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**PROMOTING GOOD QUALITY CARE THROUGH  
TEAMWORK  
AND  
EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP**

**A PRACTICE GUIDE**

**Joan Walton**

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## INTRODUCTION

### Introduction

Presumably most people would agree that the most important element in a residential child care setting is **the quality of care offered to each young person.**

The way to promote this is firstly to support each individual in acquiring the knowledge, qualities and skills to provide that care; and secondly **the staff team work together to ensure they are offering a consistent and high quality service.**

Indeed, it could be argued that without teamwork the impact of individual skills will at best be diluted, and at worst will be rendered useless. On the other hand, a strong and effective team can compensate for a lack of skills and experience in certain individuals, as long as they are recognised. Members who have the skills and experience can role-model and 'mentor' less experienced team colleagues and maintain an appropriate ethos and ethics to meet the tasks the team are set.

Good teamwork takes time to build, and a continual input of time to be maintained. Attention to teamwork can never be neglected, otherwise it will become fragmented, and start to fall apart.

Even a group of people who have been working together for a long time, know each other's working practices well, and have reached a mature level of functioning, will require strong leadership at times. The nature of the residential task is a challenging one, especially in homes where there are constant changes in the resident group, and/or the young people regularly exhibit aggressive, violent and destructive behaviours. One of the key supports that sustain individuals whilst carrying out their roles in such an environment is effective teamwork.

This Practice Handbook looks at what a team is, what differentiates it from a group, why it is so important in residential work, and considers a wide range of forums, methods and techniques for developing good teamwork. It also describes what leadership qualities and skills are required to lead and develop a motivated, cohesive, achieving team.

The Practice Guide is presented in four parts. Part 1 considers teamwork from an operational perspective. Part 2 includes a number of modules that focus on specific team development activities which may be used to address particular needs or as programmed study. Part 3 provides a rationale and framework for using Action Planning as a means of improving an individual's contribution to effective teamwork. Part 4 contains further theoretical information to support understanding of the value of teamwork and leadership.

**PART 1**

**TEAMWORK & LEADERSHIP:**

**Theory & Good Practice Issues**

## What differentiates a Team from a Group?

A group can be defined as two or more individuals engaged in some social interaction, for the purpose of achieving some goal or goals. From the table below you will see that we do not think that being a group *necessarily* leads on to becoming a team. A team is of a different level of understanding and operation. A team will have an understanding and experience of being a group, but a group will not necessarily have an understanding and experience of being a team. We think that being part of a team requires conscious understanding, planning and activity by all team members. This may be absent or unnecessary as membership of a group.

Group	Team
People can work independently.	People work collaboratively
People can set their own objectives, or are told what the organisational objectives are that they have to meet.	People agree shared objectives.
People are given a role to carry out, and are often told what to do.	People are encouraged to contribute to the achievement of objectives by using their particular skills and abilities.
People often do not have to understand the role of others; and are not given much opportunity or encouragement to do so. Disagreement or opinions that do not fit in with the wider organisation are discouraged.	An atmosphere of trust is fostered, with people being encouraged to contribute their own ideas and opinions. Conflict is not avoided; it is used constructively, with the aim of finding the best way forward.
People may choose not to be open and honest, so mutual understanding becomes difficult. 'Games-playing' and talking about others behind their backs can become part of the culture, which encourages individuals to work in their own interests, rather than that of the group.	Open and honest communication is encouraged and is seen to be important, as a means of promoting collaborative working and mutual understanding.
People may often not be involved in a participative decision making process.	Participation in decision making is encouraged, though the leader often will have the final say. Agreeing the best way forward is seen as more important than following one particular person's viewpoint.

Author's note: In this practice document we are concentrating on groups and teamwork as a means of organisational development. We are not using the terms as they may be used in a counselling or therapeutic sense.

## **Tuckman's Stages of Group Development**

Bruce W Tuckman is an educational psychologist who first described the (then) four stages of group development in 1965. He studied the behaviour of small groups in a variety of environments. As a result, he identified the distinct phases they go through, suggesting that they need to experience all four stages before they achieve maximum effectiveness. Tuckman then developed the model in 1977 (in conjunction with Mary Ann Jensen) adding a fifth stage.

### **Four Stages of Group Development**

Tuckman described the four stages a group experiences, as it comes together and begins to operate. The process may well be subconscious, though an understanding of the stages should help a group reach an optimum level of effectiveness more quickly and less painfully.

#### **Stage One: Forming**

Individuals are motivated by a desire to be accepted by the others, and to avoid conflict. Serious issues and feelings are avoided. People concentrate on being busy with routine activities, such as who does what, when to meet, paperwork, etc. However, they are also gathering information and impressions about each other, about the nature of the work to be done, and how best to approach it. This stage feels comfortable, but the avoidance of conflict means that problematic situations are not addressed.

#### **Stage Two: Storming**

Individuals can only remain pleasant to each other until a point where someone feels an important, but potentially contentious issue needs to be dealt with. Some people will feel this earlier than others, and initial difficulties may be quickly addressed, or even minimised. These may be to do with the work that needs to be done, the role that someone is carrying out, or to an aspect of interpersonal relationships. Some people will be keen to deal with controversial issues realising that real progress cannot be made unless they are, whilst others will want to remain in the present (comfortable) state of Stage One. Depending on the culture of the organisation and the personality of individuals, the conflict will be either suppressed, or it will come to the surface, possibly not in constructive ways. Individuals will tend to look to others for a means of preventing any conflict persisting.

#### **Stage Three: Norming**

As Stage Two evolves, the group establishes 'rules of engagement', and agreement is reached about tasks, responsibilities, and how decisions are made. Individuals start to understand each other better, and can appreciate the diversity of each other's skills and experiences. People learn to listen, appreciate and support each other. They are prepared to challenge and change their own views, and begin to feel part of a cohesive, integrated group.

#### **Stage Four: Performing**

Not all groups are able to reach this stage, which is characterised by a state of interdependence and flexibility. Everyone knows each other well enough to be able to work together, and individuals trust each

other enough to encourage independent activity. There is the capacity to handle conflict constructively, and people work in a way that gives them mutual ownership of decisions made. Roles and responsibilities can change flexibly according to need. . Group identity and loyalty are felt to be important, and morale is high, with everyone equally task and people-orientated. This high level of collaboration means that all the energy of the group can be directed towards achieving the vision, aims and objectives of the organisation.

Ten years after first describing the four stages, Tuckman described a further stage:

### **Stage Five: Adjourning**

This stage is about completion and disengagement, where individuals separate both from the task in hand, and other group members. People will be proud of what they have achieved, and enjoyed being part of this group. However, there is a conscious need to move on. Some people describe Stage Five as ‘de-forming and mourning’ which recognises the sense of loss felt by group members. This may be experienced when established group members leave.

The value of this model is to help people recognise where a group is in the process, and help it to move to the fourth ‘performing’ stage. Groups are often forming and changing, and each time that happens, they can move to a different stage. Any event might shift the group between stages. For example, it might be performing well (stage 4); then a challenging new member of staff arrives, which forces them back into the storming phase. Experienced leaders will understand and be prepared for this, and will help the group get back to ‘performing’ as quickly as possible.



## **Building Blocks of Effective Teamwork**

**(Adapted from Mike Woodcock: *Team Development Manual*,  
Gower Press 1979)**

### **Clear Objectives and Agreed Goals**

To be effective, people need to know what it is they want to achieve. In addition, if they are going to be committed to achieving objectives, they generally need to feel some ownership of them. Therefore, to build an effective team, it is important to have a process in place where objectives and goals are discussed and agreed by all team members. In addition, it is helpful if each team member is involved in making decisions about their own areas of responsibility, and their own objectives.

This process benefits from the development of clear Action Plans which include what is to be done, by when, by whom, and including a date when the plan will be reviewed.

### **Openness and Confrontation**

Good teamwork requires people to be open and honest with each other. If there is a culture where difficult issues are avoided and not addressed, and people either say nothing, or are destructively critical about others behind their backs, rather than constructively critical to their face, then the quality of teamwork will suffer, or indeed be totally absent.

In order to develop a culture which encourages open and honest communication, and the ability to deal with difficult issues, there is a need for team members to develop skills in constructive use of conflict, active listening, and giving and receiving feedback.

### **Support and Trust**

Trust takes a long time to achieve, but seconds to shatter. Trust only develops through team members learning to be open and honest with each other over a sustained period and time. The integrity and authenticity of all team members is important here – qualities that they have to work on individually.

When there is a high level of trust within a team, people will feel they are working in a supportive environment, which enhances mutual learning and the achievement of team goals and objectives.

### **Co-operation and Conflict**

Team members need to be able to work co-operatively together to achieve the identified objectives. Skills and information are shared in a reciprocal way. Co-operation requires trust and openness, and can generate a higher morale.

When people are working co-operatively, they are also more able to deal with issues that create conflict. If constructive problem-solving methods are used to deal with differences of opinion, the outcome can be productive, with each party gaining greater understanding and learning something useful in the process.

### **Sound Procedures**

Sound methods of working and agreed means of making decisions are necessary if objectives are to be achieved. In order to make good decisions, people must be able to collect accurate information quickly, and openly discuss alternative courses of action.

Flexible and explicit working procedures should be in place that are understood by all team members. There needs to be a clarity and acceptance concerning the process of how decisions are made and by whom. Teams should review all procedures regularly and adapt them in light of experience.

### **Appropriate Leadership**

Individuals who are effective leaders of their team generally have the ability to get the best out of all members of the team, and have a leadership style that is flexible and appropriate. They will know when and how to delegate; and will provide the appropriate training opportunities and support for delegation to have effective outcomes.

Good team leaders will be authentic and true to themselves, be clear to their team members about what they want to achieve, be receptive to other peoples points of view, encourage the development of others, and be a positive role-model. Supporting and ensuring strong leadership is probably the most crucial role for external managers and the wider organisation.

### **Regular Review**

Teams should undertake a regular review of the way they work, how they makes decisions, etc. This will allow them to learn from their experience, and consciously improve their performance. They can either complete a self-assessment, or ask someone outside of the team to observe what they do and how they do it, and give them feedback.

### **Individual Development**

Effective teams also need to pay attention to individual development. The ‘whole may be greater than the sum of its parts’; but the knowledge, skills and qualities of each individual contribute to the whole.

It is important that individuals are open to new challenges, seek greater self knowledge, welcome constructive criticism, understand their own feelings, care about others, strive to be open and honest, set high standard for themselves and their team, and see life as an adventure which they enjoy. Individual development opportunities should recognise and build on these characteristics.

### **Sound inter-group relations**

Effective teams also need to have good relationships with other individuals and groups. Organisational life can be effected if teams and individuals do not relate well to each other. If there are good inter-group relations, there can be a smoother flow of information, collaborative problems solving, less anxiety, and more enjoyable working lives.

## Why is Teamwork important in Residential Settings?

To ensure quality of service to young people, through:

- Safety, consistency and coherence for young people
- Good communication
- Mutual support
- Effective decision making
- Role modelling best practice

### From *What Works in Residential Child Care*

[http://www.ncb.org.uk/ncercc/ncercc%20practice%20documents/whatworksinrccsummary\\_ncbhighlight.pdf](http://www.ncb.org.uk/ncercc/ncercc%20practice%20documents/whatworksinrccsummary_ncbhighlight.pdf)

Research into residential Child Care identifies four key dimensions on which residential establishments differ:

- *Ideological*: the prevailing values and beliefs as implemented by staff and managers
- *Organisational*: the way aims and values are enshrined in structures and staff roles
- *Staffing*: the characteristics, training and attitudes of staff
- *Residents' responses*: for example, whether there is learning or socialisation.

