Supervisor Core Module 3: Leading Change and Managing Conflict

Developed by IHS for the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program
June 2018

Day One
- Introduction
- Understanding Change
- Supervision Strategies for Preparing, Implementing, and Sustaining Change
- Wrap-Up

Day Two
- Reactive Change
- Understanding Conflict
- Supervision Strategies to Manage Conflict
- Addressing Conflict
- Closing

AGENDA
What is your name?

Where do you work and what type of unit do you supervise?

If you could learn one thing to help you better manage change and conflict what would that be?

CHANGE

"Change is the only constant."

What does this mean for your work?

All management is the management of change.

-Heraclitus, Greek philosopher
How does your experience with change affect how you lead?

Self Reflection

Think about a past experience that involved a change initiated by someone else.

Answer the questions in your Journal.

Reflect on your responses. Think about what impact the experience may have on you as a supervisor.

Tolerance for Ambiguity Quiz

Take this quiz with the rest of your staff in a unit meeting. Then discuss the results!
What is your role in leading change?

The Middle (Wo)Man

The Supervisor’s Role in Leading Change

The Vision Keeper

The Communicator

The Coach

The Culture Builder

The Change Creator

Understanding Resistance Towards Change
People resist change because...

- Fear of the unknown, loss of control, or feeling incompetent
- Lack of a felt need to change, or feeling as if the change is not worth the time
- Threat to vested interests
- No input or buy-in
- A lack of resources
- No trust in leadership
- Exhaustion

Change is hard because it wears people out. What looks like laziness is often exhaustion. Self-control is an exhaustible resource. This means when people try to change things, they’re tinkering with behaviors that have become automatic... The bigger the change the more you’re zapping their self-control.
RESISTANCE

an attitude or behavior that indicates an unwillingness to make or support a desired change

Supervisors need to:
• Recognize resistance
• Uncover the reason
• Help staff manage feelings related to the change

The presence of resistance may suggest that something can be done to improve how the change is being implemented.

Change Agent
What are characteristics of Change Agents?

Change Skeptic
What are characteristics of Change Skeptics?

Change Critic
What are characteristics of Change Critics?
### Change Agent

**Strengths**
- Enthusiastic about change
- "Sells" the benefits to others
- Has innovative ideas to support change initiatives and motivate others
- Keeps an open mind and often welcomes change
- Open to new ideas
- Can respond quickly with strategies and approaches to successfully implement change initiatives
- Frequently an early adopter of change

**Challenges**
- Can lack attention to detail
- Moves too quickly to fully and accurately assess change implications
- Impatient with skeptics
- May lose interest quickly

### Change Skeptic

**Strengths**
- Analyzes costs and benefits of change
- Able to process a lot of data and "poke holes" in plans
- Process driven
- Brings "reality" to expectations, can identify potential problems

**Challenges**
- Slows down change initiatives
- Slow to adapt to changes and may bring others "down" regarding change with skeptical attitude

### Change Critic

**Strengths**
- Keeper of organizational history (for instance, "We did that five years ago and nothing happened")
- Causes others to rationalize details of change initiatives

**Challenges**
- Slows change
- Can be demoralizing to others (negative attitude)
- May hold others back from implementing change fully
- Difficulty converting to the new reality
Who are the Change Agents, Skeptics, or Critics in your unit?

The Change Curve

The Change Curve

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Your county has just announced a new process for assigning “on call” staff. Instead of allowing caseworkers and supervisors to volunteer to be “on call,” the agency will rotate assignments weekly among casework staff. The new process begins in one month. Assignments will be given out in alphabetical order, so staff are aware of their assigned week.

**What behaviors might you see from staff in the DENIAL phase?**

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Your county has just announced a new process for assigning “on call” staff. Instead of allowing caseworkers and supervisors to volunteer to be “on call,” the agency will rotate assignments weekly among casework staff. The new process begins in one month. Assignments will be given out in alphabetical order, so staff are aware of their assigned week.

**What behaviors might you see from staff in the ANGER phase?**
Your county has just announced a new process for assigning “on call” staff. Instead of allowing caseworkers and supervisors to volunteer to be “on call,” the agency will rotate assignments weekly among casework staff. The new process begins in one month. Assignments will be given out in alphabetical order, so staff are aware of their assigned week.

