Developing a highly effective unit is a primary goal for any child welfare supervisor. This module addresses several topics conducive to new supervisors as they work toward establishing their units. Supervisors will have an opportunity to assess their unit’s current functioning related to seven characteristics of highly functioning units, practice strategies to improve their unit’s effectiveness, and create a plan to improve their unit’s overall level of functioning.

**DAY ONE**
- Introductions
- Organizational Units in Child Welfare
- Stages of Group Development
- Characteristics of Highly Effective Units

**DAY TWO**
- Building a Highly Effective Unit
- Improving Unit Effectiveness
- Sustaining a Highly Effective Unit
- Wrap-Up
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</table>
The Unit
- a group, or team of people, working together in a coordinated fashion to achieve a specific end

State of the Unit
Consider the current state of your unit as you answer the following questions. Then, summarize the outcome of your assessment by describing your unit’s strengths and challenges.

My staff know how their job is important to achieving the mission of the agency.

Together, my staff possess all the knowledge and skills needed to perform every aspect of the unit’s work.

My staff are aware of all the unit goals, and understand how each of their job duties contributes to achieving those goals.

My unit is meeting its mission-critical goals and objectives.

My unit is structured so that ALL required tasks are covered and can be accomplished.

My unit has all the necessary processes and/or established procedures in place to assure that outcomes are achieved.

I Know This Because:

I Know This Because:

I Know This Because:
**Stages of Group Development**

**FORMING**
Takes place as a unit is forming or a new member enters the unit. In this phase, people are getting to know each other, and testing each other (including the supervisor) about what is acceptable behavior. If the new member is a supervisor, this phase includes an exploration of the level of change that will result from the new supervisor.

**STORMING**
New staff are accepted, and roles and responsibilities for all the unit staff are starting to be negotiated. This often involves the exploration of issues related to control; staff attempt to be seen as leaders. Differences of opinion are common, and staff compete for their ideas to be heard. This phase can result in high emotions and tension.

**NORMING**
Staff start to become comfortable with the norms they’ve established for the unit. They are accepting their roles and responsibilities within the unit and beginning to work well together. They understand the importance of collaborating with one another in order to fulfill their unit’s goals. Staff are also beginning to build more trusting relationships with one another.

**PERFORMING**
Working relationships are solidified, and effective work patterns and styles are embraced. Staff are committed to high quality performance. They strongly believe in their ability to achieve high standards. They work together well, and are mostly able to solve day-to-day issues on their own. They rarely rely on the supervisor for routine problem-solving. Unit business is running smoothly. This is the stage when the unit becomes a team.

**ADJOURNING**
Occurs when a staff member permanently departs the unit. The remaining staff may experience grief and loss. This could impact productivity of the unit.

Today, my unit is in the ____________ stage.
Adjusting Your Leadership Style

Adjust your leadership style according to your unit’s current stage of development. This won’t be easy at first, so practice these strategies to become more skilled over time.

As you take notes, circle the strategies you’d like to try back at the agency to lead your unit successfully through their current stage.
Embraces Diversity

Values Driven

Characteristics of Highly Functioning Units

Has Trust and Cohesion

Culture of Recognition

Uses Data to Drive Decisions

Shares Decision-Making

Collaborates Effectively
HIGHLY FUNCTIONING UNIT CHARACTERISTIC

1: EMBRACES DIVERSITY

An inclusive environment where individual differences and perspectives are respected and leveraged to achieve unit and organizational goals

KEY SUPERVISOR TRAITS
- Fairness
- Inclusiveness
- Openness to others and new ideas
- Respectfulness

SUPERVISOR STRATEGIES
- Ensure everyone’s voice is heard
- Challenge intolerance
- Promote the importance of diversity
- Fair treatment of others
- Utilize the skills and talents of others
- Highlight unit diversity

OCWTP Distance Learning Course: Transcending Differences

Differential Response Practice Profiles
Understanding the Diversity of your Unit

Write the initials of each of your staff and their primary role.
Everyone has a primary behavior type, and no style is more "right" or "wrong" than another. Although it's possible to develop other types, your primary type is what comes most naturally.

Become aware of your primary type, as well as areas to strengthen.

As your staff become more aware of their own types, they will be better prepared to work together and create a balanced sense of "team," thus, becoming a more effective unit.
Behavioral "Style" Survey

Think about your work environment and in the spaces provided to the right of the word/phrase, identify those behaviors which are MOST TO LEAST characteristic of you in your work setting.