Homes that perform best have concordant societal, formal and belief goals, strong positive shared cultures. Concordant beliefs and strong positive cultures produce a positive impact on performance; children's level of educational achievement has been shown to depend on their experience of a secure, supportive and settled environment.<sup>7</sup>

Homes which meet the personal, social, health and educational needs of children are much more likely to be safe places for children than those that do not. Sub cultures in any group, whether of staff or children, which run counter to the goals of a setting should not be left unchallenged.<sup>9,10</sup>

All children's homes are required to have a Statement of Purpose and well-articulated objectives, consistent throughout the organisation. Defining the primary task of an organisation may be established by asking 'What are we here for?' or 'What are we in the business of doing?'. All parties should focus on the definition of the core task when evaluating the work of a home. A children's home is more likely to be successful if the primary task is understood and agreed by all parties: parents; children; residential staff; head of home; external management; and outside professionals.

Clear and coherent leadership is a fundamental component of high-quality practice. The role of the head of a home is influential in determining the quality of care and that everyone understands the purpose of the home.

### **National Minimum Standards /Children's Homes Regulations - Appendix two Programmes of Training for Staff**

2. Basic residential child care skills and team working

### **National Framework Contract for Children's Homes - Being Healthy Outcome 1**

Children are able to make appropriate attachments, develop resilience and experience emotional well-being through a sense of belonging and relationships with a consistent team of carers who care for them.

### **What needs to be in place to enable good teamwork?**

1. Strong, effective leadership (some-one who co-ordinates the decision-making and the actions, and ensures that everyone understands them).
2. Agreed statement of purpose and principles (ensure everyone is agreed with the essential nature of the service they are providing).
3. Shared value base.
4. Shared awareness and approaches (for working with children / young people).
5. Recruitment practices that ensure that new members are appropriate to the existing team.
6. Regular reflective review of practice; including team reflection & individual child / young person reflections; and includes understanding of conscious & unconscious processes.
7. Staff Development Plan.
8. Annual appraisal (including opportunities to gain relevant qualifications).
9. Appropriate supervision system (to meet four function listed by Tony Morrison (2006) – accountability [management], development, support and mediation).
10. Opportunity for 360 degree supervision and reflection.
11. Regular, planned team meetings (also to meet Morrison's four functions – see 9 above).
12. Planned shift handover meetings
13. Behaviour plans for young people.
14. Care planning objectives/pathway plans which are clear for all young people.
15. All elements of the learning organisation (See SCIE Learning Pack).
16. Avoidance of 'the blame culture' and support given to those accused of wrongdoing until investigations are complete and the situation has been completely resolved.

### Another view of the tasks and roles

<b>What</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Task</b>
Performance Assessment Framework	Corporate parent	Corporate Member and DCS
National Minimum Standards	Proprietor and manager and OFSTED	Provision, regulation and compliance
National Contract	Commissioner	Inspection and compliance
NOS and NVQ	CWDC and awarding bodies	Training and development
Group	Staff and young people – carers and cared for	Evaluation of social climate of home
Child	Staff and young people – carers and cared for	Evaluation of individual child

## **Leadership**

There are a number of leadership theories that have been developed since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These include:

- ‘Great Man’ theory
- Behavioural theory / Leadership Styles
- Situational leadership
- Transactional leadership
- Transformative leadership

A few pointers which indicate the main characteristics of these is as follows:

### **Great Man Theory**

Leaders are born not made

E.g.

- Jesus, Mohammed, the Buddha
- Churchill, Eisenhower, Martin Luther King

When a great leader arises, others should follow – leaders know best!

### **Situational Leadership**

- Leader may direct, coach, support or delegate.
- No one style is better or worse in itself.
- Leader needs to adapt style to suit the situation.
- Style selected is based on an assessment of competence, confidence and commitment.

### **Transactional Leadership**

- Leadership is seen as a series of exchanges between leaders and followers.
- ‘Carrots’ are used as an inducement to achieve goals of organisation.
- ‘Sticks’ are used as a punishment if goals not achieved.
- Leader has the power in this relationship – ‘command and control’.

### **Transformational Leadership**

- Based on an understanding that people are not ‘parts of a machine’; that what they feel and think affects what happens.
- Active involvement of all team and organisational members is encouraged.
- Key words are:
  - Empowerment

- Participation
- Two-way communication
- Interconnection

In this Practice Guide, I suggest that it is the theory of Transformational Leadership that has the most to offer staff in residential children's homes. The qualities and characteristics of a transformational leader are identified below in more detail.

### **Qualities of a Transformational Leader**

- Inspires others
- Is authentic
- Is a strong role-model
- Gains trust and respect
- Creates a vision for the organisation
- Encourages people to think creatively
- Achieves goals
- Is intellectually, emotionally & spiritually intelligent

### **Emotional Intelligence**

- SELF AWARENESS
  - Tuned to inner feelings
  - Recognise how feelings affect behaviour
  - Attuned to values which guide behaviour
  - Open and authentic
  - Can speak openly about emotions
  - Good intuition about best course of action
  - Knows own strengths and limitations
  - Can laugh at self
  - Welcomes constructive criticism & feedback
  - Welcomes challenges
  - Has self-confidence
  - Has a sense of presence
- SELF-MANAGEMENT
  - Can control own emotions
  - Stays calm in a crisis
  - Is transparent – lives their values – has integrity
  - Is flexible
  - Is continually learning
- SOCIAL AWARENESS
  - Is empathic: sensitive to what others are feeling

- Will listen to other’s perspective
- Aware of political forces at work in the organisation
- Aware of guiding values and unspoken rules that operate amongst people
- RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT
  - Inspires other to work together with shared vision and sense of common purpose
  - Can engage attention of, and influence group
  - Cultivates people’s abilities
  - Can deal with conflict, understand different perspectives, and agree a way forward
  - Encourage collaboration and teamwork

### **Spiritual Intelligence**

Spiritual intelligence is the intelligence with which we access that which means most to us:

- Our values, our sense of meaning and purpose, our highest motivations;
- How we use these in our thinking processes and the decisions we make.

Leaders need spiritual intelligence to create spiritual capital in the wider organisational culture, to generate sustainable wealth.

**Wealth** is “that which we have access to that enhances the quality of life”.

### **Principles of Transformation – towards a person specification for a transformational leader**

Transformational leadership requires ‘being’ a leader as well as ‘doing’ leadership. Situational leadership and management can be taught as professional behaviours. Transformational leadership requires personal qualities.

- Self-awareness -
  - Know what motivates me, what I believe in and value
- Spontaneity
  - To live in and be responsive to each present moment
- Being vision and value led
  - Act from principles and deep beliefs
- Holism
  - See self as interconnected with others within the whole, ability to see larger patterns
- Compassion -
  - Quality of empathy and ‘feeling with’ someone.
- Celebration of diversity
  - Valuing and learning from differences in others
- Positive use of adversity
  - Ability to learn from mistakes and problems
- Sense of vocation
  - Seeking to ‘make a difference’ - to work towards something larger than self.

### **Linking Transformational Leadership to Social Pedagogy**



Pedagogy is about making connections and creating a coherent, harmonious and reflected framework of various theories and concepts and about working consciously with head, heart, and hands.

## **PART 2**

# **TRAINING MODULES TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE TEAMWORK**

## **Agreeing Purpose and Principles**

### **Aim**

To clarify the purpose of the service which the team aims to provide, and to establish an agreed set of principles underlying their practice.

### **Objectives**

1. To discuss and agree the purpose of the team, including a clear description of the service being offered.
2. To generate a range of beliefs and principles held by individual members of staff concerning their work.
3. To agree a set of principles to which all members of the staff team would be prepared to commit themselves.

### **Materials required:**

Flipchart, pens, blu-tack, A4 paper, pens/pencils.

- *Example of Statement of Purpose and Principles*

### **1 Input by Group Leader**

"Until people are clear about what it is they are trying to achieve, it is not possible to evaluate whether what they are doing is being effective or not! Further, it is likely that team members will have different ideas about what it is they are doing and why. Unless members of a staff team make explicit their own ideas and value system, individuals are likely to operate to different sets of principles and beliefs. This may lead to different work practices, which may in fact conflict with each other. Unless the reasons for these differences are clarified and discussed, practice within the team is unlikely to be as effective as it could be."

## II Exercise 1 Statement of Purpose

<b><u>Purpose</u></b>	To clarify the purpose of the team.
<b><u>Method</u></b>	Large group brainstorm Small group and large group discussion
<b><u>Time</u></b>	1½ - 2½+ hours
<b><u>Materials</u></b>	Flipchart paper and pens, blu-tack

### **Process**

1. The Group Leader should inform the staff team about the aim of the exercise. State that before identifying the purpose of the team, it is useful to consider what people actually *do* on a day-to-day basis.
2. Ask participants to brainstorm all activities undertaken in their day to day work - Group Leader to record on flipchart paper.

Contributions will probably include a wide range of activity, such as:

On the telephone  
Writing reports  
Talking to service users  
Counselling  
Groupwork  
Supervision  
Home visits  
Attending court

All contributions should be noted without comment.

After about 5 minutes, to generate further thinking, it may be helpful to suggest to team members that they imagine that they have a complete outsider in their midst, who knows nothing about why they are there, or for whom they provide a service. What do they feel are the significant aspects of what they do? For example what is the age range of service users? Does the service provide a residential facility, include family or community involvement, offer teaching or tutorial provision? Contributions may include more comprehensive statements of services provided e.g.

- long term residential care for older people requiring nursing care.
- short term respite care for young people with learning disabilities

Again, discussion at this stage should not be encouraged - this time it is to be used to note people's immediate ideas or thoughts, without evaluating or making comments on them.

**Note to Group Leader:** *This exercise involves all team members in the process of thinking about what they do in their day-to-day work. Many are often surprised at actually how much they do do! However, thinking about **why** they do these things is often something they have not consciously and explicitly done; and even if they have, it may not have been for a long time, or with the whole staff group in a structured way. The next part of the exercise encourages the team to think about the rationale for these activities.*

3. Break into small groups of 4-5 people. Each group should use the recorded words/phrases as the basis of discussion as to what they consider the main purpose of the team to be - i.e. in undertaking these activities, what is the outcome that they aim to achieve? This is the time for differences in thinking to be discussed.
4. Each group should write a minimum of one, and a maximum of five sentences, that establishes their agreed statement of purpose.
5. Each group's suggestion should be posted up on the wall. The different ideas can then be discussed in the large group, with the Group Leader playing a facilitative role in enabling the group to reach agreement as to the purpose of the team.