What behaviors might you see from staff in the **CURIOSITY** phase?
Your county has just announced a new process for assigning “on call” staff. Instead of allowing caseworkers and supervisors to volunteer to be “on call,” the agency will rotate assignments weekly among casework staff. The new process begins in one month. Assignments will be given out in alphabetical order, so staff are aware of their assigned week.

What behaviors might you see from staff in the ACCEPTANCE phase?

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**The Change Curve**

- Denial
- Anger
- Curiosity
- Acceptance

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3. Briefly describe a change you’ve implemented in your unit (if you haven’t implemented a change, use an example of a change initiated by someone else).

4. Now, think of the staff in your unit. Who are the change agents, skeptics, and critics?

5. Choose one change agent, skeptic, and critic. Describe how they transitioned through The Change Curve.

6. When did you see signs of resistance? What did their actions (resistance) look like? What were some of the reasons for resistance?

7. When did you see signs of people moving from anger to curiosity? What were the words and actions that indicated they were becoming more open to the change?

8. How long did it take for each person to move through each phase?
Choose a supervisor role. What might your behavior look like if you were working with staff who were CURIOUS about change?

Choose a supervisor role. What might your behavior look like if you were working with staff in DENIAL of change?

Think about all of the changes you’ve experienced in the past year.

Place the changes along the continuum from REACTIVE (unplanned) to PROACTIVE (planned).
The Change Process

Preparing for Change

Implementing Change

Sustaining Change

Preparing for Change

Strategies for Success

Generate a need
Create a vision
Assess the impact
Map the journey

Generate a need for change

Why is this important?
Staff Won’t Feel the Need to Change Because...

To generate a need...

- Identify potential challenges and talk about what may happen if change doesn’t occur
- Examine areas of poor performance and look for opportunities that should be, or could be, improved
- Start an honest discussion to get people talking and thinking about change
- Other ideas?
Generate a need for change

Your unit is out of compliance with the agency standard to have activity logs completed in SACWIS within three days of a face-to-face contact.

**How would you start a conversation at a unit meeting to generate a need for change?**

Generate a need for change

You’ve noticed Che’s morale has been low since Tami, a well-liked caseworker within the unit, left the agency.

**How would you start a conversation with Che to generate a need for change?**

Create a vision for change

**Why is this important?**

**Elements of a Good Change Vision**

To create and communicate a vision for change...

- Develop the vision with your staff
- Create a change “tagline” – something that inspires action in less than five words
- Make sure staff can articulate the vision
Assess the impact

Why is this important?

To conduct an impact analysis...

List all of the areas impacted by the change and the effect (positive and negative) it will have.

Based on list, decide if it's worth moving forward.

If moving forward, incorporate the barriers into the plan.

Impact Analysis

PLACE

PEOPLE

POLICIES and PROCEDURES

Impact Analysis

PLACE

PEOPLE

POLICIES and PROCEDURES

Impact Analysis

PLACE

PEOPLE

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Assess the impact

Why is this important?

PLACE

PEOPLE

POLICIES and PROCEDURES

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Assess the impact

Why is this important?

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PLACE

PEOPLE

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
**Map the Journey**

**Why is this important?**

To create a plan...

- Articulate the behaviors you want to see and steps to achieve them
- Create short-term goals to go along with the vision for change
- Include steps to mitigate challenges and overcome barriers
- Include steps to evaluate the effectiveness of the change, as well as progress
- Remember to get staff buy-in and update the plan as needed!!

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**Map the Journey**

**Why?**

**Share examples of good action steps.**

**Is this a good plan to promote change?**

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**Pulling it all Together**

Choose a CPOE Item on which to focus your change (one Item per group)

As a group:

- Create a need for change – Identify the reasons that will motivate your staff to make a change
- Create a vision for change – Develop a vision to clearly communicate the desired outcome
- Assess the impact of change – List all of the positive and negative impacts this change will have on your PLACE, PEOPLE, POLICIES, and PROCEDURES

* If preferred, work individually and then share within your small group to garner feedback.*

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Pulling it all Together

Use the strategies just learned to prepare for your own change!

