory performance when no one is responsible for recognizing and correcting it.

Non-management supervision is an expensive activity in terms of working time and resources. Organizations should only provide it if there is a good reason to do so. Other employees who need external support should consider an external coach or mentor or personal counselling, therapy, self-help groups or other sources of personal support.

Relations with the organization

The relationship between the non-management supervisor and the management supervisor or board must be built very carefully. The non-management supervisor can provide opportunities for employees to share and reflect on situations, but the responsibility for working through changes still remains with the organization.

Sometimes the non-management supervisor has absolutely no relationship with the organization or the employees' manager; literally everything said in the non-management supervision session is confidential and the responsibility for achieving any changes through traditional management routes rests with the employees. (In some situations, the non-management supervisor may request that it be specified in his or her contract that some information, for example relating to child protection or possible fraud, may be reported to the organization or to relevant external bodies

At the other extreme are direct liaisons through which the non-management supervisor communicates to the manager or board chair what has been said or agreed at each session. Obviously, there are very complex issues of confidentiality and liability to consider here.

Volunteers and seconded

Regular or long-term volunteers should receive the same supervision opportunities as paid staff. The process may need to be adapted to their specific situations.

Supervision of long-term volunteers or seconded staff from business or industry may be a concern. But after initial concern and resistance, usually both parties find that these sessions are very beneficial equally to the individuals and the organization. Temporary volunteers often find it very useful to have regular short face-to-face sessions, mainly to get input from other volunteers about how they are feeling, to give them formal recognition and appreciation for their work, and to create a permanent place where issues can be addressed.

If the organization is using volunteers with special support needs (for example, people who have never been paid staff or who have intellectual disabilities or impairments), extra time should be provided for induction, preparation, supervision and training.

Unsuitable volunteers

Some volunteers may not have the skills or knowledge needed by the organization. In most cases, this can be overcome by providing training or assigning different tasks to volunteers. But some volunteers may need more training or support than the organization can justifiably provide. It is important to accept this rather than ignore it and allow the volunteer to become a net loss to the organization.

Letting a volunteer know that she or he is unsuitable is an unpleasant duty. It would be easier if it were clearly explained what the organization can provide to volunteers, what it requires of them and why a particular volunteer does not meet those requirements. It may be possible to suggest another, more suitable organization to the volunteer, but this should never be done if the volunteer is likely to be rejected from there as well.

While it may seem cruel to turn away volunteers, it seems even crueler, in the end, to keep people whose self-confidence will be undermined because they continually take wrong actions and are rejected.

Attestation of staff

Supervisions mainly deal with day-to-day, weekly or monthly problems or issues. Appraisals or staff reviews are conducted once or twice a year and require a broader view, enabling employees and supervisors to take an in-depth look at how they are taking their jobs, the development of their careers and the organization as a whole. They are usually more formal than supervisions and may be conducted by managers or a board member along with or instead of the usual supervisor.

The appraisal usually takes place a few weeks after the employee has started work and again a few weeks later (if there is a probationary period, halfway through and shortly before the end of that period), after six months and then once a year.

One person in the organization should keep track of when to schedule the appraisal and remind the employee and the appraiser of this.

Terminology of attestation and verification

Personnel attestation is often called something else or confused with something else. With such a variety of management jargon, there is no consistency about the meaning of words and concepts and the distinction between the processes described below are often unclear.

- Supervision: a collateral process, usually addressing relatively short-term issues related to individual work;
- Job Check: assesses whether the work done by an individual has changed and if so, how the job description should change accordingly.
- Salary or wage check: assesses whether a salary is appropriate for a job (specifically after a job verification has been done). If in doubt, a job evaluation is needed.
- Job evaluation: assesses the relevant job needs of the organization, often according to an agreed external framework. Usually undertaken at salary level review.
- Performance review and performance appraisal: assesses how well or poorly a job has been done and whether objectives have been met. The term can refer to individuals, specific services or teams, or to the organization as a whole. Individual performance appraisals can be linked to salary increases or a bonus (pay depending on contribution).
- Training Needs Analysis: assesses the need for or desire for training to enable employees as a group or individually to better perform their duties or develop.