**Note to Group Leader:** *Groups complete this exercise in various degrees of detail. This is less important than is the process of enabling the staff team to establish common ground. The outcome should be a clear statement of what the team sets out to achieve. An example is given at the end of the module.*

### III Exercise 2

### Statement of Principles

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <u><b>Purpose</b></u>   | To clarify a set of principles underlying practice within the team   |
| <u><b>Method</b></u>    | Individual exercise; groups of 3/4; large group discussion.  |
| <u><b>Time</b></u>      | Minimum of 2 hours. This time will be greater if there is extensive discussion on return to the large group.   |
| <u><b>Materials</b></u> | A4 sheet of paper for each person; flipchart/paper/pens.   |
| <u><b>Process</b></u>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Group Leader outlines what is meant by principles - i.e. fundamental beliefs underlying all aspects of practice within their work. Examples of principles that individuals may or may not accept would be:<br/>           "I believe that children should be seen and not heard"<br/>           "I believe that all children have a right to feel valued, safe and secure".<br/>           "I believe that older people should be placed in a residential home as soon as they have problems looking after themselves. "<br/>           "I believe that older people have the right to be fully supported in living in their own home for as long as they wish that to happen."</li> <li>2. Each person should have one A4 sheet of paper, which they divide into four equal pieces. Individually, all group members spend 10 minutes identifying up to 4 principles/beliefs they hold concerning the work they do and write each one on a separate slip of paper. Each suggestion remains anonymous at this stage.</li> <li>3. Group Leader collects all pieces of paper and reads them out in turn.</li> <li>4. The pieces of paper should then be laid out on a table which can be used as a point of reference during the next part of the exercise. Before breaking into small groups, team members can be given the opportunity to make a note of those principles about which they feel most strongly, to minimise the need to keep returning to the table.</li> <li>5. Team breaks up into groups of 3/4 and asked to generate up to 5 principles/beliefs that they agree on as a group. Emphasise that the aim of this exercise is to establish <b>common ground</b>; however any significant issues or disagreements arising from the discussion should be noted for future discussion.</li> <li>6. The agreed principles should be written up on sheets of flipchart.</li> <li>7. Return to large group. The sheets of flipchart should be blu-tacked to the wall. The Group Leader can lead a discussion on issues arising from this exercise.</li> <li>8. Team to decide which of these principles should be accepted as a basis of practice. Final decision can be left for a further meeting (e.g. staff meeting), after there has been further opportunity for discussion and refinement of thinking.</li> </ol> |

**Annual appraisal / Personal Development Review  
Example Proforma**

<b>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW</b>
------------------------------------

**Name:**

**Work Base:**

**Job Title:**

**Date of Commencement of Post:**

## Staff Development Review: Record of Interview

Date of Review:.....

Name of Interviewer:.....

What are the main roles and tasks that you undertake within your work?

What do you feel have been your main achievements since your last review (objectives), or since commencing this post?

What do you consider to be your main strengths (skills, qualities, etc.) that you bring to your work (*e.g. ability to negotiate; good presentation skills, able to assert myself; sensitivity; reliability, ability to manage high levels of stress.*)



What parts of your work give you most satisfaction?

What parts of your work give you least satisfaction?

What do you consider to be your main areas of weakness? (*e.g. chairing meetings, time management; tendency to be impatient*).

Do you have any skills / knowledge which you feel are currently being underused?

What problems / difficulties do you consider prevents you from carrying out your job as well as you would like?

What do you think would help resolve these problems / difficulties?

How do you envisage your career development over the next 5 years?

What would you like to achieve during the next year?

What might make it difficult to achieve your objectives?

What aspects of your professional and / or personal development could be helped by training, supervision, or other forms of support?

What else can be done to help you achieve your objectives by:

Yourself?

Your Line Manager?

Others? (please specify).

Are there any other issues not so far mentioned that you feel affect your ability to carry out you job? (*e.g. management issues, environmental factors such as poor lighting, shortage of phones etc.*)

Using the information collected in the preceding sections, draw up a clear Action Plan for the following 12 months.

Objectives	How to be achieved	Who is responsible for action	When to be achieved

## **Effective Use of Meetings**

### **Aim:**

To enable staff to make more effective use of meetings.

### **Objectives:**

1. To share feelings on how team members perceive meeting time to be currently used.
2. To explore the advantages and disadvantages of making decisions as a team rather than on an individual basis.
3. To identify skills required in managing an effective meeting.
4. To hold a meeting which focuses on issues placed on the Team Agenda.

### **Materials required:**

#### **Handouts:**

- \* *How is Meeting Time Used?*
- \* *Making Effective Use of Meetings.*

## **II Introduction To 'Meetings'**

### **Input by Group Leader**

"The role of meetings in providing a forum where clear communication can take place is a crucial one. In previous sessions, we have looked at a number of reasons why we need to communicate more effectively ( e.g. to provide each other with information and support, as a means of lessening the stress that we experience; to identify and agree a clear value base in order that we can develop agreed working practices). We have also identified and practised skills that improve our methods of communication ( i.e. becoming more assertive, including negotiation, handling conflict, and being able to give and receive critical and positive feedback).

To maximise communication between all team members, we need to have the opportunity to meet together as a group, identify what areas require discussion, and ensure the time is sufficiently structured to enable it to be used as efficiently as possible. Formal meetings enable this to occur.

However, it is very easy for meetings to be experienced as lacking stimulation, boring, and a waste of time. The aim of this session is to assess strengths and weaknesses in current practice, and to agree ways in which use of meetings can be improved. There is then an exercise which identifies advantages and disadvantages of working as a team, rather than as isolated individuals. Finally, there is the opportunity to discuss some of the issues identified during the previous session when a 'team agenda' was drawn up".

### III Exercise 1 Making Effective use of meetings

**Purpose:** To share feelings on how meeting time is currently used.

**Method:** Questionnaire in pairs (or threes).  
Feedback in large group

**Time:** 20 - 35 minutes

**Materials:** Flipchart paper and pens.

**Handouts:** *How Meeting Time is Used?;*  
*Making Effective Use of Meetings.*

**Process:**

1. Pass round **HANDOUT 'How is Meeting Time Used'?** Ask participants to divide into pairs for 10 minutes, and share feelings on how they feel meeting time is used. Use the questions on handout to trigger discussion, although it is not necessary to keep rigidly to them. Brief notes should be made on issues discussed.
2. In large group, gain feedback on each question in turn.

***Note for Group Leader:*** Make a note on flip chart paper of key points raised. List principal meetings; although it should be stated that the main focus in this session is going to be on full staff meetings. It is a principle underlying the Programme that all teams should have meetings with all members present on a regular basis - ideally once a week. If meetings are not held on a regular basis, then this session should be used to demonstrate the value of holding them. As a general rule, meetings should not last longer than 1.5 - 2 hours, as people's concentration span tends not to last beyond that time.

*For each negative point raised, try to encourage people to clarify what is actually happening and why. For example, why is everything discussed not felt to be worthwhile? What is discussed that is not worthwhile, what is worthwhile? Why do we spend too long on some things and not others?*

3. Ask group to brainstorm ways in which they could improve meetings that they attend, and write up on flipchart.
4. Identify areas of agreement and disagreement.
5. Give out **HANDOUT 'Making Effective Use of Meetings'**, and discuss in the light of issues that have arisen from group exercise.
6. Identify specific changes that can be made that will lead to more effective use of meetings.

## HOW IS MEETING TIME USED IN YOUR TEAM?

**In pairs:** - share feelings on how you feel meeting time is used in your team. Use the following questions to trigger discussion, although it is not necessary to keep rigidly to them.

Make brief notes as to the content of your discussion, to feed back afterwards to the large group.

### **Questions:**

1. How many different kinds of meetings do we hold?
2. For each kind of meeting, how often do we hold them? What is the average length of each meeting?
3. Is everything we discuss worthwhile?
4. Do we spend too long on some things, and not enough on others?
5. Do you think there are areas we should discuss which are often/always left out?
6. Who decides what is discussed at a meeting? How is this decided and when?
7. Does anyone take formal control as to what happens at the meeting? Is there an agreed chairperson? If so, who is this?
8. How are decisions made? e.g. by manager, other member of team, majority vote, consensus, etc.
9. How do we record what we are doing, and who does this? Where are records of meetings kept? Who has access to them?
10. What happens if the meeting does not seem to be going too well; e.g. when someone feels that we are wasting time; or conflict arises between team members?
11. How much time is spent in meetings sharing how we feel about the work we are doing, or about the nature of the working relationships we have with each other?

## MAKING EFFECTIVE USE OF MEETINGS

There are different types of meetings that can take place within the workplace. These may include full staff meetings, specific task-centred meetings, project reviews meetings, etc. Whatever the reason for the meeting, there are certain principles and practices that are common to each.

### 1. Appoint a chairperson

This can be the same person on each occasion (e.g. the manager, team leader, etc.)

Alternatively, there can be a rotating chairperson. The value of this is that it enables all team members to gain experience and skills in chairing.

The role of the chair is to be assertive in ensuring that:

- a) agreed times of the meeting are adhered to, and that no one item takes up substantially more than its allocated time;
- b) no one person dominates the discussion
- c) everyone is encouraged to contribute their views and feelings.
- d) the discussion remains relevant to the issue under consideration.
- e) at the end of each item, summarise what has been covered, and any agreed action.

### 2. Establish time, length and location of meeting

Ensure all those who should attend have this information as soon as possible. Meetings should start and end at the agreed time.

### 3. Establish purpose of meeting

Clarify at the beginning that all those attending are clear about the reason for the meeting being held.

### 4. Draw up a clear agenda

This can be done in advance, and circulated to everyone involved, or can be done at the beginning of the meeting. Generally, all intended participants should have the opportunity to contribute to the agenda. Approximate time limits should be allocated to each item, to enable all issues to be covered in the allocated time. It is useful to have more than a single word agenda item; i.e. 'clearing away after meals', rather than 'mealtimes'; this latter form can open the door to a host of issues that people raise on the spur of the moment, making discussion less focussed.

### 5. Establish means of recording meetings

Decisions need to be made about:

- a) Where meetings are to be recorded
- b) Who is to be responsible for recording them
- c) How much detail is expected in the minutes
- d) Should all decisions be recorded
- e) Where the minutes are kept

### 6. Evaluation of meeting

It can of value to build in 5-10 minutes review time at the end of each meeting, to allow people to discuss how useful they have found it. Positive and negative factors can be raised by team members in relation to, for example: relevance of issues discussed; opportunities for all to contribute; maximising use of time; appropriateness of atmosphere in encouraging people to share on a feelings level, etc.

Reflection of this nature can act as a learning process, and can help develop understanding as to what can be done to enable more effective use of meetings on future occasions.



## **TEAM ACTION PLAN**

**WHAT IS/ARE OUR AGREED GOAL(S)?**

**IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE OUR GOAL(S), WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (Make a list of all tasks).**

**WHO IS GOING TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT EACH OF THE IDENTIFIED TASKS ARE UNDERTAKEN (Different people can be identified for different tasks).**

**WHAT FACTORS MIGHT HELP US TO ACHIEVE OUR GOAL(S)?**

**WHAT FACTORS MIGHT HINDER US ACHIEVING OUR GOAL(S)?**

**HOW CAN WE INCREASE HELPING FACTORS?**

**HOW CAN WE LESSEN THE INFLUENCE OF HINDERING FACTORS?**

**WHEN WILL WE REVIEW PROGRESS ON WHAT HAS BEEN AGREED?**  
(For example, it may be decided to put it on the staff meeting agenda in three months time).

**WHO IS TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING THAT THE AGREED ACTION PLAN IS IMPLEMENTED? (This need not be a person who is actually involved in implementing the action plan).**

## **GIVING & RECEIVING SUPPORT**

### **Aims**

1. To develop skills in giving and receiving emotional support.
2. To introduce the concept of supervision, and to identify its role in providing support.

### **Objectives**

1. To identify what is meant by 'active listening'.
2. To develop understanding of the concept of 'empathy'.
3. To practice empathic responding.
4. To clarify the purpose of supervision.
5. To explore the role of supervision as a means of giving support.

### **Materials required:**

Flipchart, pens, A4 paper, pens/pencils.

Copies of handouts:

- \* *Listener's Observer Sheet;*
- \* *Empathic Listening;*
- \* *The Objectives of Supervision;*
- \* *Supervision Arrangements;*
- \* *Supervision Modes;*
- \* *Personal Action Plan;*
- \* *Team Action Plan.*

### **I Exercise 1          Active Listening (1)**

<b><u>Purpose:</u></b>	To identify the verbal/non-verbal skills involved in active listening.
<b><u>Method:</u></b>	Exercise in pairs; feedback in large group.
<b><u>Time:</u></b>	15 minutes
<b><u>Materials:</u></b>	Flipchart paper, pen.