Individually, map the journey (create a plan for change) – Clearly articulate the behaviors you want to see and the steps to achieve them.

Your roadmap should include:

- Small achievable targets
- Script critical moves
- Barriers identified in the impact analysis
- A step to measure and evaluate progress
What did you learn from this activity?

What strategy will have the most impact in terms of creating successful change? Why?

Time will always be a factor. What can you do to make sure you adequately prepare your staff/unit for change?

Preparing for Change

- Generate a need for change
- Create a vision for change
- Assess the impact
- Map the journey

How can you ensure staff buy-in and input in each strategy?

The Change Process

- Sustaining Change
- Preparing for Change
- Implementing Change
**Implementing Change**

- Communicate often
- Lead staff during the implementation of change
- Train and coach as needed
- Monitor the plan and evaluate the effectiveness of the change

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**Communicate often**

**Why is this important?**

To effectively communicate change...

- Influence hearts and minds to change habits
- Allow time for processing
- Keep it simple
- Use different forms to spread the word
- Listen and address concerns and anxieties, openly and honestly
- Repeat! Repeat! Repeat!
- Other ideas?

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**Communicate often**

Share an example of when you experienced effective communication related to change.

**What made it effective?**
**What was that experience like?**
Lead staff during the implementation of change

Why is this important?

- Denial
- Anger
- Curiosity
- Acceptance

Why is this important?

- Talk about the change early and often - don’t wait, or the time staff have to adjust will be reduced
- Explain what to expect and suggest actions that can be taken to adjust to the change
- Allow for time to let things sink in and revisit
- Schedule opportunities to thoroughly address staff feelings about the change
Help staff to acknowledge that something is ending before they can begin to accept a new idea. Show appreciation for their emotions and help to process them. Communicate the vision and make sure it is understood because people often fear what they don't understand. Don't try to talk staff out of their feelings, but rather, help them to change, or pull it together.

Provide staff with a solid sense of direction because while experimenting with change, people may feel lost - remind staff of unit goals and encourage them to talk about their feelings. Focus on priorities. Provide any needed training or skill building opportunities. Set short-term goals. Conduct brainstorming, visioning, and planning sessions. Allow staff to continue to vent and to express their fears, anger, etc.

Set long-term goals. Validate and reward those responding to the change. Concentrate on team building. Look ahead.

Denial

Anger

Curiosity

Acceptance

Denial

Acceptance

Curiosity

Anger

Denial

Acceptance

Curiosity

Anger

Denial

Acceptance

Curiosity

Anger
Leading Agents, Skeptics, and Critics

When considering the change initiative you’ve planned today, who are your change agents, skeptics, and critics within your unit?

Choose three staff (ideally an agent, skeptic, and critic). Describe how you could use their strengths to facilitate the change.

The Change Process

Sustaining Change

Preparing for Change

Implementing Change

Sustaining Change

- Create ongoing, small wins
- Maintain focus until new habits are fully formed
Create ongoing, small wins

Why is this important?

To create small wins...

Short-Term Wins

Identify at least two short-term wins for your change initiative.

Maintain focus until new habits are fully formed
The Change Process

1: Generate a Need
2: Create a Vision
3: Assess the Impact
4: Map the Journey
5: Communicate Often
6: Lead Staff During the Implementation of Change
7: Create Ongoing, Small Wins
8: Maintain Focus Until New Habits are Fully Formed

Day One Summary

In small groups, create a summary of biggest take-aways from today's training. Here are some questions to jump-start your thinking:

• What have been some of the key points raised in today's session?
• What experiences have you had today? What did you get out of them?
• What ideas and suggestions are you taking away from today?
A new supervisor has just called and asked for your advice. She’s just been made aware of a situation (the one on your card) and must act in an hour. You have 10 minutes to get your thoughts together before she stops by your office for advice.

Structure your advice around two strategies.
The mental struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes or external/internal forces.

The average supervisor spends 18-26% of their time dealing with conflict. (CPP Global Capital Study, 2008)

CONFLICT

Positive  Negative
Share examples of workplace conflict you’ve experienced that had positive outcomes... ...negative outcomes.