- **Personnel appraisal:** as used in this book, it is similar to supervision but is conducted over longer periods and addresses larger issues. It covers aspects of individual performance review but goes further than what the employee has done and how they have done; it also includes individual training needs and possible job evaluation. The focus is on opportunities for individual development within the organization.

Linking staff appraisals to salary increases or bonuses is a complex issue. It is difficult for employees to be honest in evaluating their progress and problems if they know that their salary increase depends on what they say. A supervisor may avoid naming problems if he or she knows that the employee's salary increase will be jeopardized and that the employee may be discouraged if he or she does not receive the increase. In small civic organizations, it is almost always better to align salary levels and possible annual increases rather than trying to tie the raise to job performance and productivity.

Preparation for staff appraisal

As is the case with supervision, staff attestation is more effective if everyone involved spends some time preparing. One way to encourage this is by preparing a list of questions for the employee, supervisor, and supervisor (if not the supervisor). The questions should lay the foundation for the appraisal, but it should not be a question and answer session. Prior to the appraisal, the employee and supervisor should consider carefully which questions are appropriate and note specific issues they wish to address.

Probably the most important aspect of preparation is to remember that praise is the root of attestation. A testimonial session should be, above all, an opportunity to recognize and hone an employee's strengths and accomplishments.

Changes since the last attestation

- What are you most satisfied with since your last appraisal?
- To what extent do you think you have achieved the objectives set at the last appraisal?
- What has improved since then?
- What has gotten worse since then?

For the first appraisal after the appointment of the employee:

- How do you find work here?
- To what extent did the work meet or not meet your expectations?

Your personal work

- What do you think of your work in general?
- Are there any particular aspects of your job that you are happy or unhappy about?
- Do you think you have too much or too little to do?
- Do you understand which tasks have priority?
- Do you think you need additional skills or experience to perform your job better?
- How could we help you get those skills or experience?
- Can you handle the equipment you need for your job?
- Can you compile the necessary written materials?
- Do you think you participate enough in daily chores like washing the dishes?

The rest of the organization

- Are you getting the information you need from me?
- Are you getting the information you need from other staff, other teams and the governing body?
- Do you think there are enough opportunities to participate in decision-making about your work, and the work of your team and organization?

Our policies and procedures

- Do you think you understand our philosophy and values and our approach to work?
- Do you think your job fits that philosophy exactly?
- Do you think you understand what is happening locally and nationally that might affect us?
- Do you have any ideas on how we should evolve as an organization?
- Are there any topics you would like to discuss at staff meetings?

Relations with other people

- Are there any users/clients/members you work particularly well or badly with?
- Are there any employees you work particularly well or badly with?
- What do you think about your working relationship with your supervisor?
- What do you think of your working relationship with me?
- What do you think about employees you have to supervise?
- Are you getting the support you need in the organization? If not, what else do you need?

Relations with other organizations

- Do you have contact with other organizations or agencies that you need information about?
- Do you understand how our work aligns with or differs from the work of other organizations?

Your long-term plans

- How do you expect your work to develop?
- Have you thought about your long-term career plans?
- Is there a way the organization can help you develop your career?

360° attestation

A 360° appraisal is a specific appraisal approach that includes input not only from the employee's supervisor or manager, but also from other people who have direct contact with the employee. These may be other staff or volunteers, service users or clients, as well as contacts from external organizations. Care should be taken in selecting the people to be involved; they should be representative and have sufficient contact with the employee to be able to make meaningful comment on the quality of their work. Sometimes the appraised officer has the right to choose some of the people to be included.

The most common approach is through a questionnaire distributed in advance to people who are asked to comment. The questions should be carefully constructed to elicit the necessary information. The answers should be analyzed by the supervisor or (perhaps preferably) by someone not directly involved in the attestation.