**Process:**

1. **Introduction:**  
 "If you are to offer someone support, then it is important that the person to whom you are offering support feels you are actively listening to them. The aim of the following two exercises is to demonstrate what is involved in that process."
2. Ask participants to divide into pairs (A and B), and to sit next to each other.
3. A is to speak to B for two minutes about any subject in which s/he has an interest e.g. playing golf, listening to music, politics, etc.
4. The aim of B is to do anything but listen! S/he must remain in the room, but can use any other tactic to avoid listening.
5. After two minutes, ask the group to come together. Discuss what points emerged from this exercise, including:
  - (i) How the listeners were behaving to indicate they were not listening.
  - (ii) How the speakers felt about not being listened to.
  - (iii) What the Bs might have done to demonstrate that they were in fact listening.
6. As a result of this, write up on flipchart paper examples of behaviour that would show that someone is listening attentively to you. This should include, e.g. seating position, appropriate eye contact, nodding head, relaxed body posture, suitable facial expressions (generally relaxed and friendly; however, showing concern may also be relevant if the content suggests the other person is upset or sad); suitable verbal responses including 'mm', 'yes', 'I see', etc.

**II EXERCISE 2****Active Listening (2)**

- Purpose:** To practise active listening.
- Method:** Exercise in 4's; feedback in large group.
- Time:** 30-45 minutes
- Materials:** **Handout** *Listener's Observer Sheet*

**Process:**

1. Ask each of the pairs in the previous exercise to join up with another pair (A, B, C and D).
2. A and B are to have a 5 minute conversation in which they discuss what they consider to be the positive and negative aspects about their role within the team.  
Stress that the aim is not to make speeches; each person's task is to talk to and respond to each other, using good verbal and non-verbal listening skills.
3. C and D are observers; they should take notes on A and B's attending and voice related behaviour. The **HANDOUT 'Listener's Observer Sheet'** can be used as a basis for recording feedback.
4. After 5 minutes, feed back in small groups for 5 - 10 minutes, with speakers saying how they felt in that conversation, and observers sharing their feedback.
5. Repeat exercise with roles reversed - i.e. C and D as speakers, A and B as observers.
6. Return to large group. Ask groups to feed back main points arising from the exercise. Finish by summarising the verbal/non-verbal behaviour involved in active listening. Listening is a powerful way of demonstrating to another person that they are sufficiently valued to be worth the time to be given 'good attention' and responded to in a way that is relevant to their needs. Hence, it is important to be practised in this skill if others are to perceive you as interested in what they say, and hence potentially capable of giving them support when needed.

**III Exercise 3****Empathic Listening (1)**

**Purpose:** To identify what is meant by 'empathic listening'.

**Method:** Exercise completed individually

**Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Materials:** **Handout** *Empathic Listening*

**Process:**

1. Ask participants to suggest what they understand the word 'empathy' to mean.
2. **Formal input:**  
"One dictionary definition of 'empathy' suggests that it is *the power of understanding and imaginatively entering into another person's feelings*" (The New Collins Concise English Dictionary). Thus, it is quite different from 'sympathy', which infers feeling

sorry for someone, without necessarily having an awareness of what they are experiencing at an emotional level.

Empathic listening refers to the ability to be attuned to another's thoughts and feelings, and to be able to communicate this in a way that the other feels understood. Thus, it is a sophisticated skill, which requires a considerable degree of sensitivity and perceptiveness."

3. Distribute the **HANDOUT 'Empathic Listening'**. Ask participants to respond to the questions according to the instructions.
4. When everyone has finished, go through questions, asking for people's responses, and giving the correct answer when required. As far as possible, ensure that all team members are clear about why the one response demonstrates empathy, whilst the others do not.  
[Correct answers: 1. c); 2. a); 3. d); 4. a)

#### **IV   EXERCISE 4      Empathic Listening (2)**

**Purpose:**            To practise empathic listening and responding

**Method:**            Exercise in large group

**Time:**                1/2 - 1 hour

**Materials**            Paper, pens.

**Process:**

1. Tell team members that they are now to be involved in an exercise which should enable them to become more skilled in recognising and dealing empathically with another person's feelings and emotions.
2. State that you want them to recall an intense emotional experience (either good or bad) that they would be willing to share with other members of the group, and to write down an account of it as concretely as possible.
3. Emphasise that this should not involve an experience that has or is causing major trauma, e.g. a bereavement, breakdown in a significant relationship, etc. Differentiate between 'top drawer, middle drawer, and bottom drawer' concerns; i.e. top drawer concerns are everyday worries, (e.g. Will I catch the bus in time? What will I wear to the party tonight? Will Aston Villa win the match?) Middle drawer concerns are felt at a deeper level, (e.g. feeling anxious about the possible outcome of exam results.) Bottom drawer concerns represent major life crises, (e.g. the death or severe illness of

someone close to you.) For the purpose of this exercise, a middle drawer concern should be selected.

***Note to Group Leader:*** It is important that this latter point be emphasised. This can be a powerful exercise, especially if a group has gelled and there is a degree of trust. Individuals, if not given prior warning, may select examples of major crises in their lives, thinking they can handle it; then find that the telling of the situation affects them more deeply than they expected, and they lose emotional control.

Despite this warning, it is important that you as group leader be very aware of how people are dealing with a situation, and be ready to intervene as appropriate. For example, a woman on one course chose to share her experience of her daughter recently leaving home for university; and found that she was more affected by the move than she had been aware. The response on that occasion was to move on fairly quickly, and to pick up the issue on an individual level with the woman concerned at a later stage in the day. In fact, by that stage in the programme, a high degree of support had built up within the team, which this particular participant found she benefited from over the following weeks.

4. Before participants write down their own experience, the following can be given as an example:

"I was flying by plane for the first time last year. Everyone re-assured me that it would be all right. It was for the first half hour. Then, without warning, there were a lot of bumps and movement. We had entered a storm, and it felt as if we were being buffeted on a stormy sea. I began to feel very sick. I felt as though we would never get to our destination. I started imagining what I would feel like if the engine failed. I didn't talk to anyone - I just sat as if frozen to the seat, gripping hard on to the sides. My body was totally tense."

5. Ask the group to suggest an empathic response - i.e. a response that might identify the feelings experienced by the person in that situation, and why.

An appropriate response might be:

"You were feeling very scared because you feared that the plane might crash in the bad weather, and that you might not survive".

6. Ask the group to suggest responses that would clearly not be empathic.

Such responses might include:

- (i) "You shouldn't have been worried. You know that it is safer to fly in a plane than to drive in a car."

- (ii) "How terrible for you! I wouldn't have been in your shoes for anything!"
  - (iii) "You should have taken a drink of whisky. That would have set you up to face anything!"
7. Repeat what you are asking of the group: i.e. that you want each of them to recall an intense emotional experience (either good or bad) that they would be willing to share with other members of the group, and to write down an account of it as concretely as possible. This means that they describe what they did (e.g. gripped hard on the sides of the seat); what they thought (e.g. we will never get to our destination); and what they said - or didn't say! (e.g. I didn't talk to anyone). What they should not write down is what they felt (e.g. I felt scared, frightened).
  8. When everyone has had the opportunity to finish what they have written, state that you are going to go round the group in turn, ensuring that everyone has the chance to respond to another person's story.
  9. Ask for a volunteer to start. Ask that person (A) to turn to the person next to them (B), and read out what they have written. B should demonstrate active listening, and respond empathically.
  10. If B has difficulty in reflecting back the feelings, you can suggest that a useful phrase to start with is "You sound as though you were feeling ....."
  11. After B has had the opportunity to respond, it should be open to other members of the group to give alternative contributions. 'A' should then be asked to identify which responses reflected most closely their own feelings.
  12. B then becomes A, and turns to the person on his/her other side, who becomes B. The process is followed as previously.
  13. Proceed round the group, with everyone having the opportunity to be both A and B.

**Note to Group Leader:** You may find one or two people are resistant to writing something down, or are reluctant to be active participants in this exercise. Although they should be encouraged to be directly involved, no one should have too much pressure placed on them to be so. However, in the latter part of the exercise, those who have chosen not to share an experience should not then be on the receiving end of some-one else's experience. They should, however, keep their position as part of the circle. Thus, they still clearly remain part of the group, although less actively involved for the present.

14. When everyone has read their story, have a general discussion on what people felt about doing that exercise, what learning they gained from it, and how they might apply that learning in practice.

The following points might be made:

- \* The need to be tuned in to people's body language, and try to identify what people are feeling, even if they do not directly share those feelings verbally. Thus, someone's fairly factual account of a row with a friend or relative may be misleading in terms of how they actually feel about the incident. It may require the listener to respond empathically, before the speaker will feel free to share at a feelings level.
- \* This awareness is important when understanding colleagues' behaviour which is causing you stress. Thus, it is easy to interpret another person's behaviour at face value in terms of its immediate negative effects on us. However, it may be important to attempt to understand what is happening to that person which is contributing to them behaving in that way. Thus, a trigger question such as "You look/sound as though you are upset/angry/feeling under pressure " etc may be sufficient for a person to talk about something that is causing them concern - or at least, to acknowledge that there are issues which are affecting their behaviour.
- \* Awareness of this nature can also increase sensitivity to young people and their families, who may not always be able to verbalise feelings in appropriate ways, or who may believe that no-one can understand how they feel.



## V **EXERCISE 5**      **Introduction to Supervision**

- Purpose:**
- 1) To identify the purpose of supervision.
  - 2) To share previous experience of supervision.

**Method:** Exercise in groups of 3/4, followed by large group feedback.

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials:** Flipchart paper, pens.

**Handouts:** *The Objectives of Supervision*  
*Supervision Modes*  
*Supervision Arrangements*

**Process:**

1. State that the purpose of this part of the session is to begin to look at the role of supervision within the workplace.
2. Divide group in 3's/4's. Ask them to discuss and make notes on the following questions (which can be written on the board / flipchart):
  - (i) What do you mean by the term 'supervision'?
  - (ii) What is the purpose of supervision?
  - (iii) Share your experiences of supervision, both positive and negative.
3. After about 20 minutes, return to the large group. Each group should feed back in turn on question 1, then on question 2. Groups should be asked to feed back on question 3 only to the extent that they wish to share.  
 Main points can be noted on flipchart.
4. Distribute **HANDOUT 'The Objectives of Supervision'**. Go through the handout, and ensure that all participants are clear about the role of supervision as a means of giving support, for ensuring accountability, and for enabling professional development.
5. Distribute **HANDOUTS 'Supervision Modes' and 'Supervision Arrangements'**.  
 Encourage discussion about how the information given on the handouts compares with current and/or previous experience of supervision; and what these handouts may offer in terms of looking more creatively at different options for supervision practice.
6. State that in a future module, there will be the opportunity to plan and implement a supervision system that is appropriate to the specific circumstances operating within this team. In the meantime, there is the opportunity to look at how skills so far developed may be used within a supervision context.

**Time:** 1.5 - 2.00 hours

6. Roles should then be changed, with, for example, B as supervisor, C as supervisee, (D and) A as observer(s).
7. The process is repeated.
8. By the end of the exercise, everyone should have had the opportunity to be supervisor, supervisee, and observer.
9. End the session by returning briefly to the large group, and asking people to share how they felt about this exercise, and to identify any main learning points.

**Note to Group Leader:** *This is another exercise which may raise sensitive issues that are not dealt with adequately within the small group. You should be on the look out for anyone who does not appear particularly comfortable at this stage. It may be worth repeating the statement that if an issue has arisen for someone that is causing them concern, they should at some stage share it, either with you as group leader, their line manager, or some other person whom they feel might be helpful.*

## 10. Action Planning

- \* Each person should be encouraged to complete a Personal Action Plan as an outcome of the day's session.
- \* The team could agree a Team Action Plan, as a result of awareness/learning gained from the day.
- \* Opportunity should be given to review progress on previously agreed Team Action Plans, if these are not being regularly reviewed at other times.