What are some benefits of conflict?
**Benefits of Conflict**

- Increased ability to overcome difficult situations, synthesize diverse perspectives, and make sure solutions are well thought out
- Better work outcomes
- Renewed energy and productivity
- Opportunity to learn and grow
- Improved relationships
- Increased job satisfaction

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**The Stages of Conflict**

- Undercurrent
- Trigger
- Episode
- Escalation
- Peak
- De-Escalation
- Resolution
- Aftermath
### Sources of Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>personal disagreement or clash of personalities</td>
<td>disagreement over how to carry out a task/project</td>
<td>disagreement over the intended goal of a task/project</td>
<td>disagreement over who’s in charge, who gets credit for work, or someone’s standing in a group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bill has been talking behind Cindy’s back. He is annoyed she hasn’t been completing her monthly visits on time and it’s starting to reflect poorly on the entire unit.**

**Supervisor Todd dislikes a new form his agency is using. He feels it is just creating redundant work for his staff.**
Understanding Conflict

Briefly describe two current, professional conflict situations you’re experiencing.

For each situation, identify the stage and type of conflict.

Supervision Strategies to Manage Conflict

Communication Style Flexing

modifying your communication style to most effectively engage with others.

Emotional Intelligence

self-awareness of how your actions affect those around you.

Emotional Intelligence

What is it?

Five Elements of EI

Self-Awareness

Self-Regulation

Motivation

Empathy

Social Skills
Why is it important for supervisors to have Emotional Intelligence when managing conflict?

Building Emotional Intelligence: What are my Triggers?

List three traits of your staff that could cause you to have a negative emotional reaction.

Next, turn to a partner and discuss what you could do to self-regulate your reactions.

Conflict Attitude

Conflict Avoider

- Shies away from disagreements
- Strives for harmony in relationships
- Changes the topic if he/she senses conflict
- Actively avoids conflict so he/she doesn’t hurt someone’s feelings
- Fears disrupting personal and team dynamics
- Doesn’t voice personal concerns or attempts to understand others
- Hides interests/position until the situation is less threatening

Conflict Seeker

- Unafraid to engage in disagreements
- Prefers directness and honesty
- Strongly advocates for his/her own perspective and opinions
Self Reflection: Conflict Attitude

With a partner, reflect on your approach to conflict. Use the questions in the Journal to guide your conversation.

You may take notes on Journal page 25.

Communication Styles

Why is it important?

Four Communication Styles

- Emotive
- Reflective
- Directive
- Supportive

Communication Style Assessment

Complete the Communication Style Assessment by quickly reading the words/phrase in each box and checking the one that is most descriptive of you.

Next, use the key on page 28 to determine your preferred Communication Style.
Style Flexing

Why is it important?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supportive</th>
<th>Emotive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflective</td>
<td>Directive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pair up with someone who has the opposite communication style.

Have a dialogue about how each person prefers to give and receive information.

You may take notes on Journal page 33.
What did you learn from talking to your partner about his/her communication preferences?

How will you communicate differently to reduce conflict?

You're meeting with one of your staff, Karen, who has come to you with an idea to improve the case transfer process. She's very excited and comes to the meeting with a lot of information. Karen is eager and very persuasive.

You need to collect all of the information to make an informed decision about her idea. How would you engage Karen?

Aaron has come into your office to tell you he is going to remove the Smith children. He has already made a plan for how he intends to do this and contacted the foster care unit to make the placement.

As his supervisor, you need to ask questions to gain a better understanding of his plans to remove the children. You also want to address his independent decision making that did not include you, the supervisor.

What is the source of this conflict? (Relationship, Process, Task, or Status)
Reflective

You and Sarah, a fellow supervisor, have been asked to examine the case assignment process for ongoing cases and make recommendations on how to make it more equitable.

This morning, you met with Sarah and talked about your recommendations. You left the meeting in agreement, but later, Sarah approached you and said after having time to reflect she has a different perspective.

Although frustrated at this recent turn of events, you must meet again and try to understand her perspective. How would you engage Sarah in the future?