A 360° appraisal allows for a broader perspective and can help the supervisor see the employee differently. However, this approach is time-consuming for the people involved

and who have to analyze and interpret the results. It should be applied judiciously and checked that it is actually being applied usefully in the appraisal process.

Attestation tracking

The staff appraisal tracking scheme may include sections with the following headings. Each item tracked should include a deadline and a contractor. The term may be immediate or long-term.

- Changes to the post.
- Changes to the organization's procedures .
- Other organizational changes.
- Training and other learning opportunities.
- Other obligations or purposes.

The tracking chart should end with a note for the month of the next inspection. It should be typed (if necessary) and two copies signed by the employee and supervisor. The first copy goes to the employee and the second signed copy goes in the employee's file, with photocopies, if required, for the employee's supervisors and/or supervisor.

The follow-up scheme should be accepted as a necessary element of supervision and should be the starting point for the next appraisal.

Even people who are opposed to the idea of personnel attestation are usually won over to the cause after the first year or two. The typical comment is, "I never realized how much I have accomplished and changed in the last year."

If there are still problems

Even with good supervision, appraisal procedures and training opportunities, some staff may still not perform their duties adequately. What has gone wrong and what can be done?

Inability to get the job done

The employee may be unable to perform the job or specific duties. Is it possible that the difficult job is being influenced by someone else? Is it possible to convert the entire job? Would additional training or support would be helpful? Can the employee be transferred to another position?

If there is at least one yes, the possibility should be considered. But if all the answers are no, disciplinary action should be taken and dismissal may be possible (some organizations have two separate procedures. One is called the conduct disciplinary procedure and the other is called the competence professional procedure. In law, both are disciplinary procedures).

Disciplinary and dismissal procedures are unpleasant and no one wants to engage in them. Every effort should be made to avoid a situation where dismissal is required. But if the job has to be done and the person cannot, it is damaging to the organization and its services, to the person engaged in that activity and to the other staff who support them in their place.

If an employee can be shown to be incapable of doing the job, that is legally “just cause” for dismissal. In order to show that the reasons for dismissal and the procedure itself are lawful, the organization must be able to show that it has clearly communicated to the employee that their performance is unsatisfactory, that it has given them the opportunity to improve, that it has strictly followed the statutory disciplinary procedures for dismissal and that they have been warned of possible or imminent dismissal if performance does not improve.

Lack of commitment to the job

The employee may not want to do the job properly. There may be a problem with motivation (see above) or stress or overwork (see Resource Material 13). If the employee does nothing to overcome the cause of the problem, the only solution is for her or him to be given a clear indication of what needs to be done and to what standards, and to be warned that disciplinary action will follow if performance does not improve. It’s unpleasant, but if the employee doesn’t want to work, it can very easily undermine the efforts and enthusiasm of everyone else.

Weak management of the organization

Poor management of the organization can contribute to poor performance and lack of motivation.

- The supervisor may be unable or unwilling to manage the employee, so supervision sessions, appraisals, and other procedures are ineffective (or not implemented at all). The supervisor needs training and support.
- The supervisor may not have the authority to implement the changes needed to help the employee improve his or her performance. Lines of communication need to be established between the supervisor and those who have the authority to make the change.
- The organization may not be clear about what it should expect from the employee. It may give confused messages and/or expect too much. (“We want you to concentrate on working with those in need”... “We want you to be in the office every day.”)
- The organization may have conflicting or too many priorities. Individuals and the organization as a whole need to learn more about planning (Resource Material 14) and time management (Resource Material 22).
- Employees may feel unappreciated and unsupported in the organization. Unless the necessary support is provided, employees are likely to work at the minimum acceptable level and feel alienated from the team or organization.

If the manager is unable or unwilling to manage, or if the organization is not clear about its priorities, the employee is doomed to failure. Then the organization fails as well.

Disciplinary action and dismissal

Disciplinary actions

Disciplinary action should only be taken if informal discussions and supervision with clear targets for improvement prove ineffective, or if there is misbehavior or serious misconduct that cannot be addressed informally.