<b>LISTENER'S OBSERVER SHEET</b>
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**Make notes on what you observe in the following areas:**

**Seating position:**

**Body posture:**

**Eye contact:**

**Facial expressions:**

**Tone and loudness of voice;**

**Speed in talking:**

**Verbal responses:**

## EMPATHIC RESPONDING

**In the following dialogues, tick the response which you think most clearly reflects empathy - i.e. appears to understand and reflect the other person's feelings.**

**Example:**

**Student:**

You know, I find it really hard to decide what I want to do. My father wants me to get a job. My mother want me to go to college. I can't please both of them, and neither of them may be right.

**Teacher:**

- a) Well, it's up to you to make your own decision.
- b) You're confused and finding it difficult to decide what is right for you. Your parents are not agreed about what you should do; and you're wondering whether either of them really provides the best solution.
- c) Let's look at why you would like to please your parents. One of them is bound to be disappointed.

**Comments**

- a) Patronising statement; advising.
- b) Communicates good understanding.
- c) Interprets the meaning of what is said; makes assumptions.

**Exercise**

**1. Young person:**

I'm really fed up with getting into trouble with the police. Me and my mates used to think that nicking things from shops was fun, but now I'm not sure that it's worth it in the long run.

**Youth Worker:**

- a) I am sure your parents would be pleased if you didn't get into more trouble. They have been very worried about you.
- b) I can understand what you are feeling, and am glad you have made the decision to go straight.
- c) You now feel that stealing is giving you more hassle than its worth - taking things from shops is not the same as it used to be.

**2. Team member to Colleague:**

I know I'm being stupid, but I'm worried about my operation, both whether something will go wrong with it, and whether I will be in pain afterwards.

**Colleague:**

- a) You feel silly that you're worried, but would like to be given some reassurance that it will be all right, and that you will not be in too much pain.
- b) I know I would be worried in your shoes, but you have a good doctor, don't you?
- c) It's quite usual for people to worry, but worrying about it will not really help you that much.
- d) I'm sure you'll be able to cope - it probably won't hurt that much.

**3. 15 Year Old Girl to Social Worker:**

I've been to the doctors and she's told me that I'm pregnant. I've really had a shock, because it wasn't planned. My boyfriend and I are quite pleased, but my Dad is going to go mad. He said he would disown me if ever I got pregnant!

**Social worker:**

- a) You're really a bit young to have a baby. It might be a good idea to consider having an abortion.
- b) I can understand you not knowing what to do. You sound as though you need some counselling.
- c) I wouldn't make a decision yet as to what to do. Wait until you've had some time to calm down and think.
- d) You sound as though you're wanting what's best for you and your boyfriend but are fearing your Dad's response.

**4. Residential Carer in Home for Older People to Staff Counsellor:**

I love the job, but my husband is trying to persuade me to leave. He doesn't like me working shifts, and wants me home at week-ends. But he's not in much himself. He goes off playing golf most Saturdays and Sundays.

**Staff counsellor:**

- a) You're feeling pressurised to leave a job which means a lot to you, and think that your husband is being unfair in what he is asking you to do.
- b) I suppose you could ask your husband to compromise - you say you will give up the job if he gives up his golf!
- c) You have to make up your own mind what to do - at the end of the day, it's your life.
- d) Your husband has a point. Residential work can put a lot of pressure on family life, and it would not help you to put your personal happiness at risk.

THE OBJECTIVES OF SUPERVISION
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1. To provide support for team members.
2. To ensure that staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities.
3. To ensure that practice within the team is consistent with organisational policy and procedures.
4. To provide staff with the opportunity to identify areas for professional development, and to enable them to acquire greater awareness, knowledge and skills in these areas.

## SUPERVISION MODES

FORMAL	MODE
<p>1. Supervision takes the form of planned meetings on an individual or group basis. There is an agreed agenda and methods for reaching objectives. Such meetings can be arranged for a limited or indefinite period of time, and for general or specific purposes.  <i>[For example, a Manager contracts with her Deputy to meet with him once a week for an hour to discuss issues relevant to managing the team. Both contribute items to the agenda, which is agreed at the beginning of the session.]</i></p>	<p>2. Supervision takes the form of unplanned discussions and consultations on an individual or group basis. The agenda is agreed on the spot; often when an unforeseen crisis or problem has arisen. However, some space and time is created away from service-delivery to work on the problem.  <i>[For example, a young person in a residential home has barricaded herself in his bedroom, and is stating that she is not going to come out until the residential social worker agrees to give her back the snooker cues and balls, which have been confiscated from her. The shift leader sits down with the member of staff to explore how the situation should best be handled.]</i></p>
PLANNED	AD HOC
<p>3. Agreements are reached between individuals and members of a group to give help, advice, constructive criticism, and other forms of feedback, while working with those for whom they are providing a service. These agreements are made in advance, according to predetermined objectives, and made subject to monitoring and regular review.  <i>[For example, during a staff meeting, a youth worker acknowledges that he does not handle difficult situations with young people well; he tends to become aggressive too quickly, and hence escalate rather than diffuse a situation. Other youth workers agree to observe him at these times, to give him advice when appropriate, and to provide him with feedback as soon after an incident as possible].</i></p>	<p>4. Supervision is given while individuals are working with service users, or engaged in service delivery tasks. It may take the form of help, advice, constructive criticism or offered through demonstration and example. This activity may become the focus for discussion in a more formal context, or be developed into an explicit supervision agreement; but first occurs as unplanned activity because of needs and circumstances.  <i>[For example, a new member of staff and an experienced teacher accompany a group of students on an outing to the local botanic gardens. The new member of staff meets one of his friends there, and spends time talking to him. The other teacher interrupts him; on their return, later in the day, she initiates a discussion about responsibilities when supervising children.]</i></p>
INFORMAL	MODE

*[Based on C. Payne & T. Scott "Developing Supervision of Teams in Field and Residential Social Work", Part 1, Papers No.12, National Institute for Social Work, 1982, p. 29.]*



<b>SUPERVISION ARRANGEMENTS</b>
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INDIVIDUAL SUPERVISION	Traditional Model. One-to-one discussion focusing on professional concerns / problems, and the development of the individual worker.
PAIRS	Supervisor supervises two workers whose needs are similar. Enables greater range of discussion.
PEER SUPERVISION	Two experienced workers supervise each other. Often priority is given to supportive function.
ATTACHMENT	A more experienced staff member supervises a less experienced staff. Supervisor retains overall responsibility.
GROUP	Group of staff with similar need work together to identify and meet those needs. Often priority is given to supportive function. Supervisor may facilitate process.
COLLEAGUE GROUP	Group works together on a specified task. Supervisor monitors process.
TEAM	Whole team works together, regardless of needs / tasks. Focuses on the work of the team itself, as in team meetings.

*[Adapted from C. Payne & T. Scott "Developing Supervision of Teams in Field and Residential Social Work", Part 1, Papers No.12, National Institute for Social Work, 1982, p.39.]*

<b>PERSONAL ACTION PLAN</b>
-----------------------------

**TITLE OF SESSION:**

**DATE:**

**WHAT I HAVE LEARNED FROM THIS SESSION IS:**

**WHAT I HAVE LEARNED IS RELEVANT TO MY PRACTICE IN THE FOLLOWING WAY(S):**

**AS A RESULT OF WHAT I HAVE LEARNED, I HAVE IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING GOALS FOR MYSELF:**

**IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS, I NEED TO:**

**FACTORS THAT MIGHT HELP ME ACHIEVE MY GOALS ARE:**

**FACTORS THAT MIGHT HINDER ME FROM ACHIEVING MY GOALS ARE:**

**I CAN INCREASE THE HELPING FACTORS BY:**

**I CAN LESSEN THE INFLUENCE OF HINDERING FACTORS BY:**

**CONTENT OF ACTION PLAN DISCUSSED WITH:**

**DATE ON WHICH I WILL REVIEW PROGRESS OF THIS ACTION PLAN:**

<b>TEAM ACTION PLAN</b>
-------------------------

**WHAT IS OUR AGREED GOAL?**

**IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE OUR GOAL, WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? (Make a list of all tasks).**

**WHO IS GOING TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT EACH OF THE IDENTIFIED TASKS ARE UNDERTAKEN (Different people can be identified for different tasks).**

**WHAT FACTORS MIGHT HELP US TO ACHIEVE OUR GOAL?**

**WHAT FACTORS MIGHT HINDER US ACHIEVING OUR GOAL?**

**HOW CAN WE INCREASE HELPING FACTORS?**

**HOW CAN WE LESSEN THE INFLUENCE OF HINDERING FACTORS?**

**WHEN WILL WE REVIEW PROGRESS ON WHAT HAS BEEN AGREED?**  
(For example, it may be decided to put it on the staff meeting agenda in three months time).

**WHO IS TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING THAT THE AGREED ACTION PLAN IS IMPLEMENTED?**  
(This need not be a person who is actually involved in implementing the action plan).

## ESTABLISHING A SUPERVISION SYSTEM

### **Aim**

To plan an initial structure for supervision practice within a team.

### **Objectives**

1. To review awareness and knowledge gained in relation to supervision objectives, arrangements and modes.
2. To look at the role of power within supervision practice, and to consider how supervision can be used to empower all staff.
3. To agree a system of supervision that is appropriate to the needs and circumstances of the team.

**Note:** *This module only has a relevance if team members and their manager feel there is a value in developing an alternative model to the traditional one-to-one hierarchical system that is often seen to be the norm. There can be many benefits in exploring a different structure, which can include spreading the work-load, and enabling a more diverse and richer experience of supervision.*

### **Materials required:**

Flipchart, pens, blu-tack, A4 paper, pens/pencils.

### **Handouts:**

- \* *Example of a Supervision System*
- \* *Establishing a Supervision Contract.*

**Note to Group Leader:** *Information given in the form of handouts to participants in this module is not extensive. As group leader, your main role lies in facilitating the process by which clear agreement can be reached as to an appropriate supervision system. If time and the energies of the team allows, then more detailed analysis of current practice and possible structures can be undertaken, as clearly laid out in Payne and Scott(1982). However, the availability of this time is often not the reality that exists. The main principle is that everyone be involved in some way in the process of understanding the alternatives and participating in the decision-making. In supporting the group, it would be useful for you to have gained a clear awareness of what the needs and circumstances of the team are, so that you are in a position to make positive contributions and suggestions as relevant.*

### **I    Exercise 1:                      Introduction**

**Purpose:** To recall previous work undertaken on supervision.

**Method:** Discussion in pairs.  
Feedback in large group.

**Time:**                      15 - 20 minutes.

**Materials:**              Paper and pens

**Process:**

1. State the aim and objectives of the day's session. Remind team members that the idea of supervision was introduced in Module 6.
2. Ask participants to pair up with a person sitting next to them, and to recall what they remember about the material covered in relation to supervision during the earlier module. Handouts can be referred to. If any further work has been done on supervision since that module, this can also be shared.
3. After about 10 minutes, participants should return to the group; each pair in turn can feed back briefly what they recalled.
4. Ensure that the following are mentioned:

In the previous session, they:

- \* exchanged previous experiences of supervision, both positive and negative.
- \* explored the purpose of supervision (giving support, ensuring accountability, enabling professional development).
- \* discussed different possible modes and arrangement for supervision practice.
- \* had the opportunity to practise mutual supervision as a means of giving and receiving support.

**II    Exercise 2****The Role Of Power In Supervision**

**Purpose:** To analyse how power might be used and abused within supervision, and to consider how the possibility of abuse of power might be minimised.