BONUS QUESTION: What is the source of this conflict? (Relationship, Process, Task, or Status)

Supportive

You and Michelle, a new caseworker, are meeting to discuss a case she’s been working on for a while. The family is seeking voluntary services, and Michelle feels they are making progress, albeit slowly. She believes they will continue to improve if given more time. The family seems to be afraid to close the case, so they appear to be stalling, although Michelle does not see it this way. She is trying to decide if she should close the case or not, but is having difficulty making this decision.

As her supervisor, you believe her time would be better spent on other cases and you will be discussing this with her at the case conference. How will you engage Michelle?

To become better at managing conflict, make a plan to develop your communication skills in these other areas.

- Strengths-Based Communication
- Communicating with Caution
- Active Listening
- Motivational Interviewing
Addressing Conflict

**FOUR OPTIONS**
Addressing Conflict

**Do Nothing**  
**Address Indirectly**  
**Address Directly**  
**Exit the Situation**

When would you use each strategy?

Do Nothing  
Address Indirectly  
Address Directly  
Exit the Situation

 adversary
Choosing to move past or ignore the conflict

Best used when you:

- Don’t have the time or energy to prepare or have a productive conversation
- Suspect the other person is unwilling or not able to have a productive conversation
- Won’t beat yourself up or stew over it

Skirting the issue instead of handling it directly

Best used when you:

- Know the importance of “saving face” in your agency culture
- Know direct conflict is inappropriate in your agency culture
- Believe the other person will be more accepting of feedback from someone else

Possible Strategies

- Assign a liaison
- Appeal to common goals or mission
- Use a story or metaphor
- Seek support from others
- Others?
ADDRESS DIRECTLY

Actively handling the situation by talking to the other person
Best used when you:
• Know there will be less lingering resentment if the air is cleared
• Have tried other options but the problem persists
• Want the relationship with the other person back on track

EXIT THE SITUATION

Taking action to be completely removed from the situation.
Often, this is the final option.
Best used when you:
• Feel emotions are too heightened for a productive conversation
• Can easily remove yourself from the task or job
• Have tried other options, and nothing has worked
You just got off the phone with yet another parent who really pushed your buttons. You feel guilty because you snapped back a few times. Then, your supervisor walks in. You’re afraid to say anything because you don’t want to get into trouble. At the same time, you want to vent!

You notice that tension between two of your staff has been escalating over the past few weeks.
Reflect on experiences you’ve had directly addressing conflict in the past. What is different about the experiences you felt ended well and those that did not?

- Know and understand your conflict attitude, as well as the other person’s
- Identify the source of conflict
- Choose the most appropriate option for moving forward
- Identify your goal for the conversation
- List key points and/or considerations

Directly Addressing Conflict

Choose one of the situations you identified on Journal page 23.

Practice the Preparation and Reflection Phase by working through the questions in your Journal.
Directly Addressing Conflict

- Pair up with someone and share your reflections.
- Partners should offer insight and alternative perspectives to encourage deeper thinking.
- You may take notes on Journal page 37.

How do you feel about the conversation now compared to before this activity? More/Less prepared? More/Less anxious?

What are the benefits of preparing and reflecting prior to a difficult conversation?

What challenges do you see in this process? How can they be managed or overcome?

ADDRESS DIRECTLY

- Preparation and Reflection
- Conversation
- Follow-Up
- Practice Emotional Intelligence
- Listen Well
- Communicate Effectively
- Move Towards a Resolution
Successful Resolution

- Achieves each party's goals
- Is acceptable to both parties
- Allows all parties to be open and honest about facts and feelings

Directly Addressing Conflict

- Find your partner and practice having the difficult conversation you prepared for in the previous activity.
- Partners should help each other plan for multiple scenarios (e.g., if the counterpart is defensive, quiet, understanding, etc.).
- Raise your hand if you get stuck or would like to ask others in the class for ideas.
- You may take notes on Journal page 37.

Mediation is an advanced conflict resolution technique.

The Supervisor as a Mediator
Final Thoughts

Answer the following questions in your Journal:

• What will I start doing?
• What will I stop doing?
• What will I keep doing?

Share your thoughts!

Congratulations! You’ve just completed Supervisor Core Module 3!

Schedule time to review the Training Transfer Indicators on Journal pages 39-40.

As you know, feedback is critical! Complete your E-Track evaluation to tell us about your learning experience.