Disciplinary action is an important issue that affects the morale of everyone involved: the employee, the supervisor and co-workers. But it can be just as discouraging if no disciplinary action is taken when everyone realizes that work is not being done properly or that an employee is constantly breaking the rules and nothing is being done about it.

Each stage of the disciplinary action should clearly state what is wrong, what needs to be done, a deadline for improvement, how improvement will be assessed and by whom, and what will or may happen if the required improvement is not made.

Lawful disciplinary measures and dismissal procedures

Where disciplinary action involves suspension with or without pay or dismissal, the employer must follow lawful disciplinary measures and dismissal procedures. Information on these can be obtained from the Department of Trade and Industry (UK). Failure to follow the statutory procedures automatically makes the dismissal unfair and gives the employee an automatic pay increase which they receive from the employment tribunal.

Where disciplinary action involves a warning or suspension with full pay (i.e. where the employee will not suffer financially from the disciplinary sanction), it is not necessary to follow the statutory procedure, but it is good practice to do so.

Legal advice should be sought before disciplinary action is taken which results in suspension or dismissal. Incorrect application, even at a very early stage, can have very serious consequences and entitle the employee to appeal against wrongful and/or incorrect dismissal, even if it is fully justified.

Early stages

Disciplinary action shall be taken if informal discussions and supervision with clear goals for performance or behavior improvement have not produced the desired result. Disciplinary action includes an investigation of what happened and the reasons, and discussion with the employee. For something relatively minor, the first disciplinary sanction is usually a verbal warning. Although called “verbal,” a written document should be handed to the employee and a copy left in his or her file. It should clearly state that this is the first stage of a disciplinary warning.

If performance does not improve, the next step may be an additional verbal warning or one or two formal written warnings.

Disciplinary procedures should enable disciplinary sanctions to begin at the stage of a written warning of serious failure to perform or serious misconduct. Poor written procedures often require everything to start at the verbal warning stage, even if the offence is not very serious.

The employee and supervisor may disagree on whether there is poor performance or a violation of standards of conduct. They should discuss this, but ultimately, the supervisor decides whether to initiate disciplinary action. If the employee disagrees with these actions and with the issuing of warnings, the disciplinary procedure will commence regardless of whether it is possible to appeal against the warnings and how they will be appealed.

Recent warnings and dismissal

If performance still does not improve, or the rules are still broken, the next stage will be a final written warning making it clear that dismissal follows if there is no improvement. At this stage, the statutory procedure should be followed and the employee should have the right to appeal.

If the employee's behavior does not improve sufficiently, the next stage is notice of dismissal. Except where dismissal without notice is justified (see below), the employee must be given notice within the period specified in the contract of employment or under the law (or compensation must be paid for the notice period if the organization does not want the employee to continue working during the notice period). The employee must have the right to appeal.

Gross misconduct

Very serious misconduct will usually result in suspension with full pay while the incident is investigated. An employee may be suspended with limited or no pay if specifically stated in the contract.

Suspension from work, even with full pay, should only be undertaken in very serious cases such as theft from the organization or its users, violence or blatant racism or sexism, and only if the employment contract so provides. Any case of gross misconduct must be investigated and brought to a swift conclusion, and independent people from outside the organization may be brought in to help with the investigation.

If gross misconduct is proved, the employee shall be dismissed immediately without notice and without payment of compensation for the period of notice if so provided by the contract of employment. This is called dismissal without notice. The lawful disciplinary measures and procedures for dismissal contain special conditions for dismissal without notice and these must be strictly adhered to.

Legal and illegal dismissal

With a good recruitment, selection, induction, supervision and vetting system in place and a good training program, the likelihood of an employee being dismissed is minimal. If necessary, it should be done quickly and lawfully.