**Method:** Discussion in small groups.  
Feedback in large group.

**Time:** 30 - 40 minutes (considerably longer if the exercise described in section 4 is included)

**Materials:** Flipchart paper and pen

**Process:**

1. Divide team members into small groups for about 20 minutes to consider the following two questions:
  - a) In what ways might supervision practice increase inequalities in power?
  - b) How might the potential for unequal power relationships arising out of the supervision process be addressed?
2. On returning to the large group, the group leader should note on flipchart paper the main responses arising out of the feedback from both of these questions.

3. During the feedback, the following should be included:

- \* Issues arising out of Exercise 4 in Module 2 'Understanding and Managing Stress' should be highlighted. Thus, there are issues for black people having white supervisors, in terms of reinforcing an already existing imbalance in a power relationship; similarly, for women being supervised by men.

The following are a number of ways that can be worked on within a staff team to counteract the potentially oppressive nature of supervision:

- \* A supervision system should take into consideration the factors that might exacerbate a power imbalance, and plan ways of counteracting this. For example, two black members of staff might be involved in peer supervision for the purpose of support, and to explore ways of furthering professional development. If there is only one black member of staff, or a suitable supervision arrangement within the establishment is not feasible, then the possibility of receiving supervision from an appropriate person outside the team should be explored. The person involved should be supported in playing a proactive role in identifying a situation that would ensure her/his supervision needs are met. Similarly, any individual who by virtue of gender, culture, etc., has specific needs that should be recognised, should have full opportunity to have these acknowledged and addressed in planning a supervision system.
  - \* Every supervisory relationship should be based on an agreed contract. (*The idea of contracts within supervision is to be covered later in the module*). Within this contract, any existing power imbalances should be identified, acknowledged, with the feelings of both/all shared, and methods for addressing these imbalances discussed.
  - \* The role of assertiveness is crucial for people being able to challenge when they feel a situation is not being appropriately dealt with. Building on the ability for team members to be able to share what they feel in an open and honest way, and to be able to give constructive critical feedback without feeling that this will have a negative 'rebound' effect on them, is crucial.
  - \* Increased sensitivity towards individuals who do feel disempowered and oppressed is also crucial. Exploring ways in which the principle of 'equality' can be integrated into teamworking, whilst acknowledging different roles and responsibilities which lead to differences in perceived status, needs to be an issue that is explicitly addressed.
4. If members of the team appear to be insufficiently sensitive to the feelings of others within the group, and cannot see why they might feel 'disempowered', it can be useful to include the following exercise.
- a) Suggest that each person recall a time when they felt powerless, which they would be willing to share with members of the group. This can be a recent experience, or one that occurred a long time ago. So, for example, it might be an incident that happened as a child, when an adult forced them to do something; or more recently, as a residential worker in a case conference, when an 'expert' totally dismissed what they were trying to say about a child living in their establishment.
  - b) Each person should identify what they felt at the time, and why.

- c) Ask each person in turn to describe the situation, what they felt, and why.
- d) Make the point that people's feelings are valid and should be accepted as such, whether or not others either understand or agree with them. A person's reality belongs to them, and should not be dismissed. If people perceive that their feelings are minimised, put down or rejected, then that has an impact on their own feelings of value and self worth.
- e) Consequently, people's feelings in relation to supervision needs should be sensitively listened to, and given an appropriate response.

**Note to Group Leader:** *This exercise can be a powerful one, because of the strength of feelings that are expressed - feelings of anger, frustration, helplessness and humiliation are frequently communicated. Again, it needs to be facilitated with considerable sensitivity, with attention being paid to points made in Section 1: **Guidance for Group Leaders**.*

### III Exercise 3

### Negotiating A Supervision System

**Purpose:** To plan a supervision system

**Method:** Planning in groups of 4/5 people.  
Feedback and discussion in large group.

**Time:** 2 - 2.5 hours

**Materials:** Flipchart paper and pens.

**Process:**

**Note to Group Leader:** *Throughout most of this team programme, Managers within the team will probably have been involved in exercises on an equal basis to other members. However, in the following exercise, it may be beneficial to the rest of the team to be able to put forward their ideas without managers being present. Often, the need to build in support mechanisms for themselves, or discuss ways in which they can identify issues that can later be taken up with managers is something that benefits from initially being shared amongst themselves - a form of 'empowerment'! It can be suggested that manager or managers draw up their own proposal - to be given equal status to the others put forward.*

1. Remind team members to refer to **Handouts** already given out in Module 6 - i.e. '**The Objectives of Supervision**', '**Supervision Modes**', and '**Supervision Arrangements**'. Using these, and bearing in mind points raised during the previous exercise, each group to draw up a suggested supervision structure.
2. Divide into small groups.

3. The group leader should ensure on a regular basis that groups feel they are making constructive progress. They should be made aware that the group leader is available to contribute to the process if they are experiencing difficulties.
4. After 1.5 - 2 hours, return to the large group. Alternative proposals should be presented in turn.
5. Strengths and weaknesses of each should be identified, with input from group leader when appropriate.
6. An effective way of moving forward is to decide as a team which of the suggestions seems to offer the most potential in terms of providing a framework; and then if possible, to incorporate modifications from the other schemes.
7. It should be emphasised that any structure agreed at this point in time will only be provisional in the meantime, and will form the basis of a 'trial run'. It can then be evaluated and modified in the light of experience.
8. The following points should also be made:
  - Establishing a supervision system is not easy. 'Hiccups' are an inevitable part of the process. If it is to work, there needs to be a determination to see it through, as there will be phases when people feel that it does not seem worthwhile. This should be seen as inevitable part of the process, but should not be allowed to stop progress.
  - The ability to apply this determination depends on keeping in mind the fact that there is a clear purpose to supervision - that ultimately it contributes towards providing a better service. A date needs to be set for a review of the suggested system, when the structure can be changed/modified, etc.

**Note to Group Leader:** At this point, the proposed system will be in draft form on flipchart paper. It is essential that someone, preferably yourself, takes this, and writes it up in a structured way, incorporating the decisions that have been made. Copies should be distributed to all team members as soon as possible, including a time scale outlining when different sessions will start. A copy of a suggested system arising from one programme is included at the end of this module.



#### IV    **Exercise 4**                      **Agreeing A Supervision Contract**

**Purpose:**                      To establish the purpose of a supervision contract, and to have practice in drawing one up.

**Method:**                      Negotiation in pairs/groups

**Time:**                        45+ minutes

**Materials:**                **Handout** *Establishing a Supervision Contract*

**Process:**

1. **Introduction:**

"As a means of ensuring that everyone's needs are acknowledged and met within a supervision context, it is important to reach a clear agreement as to expectations, structures, and means of giving each other feedback. Negotiating a clear contract which can be reviewed on a regular basis is an effective means of achieving this end."

2. Give out **HANDOUT 'Establishing a Supervision Contract'**, and go through each section with the group. Suggest that this can be used as a framework to help reach a working agreement.
3. Looking at the proposed system of supervision, each person should identify a person/group with whom they will be involved in supervision. Using the handout as a basis for discussion, they should have an initial supervision session, the purpose of which is to draw up a supervision contract that is acceptable to both/all.

## ESTABLISHING A SUPERVISION CONTRACT

**A written supervision contract should be negotiated between supervisor and supervisee(s). This should include agreement in relation to the following areas:**

1. Purpose of supervision.
2. How agenda is determined.
3. Decisions re recording - e.g. methods of recording, what is recorded, how personal issues are recorded, who records, and where records are kept.
4. Extent to which content of sessions is confidential.
5. Means of evaluating, and giving feedback on supervision experience.
6. Basic ground rules, including, for example:
  - \* how often sessions take place;
  - \* how long each session will be;
  - \* where sessions are held;
  - \* acceptable reasons for cancellation;
  - \* how cancellations are dealt with;
  - \* nature of consultation that takes place between formal sessions.

## **Example of a Supervision System**

The following outlines an initial structure for supervision, agreed by members of the staff team. This process took place in a residential setting. Obviously, the professional context in which the team is located will influence the nature of the issues that need to be taken into consideration. The team in this example considered all forms of supervision outlined in the handout. As a result of extensive discussion, the following was agreed:

### **GROUP SUPERVISION**

All were agreed that group supervision could be a valuable form of supervision to introduce into the team.

The aim of group supervision would be to **"improve working practices through mutual support"**.

It was decided that there was value in having sessions that were held without managers, and sessions that included managers.

There were predominantly two 'teams' who worked on alternate week-ends. It was realised that there was a danger that different working practices could be developed on alternate weekends, and hence there was a need to ensure that there was good communication between the two groups. One way of enabling this was to create two groups for supervision, each group comprising of staff covering each week-end.

However, it was also felt that there was value in the staff team covering each weekend to meet together as a group, in order that issues affecting weekend working could be addressed. Unless this forum was specifically created, there was no opportunity for staff to do this.

There was value in staff meeting together to discuss issues without managers being present. This gave people the opportunity to raise and explore issues with peers, when perhaps they did not feel sufficiently ready or confident to raise them with the wider staff group. The aim would be to gain other people's perspective on those issues, and to consider whether they warranted being taken up in a different setting. It would be possible to look at the most appropriate forum for raising the issues, and to perhaps identify/practise any skills required in articulating them.

There was also value for these groups to meet with a manager, and to gain an additional perspective on issues under consideration. This forum could then be used to determine whether there was value in putting these items on the agenda of a full staff meeting.

The value of this process was seen to be as follows:

1. All staff would have the opportunity to share what they felt in a 'safe' setting, and hence be provided with a support mechanism that could help them manage their personal stress levels.
2. All staff would gain the opportunity to look at effective ways of raising these issues in a wider forum if considered appropriate.
3. More efficient use could be made of staff meeting time, where many items on the agenda would already have been worked through to a great extent, and may have been distilled to its essential elements. This would prevent meetings being used for the purpose of 'off-loading',

as this would have been done in the other forums. Also, some subjects may be able to be fully dealt with in group supervision.

As a result of the different perceived needs, the following 'rolling programme' was devised:

**Week 1:**

- 12.00 - 1.00pm Managers Meeting - Team manager and Deputy Team manager.  
12.00 - 1.00pm Group supervision, without Managers present.

Group 1: Half staff group.

Group 2: Half staff group.

Each group would draw up a written agreement/contract, based on the handout '*Establishing a Supervision Contract*'. The content of this contract should be reviewed on a regular basis, and modified if necessary.

In a provisional discussion of this document, the following 'ground rules' were proposed as providing the basis of an agreement:

1. Supervision sessions should take place in a room with minimal interruptions - e.g. phones off the hook.
2. A session should take place, even if only two people could be present.
3. Everyone within the group should be given the opportunity to contribute towards the agenda, and be given a specific portion of time to enable their issue to be discussed.
4. Managers can ask for an issue to be placed on the group agenda for discussion. The group retain the right to decide whether they feel the group supervision time is an appropriate forum to discuss this issue.
5. Similarly, a member of one group can ask for an issue to be placed on the other group's agenda; again, the second group has the right to determine whether in fact this is an appropriate matter for discussion.
6. Group supervision time should not be used for being critical of individuals not involved in the session. If this should happen, other members of the group have the responsibility to point out that this matter should be raised directly with the person concerned.
7. Minutes of sessions should be taken, and kept in a file; the location of this file would be established within the written agreement/contract drawn up by the group.
8. Limits of confidentiality should be laid down within the written agreement/contract. However, unless there is explicit agreement within the group, all topics raised should be able to be discussed by individuals within one-to-one supervision with their managers.

**Purpose of session:**

1. To provide a forum for any member to discuss issues and/or share concerns they hold, and to receive support from the group in exploring/discussing these.
2. To look at issues placed on the agenda by individuals outside the group, and to discuss these if it is considered to be appropriate.
3. To agree items to be placed on the agenda for the following week, to be discussed with the Manager.

**Week 2:**

- 12.00 - 1.00pm Group supervision. Membership of group same as in Week 1, but including Team manager / Deputy Team manager.

The two groups should remain the same as the previous week. However, the managers would alternate which group they would be part of. Thus, each group would get the opportunity to work with both managers.

Purpose of session:

1. To discuss items on the agenda placed as an outcome of the previous group session.
2. To provide a forum for any member to discuss issues and/or share concerns they hold, and to receive support from the group in exploring/discussing these.
3. To look at issues placed on the agenda by individuals outside the group, and to discuss these if it is considered to be appropriate.
4. To agree items to be placed on the agenda for the next staff meeting, identifying who is going to be responsible for introducing each issue.

Whereas the previous week may include considerable 'offloading', the aim of this week was to begin to be more focused, and to determine what actions/decisions could or should be made.

**Week 3**

12.00 - 1.00      Group supervision. Membership of group to be made up of those who had just completed a working week-end.

Purpose of session:

1. To identify and discuss any issues arising from working the previous week-end.
2. To look at ways of improving practice during week-end working.

**Weeks 4 - 6**

A repeat of weeks 1 - 3

**Week 7**

A staff training day.

**INDIVIDUAL SUPERVISION**

Team manager: Deputy plus five members of staff.

Deputy Team manager: Five members of staff.

Frequency of supervision: Once every 7 weeks.

Acceptable reasons for postponement: illness of staff member; unavoidable rota change; external meetings; no other member of staff on duty; child's illness requiring special attention.

If session has to be postponed, an alternative time should be re-arranged at the time of postponement, or if this is not practicable, as soon as possible; responsibility for this lies with the person requesting the postponement.

**INDUCTION**

One identified person to take responsibility for co-ordinating the Induction process. This person to be formally involved in the role for a period of three months, with a complementary supervisory role to be played by the Line Manager.

**PEER SUPERVISION**

Two female members of staff on a similar grade. Frequency and time to be negotiated between themselves.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Although the rolling programme covers a 7-week time span, there would be factors that would prevent this running smoothly without a break. Holidays, for example, would result in meetings being cancelled/postponed. Hence, a timetable would be drawn up every 7 weeks, which would account for any foreseeable events/breaks, and would plan in any necessary modifications.

## **The Benefits of Action Learning for Team Development**

A process based on an Action Research methodology can be used by a team where team members are willing to be involved in a co-operative approach to identifying and resolving challenges and problems that they face in their work. Team members will find that they will not only pro-actively learn from experience (and reflection on that experience), but will see that by working collaboratively with others, they are more likely to generate ideas that will lead to providing a higher quality level of care to young people.

Action learning can take a variety of forms; but most are based on a cyclical process whereby the team meet together and work through stages which include the following:

**1. What is it that people are experiencing?**

Identify a shared problem or issue that is presenting them with a challenge, and for which there is no agreed way forward. What is it that people are experiencing? In what contexts? With what frequency, etc?

**2. Discuss/ reflect on why the problem exists in the first place**

Analyse what is happening in as much detail. What is it about people's experience of the issue that is common, and what are the differences?

What are people's different perceptions about the problem; and why do they think that way?

**3. Generate ideas as to what can be done to meet the challenge / resolve the problem**

Each person should have the opportunity to make suggestions as to what can be done to improve the situation. Generate as many ideas as possible; then weigh up the pros and cons of each before making a decision as to which to try.

**4. Draw up an Action Plan – i.e. plan how the 'way ahead' will be tested out in practice.**

Ensure that everyone is clear what their role will be in the process; who has to do what, and by when; and when / how the process will be reviewed and evaluated.

**What is it that people are experiencing?**

So we have looped back to Stage 1 – whereby people, as a result of the analysis of the situation, and planning a new way forward, engage themselves in their experience – before returning to again reflect and discuss with others what has changed – and so start round the cycle again.

## **PART 3**

### **Promoting Teamwork**

#### **An Action Plan Booklet**



## Introduction

The assumption underpinning the development of this booklet is the belief that if people in a team were to take responsibility for their own behaviour, and commit themselves to specific behaviours that would contribute to effective team functioning, there would be a progressive improvement in teamwork.

The reality is that most people find it easier to criticise other people's behaviour rather than their own; they can identify what others need to do to improve their practice, rather than be prepared to reflect on, analyse and improve their own practice. However, if each individual were to identify what behaviours they could change or introduce themselves which would help promote teamwork, then this in itself could lead to considerable positive change.

The Action Plan booklet provides the framework and guidance to enable this to happen. Completing an Action Plan takes only a minute or two; and can be done in note form. The point of writing something down is that it acts as a record, and can remind people exactly what they have committed themselves to doing. If necessary, if someone has a difficulty with writing, a manager / supervisor can note what their objectives are.

Factors to note include the following:

- 1. It can be easy to state an aim in a generalised way, without being specific about what that will actually mean in practice.**

Examples of this might be 'to be more honest with people'; or 'to gain feedback from colleagues'. Individuals are likely to choose objectives which they know they should and would like to do; but which they may in fact find quite difficult and challenging. It may help them in progressing with this if they were to be more specific about what they were going to do; and aim to take one step at a time.

So, for example, they could initially identify one person they were going to be more honest with; or one colleague they will gain feedback from; and plan when or in what circumstances that will happen. Once that has been achieved, celebrate the achievement. When there is success in being honest / giving feedback in a particular context, then move on to the next stage (which may be being honest / giving feedback to a different person or about a different issue, etc).

In other words, seeking at the outset to become more honest, or gain feedback from all, may be too generalised an aim to have much overall effect; it may be too ambitious to expect a major 'shift' in one go.

Linked to this is the fact that, although someone identifies an objective for himself or herself, they may then find they do not have the confidence and/or skills to achieve that objective. So taking the above examples again: saying what you honestly think (in a tactful non-offensive way), or giving (constructive) feedback are not easy skills; and may identify a training need for that individual, or (if shared by a number of people) possibly for the team as a whole.

**2. Individuals may not always feel able to share their objectives with other team members**

In contexts where a strong team does not already exist, or some members lack trust in others, individuals may feel unwilling to share their objectives with the team. It may be desirable that they undertake this activity only with their supervisor / manager temporarily.

The aim would be that over time, people would feel more able to mutually share within the team setting; which in itself would be an indicator of an improvement in team relationships.

This factor may also highlight the wider issue of what intervention a team requires to enable them to better understand and trust each other.

**3. Team members do not understand the basic elements of teamwork; or even why working as a team is necessary!**

Team members may not in fact have an understanding of the nature and value of teamwork; and the role that any one individual can play in helping / hindering that process. To achieve this level of understanding/acceptance may require some basic team training at the outset.

**4. It should be a clear requirement that individuals act in a way that promotes teamwork.**

Indeed, any job description may include such a requirement. The Action Plan booklet identifies a way that people are encouraged to think more consciously and actively about what they can do to achieve this.

If individuals are experiencing difficulty, then they can receive coaching or training as a means of support. The whole process of identifying objectives can be included in the **supervision** process, and monitored in that context until the team members are able / willing to do so in a group context.

## Guidance Notes

1. Very often, when thinking about whether our colleagues work together well as a team, we think in terms of what others do and how they behave. We tend to modify our own behaviour according to that of others; and if they act in ways that appear to focus on their own individual needs and wishes, then it is easy for each of us to default into similar ways. We expect a lot from others; but would be more effective if we paid greater attention to our own contribution and actions.
2. The Action Plan booklet is based on the key principle that teamwork is more likely to be effective if each person takes responsibility for their own behaviour (basing their actions on the view that ‘the well-being of the whole is my responsibility too’); and commits themselves to acting in specific ways, irrespective of how others behave.
3. Of course, if everyone takes responsibility for their own behaviour in this way – and there is agreement amongst the team about what that behaviour is – then the well-being of the whole is likely to be an inevitable outcome! The secret is to decide and implement what is involved in appropriate individual behaviour.
4. A further principle is to learn from experience – to focus on ‘action learning’. We may all think we know which individual behaviours will support team working; but unless we test these out in practice over a sustained period, we do not necessarily know what combination of behaviours will maximise effective team working. Hopefully in the process we will raise our morale and motivation, because we are finding it more enjoyable to be part of our team.
5. The Action Plan Booklet should be used to represent your ideas from experience as to what you can do to help promote good teamwork.  
There are a number of suggestions that you are asked to think about and possibly commit yourself to – on the basis that these are methods which have historically been demonstrated to enhance teamwork. However, you have to decide what is realistic for you, given the context you are working in.

You could also identify that there are other behaviours, which you may or may not already using, that you think may support team working. You are encouraged to note these, and to evaluate what happens as a result of putting them into practice.

For example, you may commit yourself to making one positive and appreciative comment to a young person or member of staff each day you are on shift.

Senior practitioners and managers in a residential establishment identified the following as behaviours that indicate good teamwork and a lack of it. You may find this list helpful in deciding what your actions might be.

***Behaviours that signify the presence or absence of  
ability to work in a team and not be too individualistic***

**Indicative behaviour**

**Counter-indicative behaviours**

S/he adheres consistently to and follows through group decisions  
 S/he seeks to achieve shared goals  
 S/he accommodates the strengths and weaknesses of others  
 S/he consults colleagues before making decisions or when planning activities  
 S/he makes compromises to help achieve team consensus  
 S/he takes an active part in team meetings  
 S/he encourages the participation of other team members

S/he boasts about his/her own achievements  
 S/he usually does his/her own thing contrary to policy or group decision  
 S/he scapegoats other team members

**From Roy Grimwood, (1993) *Assessing the disposition of candidates for posts in residential child care*  
 Unpublished MSocSci thesis, University of Birmingham.**

## Action Plan

Name \_\_\_\_\_

In order to fulfil my responsibility to promoting teamwork at \_\_\_\_\_,  
I will commit myself to the following:

Action	Additional information (e.g. how often / when (be realistic)	Comments
Attend team meeting		
Participate in formal supervision		
Participate in formal handover meeting		
Write minutes for team meeting		
Initiate and chair formal handover meeting		
Receive support from another staff member		
Support another member of staff		

Action	Additional information (e.g. how often / when (be realistic)	Comments

**PART 4**

**TEAMWORK & LEADERSHIP:**

**Further Background Information**

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD TEAM?

The main principle of teamwork is that it enables individuals to achieve more together than they would on their own. If they develop effective relationships, then they can achieve ‘synergy’, where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Not only that, but being a member of a good team can be enjoyable, rewarding and fun. People need to feel connected to others. Being part of a team is one of the things that brings greatest job satisfaction, and makes it worthwhile getting out of bed in the morning. So promoting teamwork can be another way of encouraging the motivation of staff.

To build and maintain a good team means that attention needs to be paid to the following:

### a) **Effective leadership**

Unless a team is well established, with all individuals sufficiently experienced and skilled in working together, there will need to be someone who plays a leadership role. The Team Leader needs to ensure that:

- Everyone is clear about the purpose of the team, and how that purpose is to be achieved.
- People are encouraged and empowered / enabled to communicate open and honestly with each other, through supervision, support, team meetings and personal example.
- An ethos of support and mutual trust is achieved.
- Individuals acquire the confidence and skills to deal with conflict and differences of opinion in ways that are constructive rather than damaging.
- Each person has the opportunity to have their specific development needs recognised and met.
- There are times scheduled for review and evaluation of progress being made by the team.
- Attention is paid to relationships with individuals, groups and teams in other parts of the organisation, and from other agencies, so that good working relationships exist within the wider context, and team members understand, value and respect the roles of others.
- Their own development needs are recognised and met, and they receive appropriate support.