For all employees, regardless of how long they have been employed or how many hours per week they work, dismissal is automatically deemed unlawful in the event that:

- because of their race, ethnic origin, national origin, nationality, gender, marital status, pregnancy, gender reassignment, religion or other beliefs, or sexual orientation;
- is carried out for an unjustifiable reason – because of their disability;
- if it is because of age, except in cases where the employee is over the specified retirement age or the retirement age determined under the employment contract;
- relating to an employee taking action under health and safety law, asserting a legal right or being bound by any trade union activity.
- an employee dismissed for one of these reasons can bring a complaint against the employer for unfair dismissal, and if the basis of the dismissal was discrimination.
- other dismissals are lawful only if they are based on a lawful reason and the employee has followed the lawful procedure. However, even if the employee does not have a lawful reason or did not follow a lawful procedure, dismissed employees cannot usually appeal an unfair dismissal unless they have worked for that employer for at least one year.

The legitimate reasons are:

- incapacity – where the employee cannot do the job (possibly because it is too difficult or because the employee is ill);
- behaviour – when the employee's behaviour is unacceptable (systematic lateness, rudeness, etc.);
- redundancy – when the employer no longer needs the job;
- when the law prevents the person from doing the work, for example when a lorry driver's license is revoked;
- 'some other substantial reason', where the employer can show that there is good reason for dismissal, even if it does not fall into one of the above categories.

Unsatisfactory work by volunteers

An organization that regularly uses the services of volunteers should have a simple, lawful procedure for dealing with unsatisfactory performance or conduct. The organization's disciplinary procedure for paid staff could be applied, but with fewer steps. Instead of being called a disciplinary procedure, it is often called a job performance procedure or something similar.

Managing the work of subcontractors

Increasingly, organizations are contracting with self-employed staff or external agencies. This can be done on a one-off basis, for example some research, or on an ongoing basis.

To make sure the work is managed properly:

- the organization must be absolutely clear about what it wants, when it wants it, and what quantity and quality it expects (see Resource Material 9 on Outsourcing);
- the work, schedule and standards should be clearly defined in the contract and in discussion between the purchaser (organization) and the supplier (self-employed contractor or agency);
- the contractor or agency must accurately report to a designated person or work group within the organization;
- the contract must provide for regular inspections of the work;
- the contract must specify what will happen if the work is not done on time or is unsatisfactory.

Supervision that is done to paid staff and volunteers is usually not appropriate for self-employed staff unless they have a long-term relationship with the organization and are well integrated into its structure. But if this is the case, they may be accepted under the law as paid employees instead of self-employed contractors, which raises a number of important legal issues.

List of Questions for Managing People and Their Work

1. Do board members, paid staff, and volunteers know who is responsible for managing staff, who reports to whom, and who is responsible for addressing service issues?
2. Does the organization have an executive personnel or human resources committee? If there is no executive personnel committee, do board members have the qualifications and time to discuss and make decisions about employment issues?
3. Does the organization comply with all legal requirements relating to employees they and those relating to volunteers where necessary?
4. Do the relevant personnel policies and procedures apply to both paid staff and volunteers? Do supervisors know what these policies and procedures are and follow them?
5. Do policies and procedures undergo regular review and update in consultation with staff?
6. Is the organization clear about what each employee, paid or good volunteer, is expected to do, when they are expected to do it, and what standards apply to the job?
7. Do individual leaders have open and stable relationships with their servants? Is there consistency in the approach of all leaders? Do managers have the opportunity to talk about these issues, for example how they would deal with particular staffing issues?

8. Are all staff (including the executive director) and long-term volunteers given regular opportunities to meet with a supervisor or other person in the organization to talk about accomplishments, issues, and plans?
9. Have employee performance issues been identified, accepted and discussed with a view to resolving them rather than being ignored or dealt with in the ineffective fault-finding manner?
10. Is everyone given the opportunity to learn from their mistakes?
11. Is there a clear appraisal procedure and is it consistently applied across the organization including to managers?
12. Does the organization have clear, lawful and enforceable disciplinary and grievance procedures?
13. If the work is outsourced, is proper management and monitoring performed?