### b) **Establishing agreed values and working practices**

A team cannot work well if members disagree about the values they work by, and how these are translated into practice. This is particularly important in residential child care settings, where it is critical to young people’s wellbeing that they get a consistent response from all the adults who are working with them.

Generally, team members will feel more committed and motivated if they have been involved in the process of agreeing them. Therefore, it is important that all team members are collaboratively involved in:

- Either drawing up, or regularly reviewing, the statement of purpose and principles. These must be central to the induction of new team members.
- Drawing up an Action Plan, which includes what is to be done, by when, by whom, and when the plan will be reviewed.
- Being aware of factors that might help and hinder progress, and taking these into consideration in the planning process.

### c) **Enabling open and honest communication**

One of the greatest problems in teamwork is the fact that people have difficulty being open with each other – and find it much easier to bitch about others behind their backs! Team members must be committed to being honest about issues that annoy and frustrate them; but need to have the skills to communicate these in a positive and helpful way. One of the major skills of a leader



is to be able to enable and empower the team members to do this, through supervision, support, team meetings, and positive role-modelling.

**d) Providing mutual support and developing trust**

If open and honest communication can be developed in appropriate ways, then trust and mutual support will be easier to foster. Feeling you can trust other team members is one of the most precious team qualities, and contributes at least as much as anything else to effective working relationships. However, trust is something that takes a long time to build, and seconds to shatter; so it is a quality that needs to be given good attention in the team development process.

One major area where trust can be shattered is by one member of the team having to pass on allegations about another. There is ample evidence of the poor treatment of whistle-blowers, and although people know that this can happen, emotions tend to run high on these occasions. Leaders need good strategies for managing this type of occurrence, not just at the time, but in providing the support necessary to re-establish trust and harmony.

**e) Constructive response to situations involving conflict and interpersonal tensions**

Having disagreements is an inevitable aspect of life. It is not the disagreement itself that is a problem; it is when it is handled badly. If people develop the appropriate skills, and respond to it constructively, then there can be positive outcomes. Valuable learning has come out of conflict situations well-handled. On the other hand, conflict that is not dealt with, or is handled badly, creates situations which fester, and can ultimately be disastrous to the well-being of the team – and in turn, to the wider organisation.

**f) Developing knowledge and skills of each individual**

In order to maximise the ‘synergy’ of a team, it is important that each individual is operating at an optimum level of competency and confidence. Consequently, paying attention to individual development needs makes a significant contribution to the success of the larger whole.

**g) Evaluating practice on a regular basis**

It is important that the quality of service is maintained, and that practice is reviewed on a regular basis. Don’t wait for external inspections to ensure that minimum standards are met; establish own higher standards, and work with the staff team to achieve them. Without regular dates to review progress against initial plans, it is very easy for goals and timescales to slip. Review meetings are essential to ensure a team achieves what it set out to achieve; that the quality of service or at least to be clear about the issues causing problems, and to be motivated to find solutions to those problems as quickly as possible.

**h) Building good relationships with other groups and teams**

It is no good if a team works very well internally, but at the same time, its perceived ‘cliquishness’ creates difficulties with other parts of the organisation. If the overall organisation is adversely affected, then the beneficial outcomes of the team may be counteracted. Similarly, there needs to be good relationships with people from other organisations, if the benefits of good teamwork are to be recognised beyond its own boundaries.

## LEADERSHIP

### Brief Overview of Leadership Theories

#### **Trait theory** (early 20<sup>th</sup> century)

Traits and characteristics of successful leaders seen to include:

- Intelligence
- Self-confidence
- Determination
- Integrity
- Sociability

#### **Behaviour theory** - style of leadership used ( 1950's & 60's)

Two dimensions of leadership behaviour:

- Pays attention to achievement of identified organisational **tasks**
- Pays attention to the needs of **people** within the organisation

Other theories focused on behaviours including:

- Autocratic
- Authoritarian
- People centred
- Consultative
- Democratic
- Charismatic

#### **Situational theory** (1970's & 80's))

Developed out of trait and behaviour theory.

Stated that one style was not necessarily better than the other; but that the style should be adapted to suit the situation.

For example, a person who lacked competence, confidence and commitment would need a high level of direction and support; but a person who demonstrated all these qualities would have less need for direction and support. The skill was for the leader to assess where staff were in relation to these three characteristics, and adapt the style accordingly.

#### **Transactional leadership theory** (1970's)

Explains leadership as a series of exchanges between leaders and followers, with either 'carrots' used as an inducement to achieve goals of the organisation, and 'sticks' as punishment if goals are not achieved.

#### **Transformational leadership theory** (1980's onwards)

People centred approach to leadership, where the active involvement of all team and organisational members is encouraged.

Central to transformational leadership is **empowerment**.

A transformational leader:

- Inspires others
- Is authentic
- Acts as a strong role-model
- Creates a vision for the team

- Facilitates maximum participation
- Gains trust and respect
- Encourages people to think creatively
- Achieves goals
- Pays attention to the individual and encourages them to grow and develop
- Supports people in the process of finding meaning in their lives

### **The Relevance of Transformational Leadership for Residential Child Care**

There are many leadership theories around. Some suggest that people tend to have one dominant style – for example they are autocratic, or democratic, or laissez-faire ....

Others suggest that a good leader will use different styles in different situations. So, for example, sometimes they tell people what to do, and sometimes they let them get on with things in their own way.

Transformational Leadership takes leadership theory one step further. It suggests that in a rapidly changing world, there is not a fixed set of skills that you can hold up and say: “If you learn these, you will become a good leader”.

Rather, it proposes that teams which need to adapt to meet the shifting demands placed on them require dynamic leaders who can be personally responsive to the major challenges presented by the often unpredictable behaviour of young people, and the ever-changing requirements of external organisations.

This requires a wide range of qualities and skills, including:

- a) The ability to think imaginatively and creatively.
- b) The ability to quickly assess what is going on in a situation, and make immediate adaptations in what they were planning to do.
- c) The ability to trust in their own intuitive responses, as well as access the experience and wisdom of others.

A transformational leader is a leader who –

- Inspires others
- Is authentic
- Acts as a strong role-model
- Creates a vision for the team
- Facilitates maximum participation
- Gains trust and respect
- Encourages people to think creatively
- Pays attention to the individual and encourages them to grow and develop
- Supports people in the process of finding meaning in their lives

### Effect on Motivation and Morale

A transformational leader knows how to motivate people and raise morale. Many people think that money is the main motivator for employees. But for most individuals, this is not the case. Herzberg said if people do not have an adequate wage or salary, they will be dissatisfied; but money on its own is not enough to satisfy.

And remember Maslow's theory? Maslow said we have 5 different levels of needs, which could be represented as a 'hierarchy' as in the left-hand column of the diagram below. His contention was that lower level needs had to be satisfied to a certain extent before there would be motivation to achieve at the next level. So, the first priority was to meet physiological and safety requirements, before much investment was made in attaining the others.

The second column identifies how an organisation may meet needs at each level.

<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Self-Actualisation</b> The need for personal growth & fulfilment	Work is felt to be a satisfying and meaningful aspect of life, where ability and potential are recognised and fulfilled.
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Self-Esteem</b> The need to achieve, be recognised and have status, etc.	Being able to set and achieve goals Having good work formally recognised and appreciated
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Belonging</b> The need to be loved, included, have good relationships, etc	Feeling part of a team Social events encouraged Importance of good relationships between staff recognised and fostered
<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Safety</b> The need to feel secure, be protected, have stability, etc	A safe working environment Good contract of employment, including sick pay, pension and health care
<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Physiological</b> Basic life needs – for air, water, food, shelter, sleep, sex, etc.	Salaries / wages Pleasant working conditions

A transformational Leader recognises that **all** these levels need addressing, not just the first two or three. It is when an organisation reaches a stage of development where continual attention is paid to Level 5,

such as recognising the desire people have for their talents and potential to be recognised and fulfilled, that you will achieve the full commitment of your staff.

One highly influential method of raising morale is to have a team 'vision' that is shared by all employees; a vision which inspires them, and describes a world they all want to be part of. A powerful vision strikes a chord in people, and motivates them to do what they can to make it happen!

Martin Luther King expressed his Vision in his often quoted speech 'I Have A Dream'. He appealed directly to people's imagination, enabling them to 'see' vividly what the possibilities were that existed. Through both the power and passion of his communication, and the desirability of what he envisaged, he inspired an entire nation to address the inequalities in American society through landmark civil rights legislation. He was a co-pastor (not even head on his own) of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. He had formal authority over less than a dozen people. Yet he was responsible for changing the richest nation on earth and inspired many other people to change their own nations.

People will rally around leaders with a compelling vision and a clear sense of purpose. A transformational leader will know how to create such a Vision for their team which will resonate with its employees, and will gain their commitment to then working on how it might practically be realised in practice.

Now, doesn't every Leader want people who are giving their all to their work; who want to be there, and are motivated to ensure that both they and the organisation are successful?

In learning how to be a transformational leader, you will be learning how to maximise the motivation and morale of your staff, so that all their energy at work will be spent on doing their job well.

### **Retention of staff and less time taken off for sickness**

People leave their jobs for a range of different reasons:

- They are bored – and there are no opportunities for further development
- They don't get on with the people they work with – disagreements and conflict are not resolved, and situations fester.
- They don't agree with the vision and ethos of the organisation
- They feel that what they do is not valued.
- They are not given enough support
- They feel overworked and exploited.

Similarly, people get stressed and go off sick for similar reasons; but perhaps due to age, lack of qualification, or just plain apathy, they can't or won't get another job.

However, if an organisation –

- Provides development and promotion opportunities for its staff;
- Selects appropriate people;
- Ensures they are valued and rewarded for good performance;
- Provides them with the leadership and support to ensure they feel engaged in meaningful and productive work;
- Provides them with opportunities to give feedback on what they find good and not so good about their job, and responds seriously to what they say.....

Each team member will feel that there is no better place to work, and they will want to help themselves and the business grow.

## Personal and Professional Development

It is the development of transformational leadership that lies at the core of the success of an organisation. The power of transformational change, whether it be of an individual, team or organisation, derives from each person paying attention to their own attitudes and behaviour, and living according to the principle ‘the wellbeing of the whole is my responsibility too’. If everyone takes the time to reflect on how they can improve their practice in whatever role they play, ensuring that what they do supports and builds on the actions of others, an organisation can be internally strong and resilient. A leader who acts as a positive role model in this respect has the most influential position, and can really make things happen.

This is not an overnight achievement! It includes:

- Communicating an vision of what kind of residential unit you want to achieve
- Ensuring that all staff buy, engage with, and own the vision – that is ‘walk the talk’.
- Encouraging people to participate in the process of agreeing goals and how they can work together co-operatively to achieve them
- Living with an awareness of what is going on in the wider organisation (this includes the young people)
- Being able to access and trust your own deeper intuition and inner wisdom to help you make good decisions

All of these and more are skills and qualities that facilitate transformational change.

As the leader of a residential staff team, faced testing situations on a daily basis, we can underestimate what difference it is possible to achieve in other people’s lives: staff as well as young people. However, such an environment can provide us with a context to develop all our talents as human beings. The following is written by Marianne Williamson (often wrongly attributed to Nelson Mandela):

*‘Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? Your playing small doesn’t serve the world. There’s nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won’t feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do... It’s not just in some of us; it’s in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we subconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we’re liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others’.*

This gives food for thought! But if we live with the consciousness that everyone is capable of more, and what we as leaders need to do is provide the encouragement and practical support to enable them and us to improve, then think what the possibilities might be!