Working in one row at a time, assign "4" points to your MOST characteristic behavior, "3" to the next most characteristic behavior, then a "2" and finally a "1" to your LEAST characteristic behavior. This is a forced choice instrument. If you think all apply to you, you still need to rank order them "4", "3", "2" and a "1". If none seem to fit, the same directions apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directing</th>
<th>Influencing</th>
<th>Steady</th>
<th>Cautious</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restless</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Protective</td>
<td>Questioning</td>
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<td>Assertive</td>
<td>Talkative</td>
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<td>Tolerant</td>
<td>Conventional</td>
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<td>Experimenting</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Easy Going</td>
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<td>Do-er</td>
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<td>Adventurous</td>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>Predictable</td>
<td>Logical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quick to act</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Data Gatherer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Picture</td>
<td>Animated</td>
<td>Persistent</td>
<td>Detail Oriented</td>
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<td>Doing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Driving</td>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>Helpful</td>
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**SCORING INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Total the numbers in each of the four columns. Place the total number in the blank at the bottom of the column.
2. Add the four columns together, and make sure they equal 200. Once your total equals 200 please graph your scores on the graph on the next page.
Plot the numbers from the totals columns on the previous page. For example, if the total number in the first column is 50, you would place the plotting point (a DOT) on the line between the 47 and the 53. If your number is a 42, you would plot it between the 41 and the 44.

Then, circle the highest visual point. That represents your strongest behavioral characteristic. The higher the score on the graph, the more intensity you bring to this behavioral characteristic. Your second highest number is your back-up style. Your lowest number is your least used behavioral characteristic. The behavioral descriptions – from left to right are: Dominant, Influencing, Steady and Conscientious.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Influencing</th>
<th>Steady</th>
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<td>BEHAVIOR TYPES</td>
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<td>SUPERVISION STRATEGIES</td>
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</table>
| **Dominance**  | • Independent, persistent, direct  
• Energetic, busy, fearless  
• Focus on own goals rather than people  
• Directive  
• Ask “what?” and “when?” | • Build respect to avoid conflict  
• Focus on facts and ideas rather than the person(s)  
• Have evidence to support argument  
• Be quick, focused, and to the point  
• Ask what, not how  
• Talk about how problems will hinder accomplishments  
• Show them how they can succeed |
| **Influence**   | • Social, persuasive, friendly  
• Energetic, busy, optimistic, distractible  
• Imaginative, focus on the new and the future  
• Involved in many activities  
• People-focused  
• Ask “what?,” “when?,” and “why?” | • Be social and friendly, build the relationship  
• Listen  
• Find ways to translate talk into useful action  
• Don’t focus too much on details  
• Motivate staff to follow through to complete tasks  
• Recognize accomplishments |
| **Steadiness**  | • Consistent  
• Accommodating, peace-seeking  
• Like helping and supporting others; good listener and counselor  
• Few close relationships  
• Asks rather than tells  
• Ask “how?,” “what?,” “when?,” and “why?” | • Be genuinely interested  
• Create a calm working environment  
• Allow time to adjust to change  
• Clearly define goals, and provide ongoing support  
• Recognize and appreciate achievements  
• Avoid hurry and pressure  
• Present new ideas carefully |
| **Conscientious** | • Slow and critical thinker, perfectionist  
• Logical, fact-based, organized, follows rules  
• Doesn’t show feelings; private; few but good friends  
• Big picture thinker  
• Ask “how?,” “what?,” “when?,” “why not?,” and “what else was considered?” | • Avoid surprises, don’t ad-lib when meeting  
• Be logical, accurate, and use clear data  
• Show how things fit into the bigger picture  
• Be specific and focus on the facts  
• Be patient, persistent, and diplomatic |
Highly Functioning Unit Characteristic

2: VALUES DRIVEN

Alignment of work activities with the vision and values of the agency and unit.

KEY SUPERVISORY TRAITS
- Visionary
- Leadership
- Strategic Mindset

SUPERVISOR STRATEGIES
- In a unit meeting, have a conversation about the unit's values and how they are carried out
- Display the unit's values around the office as a reminder
- Model values for staff
- Include a discussion of values periodically during supervision
Your values drive how you work.

It’s up to you and your staff to identify the set of values that will guide your work.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>VALUE</th>
<th>UNIT OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
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<tr>
<td>People should be treated with respect and dignity</td>
<td>Phone calls from clients will be returned within two business days</td>
<td>Staff will set aside time every morning and afternoon to return phone calls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagreements among co-staff will be kept private</td>
<td>Disagreements among co-staff will be kept private</td>
<td>Staff will speak directly with the person they disagree with to discuss the issue. This will be done privately.</td>
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</table>

**MY UNIT**

**VALUES**
Highly Functioning Unit Characteristic

3: HAS TRUST AND COHESION

Interactions with others are courteous and respectful. Staff make every effort to understand and relate to others.

KEY SUPERVISORY TRAITS
- Emotional Intelligence
- Social and Self-Awareness
- Empathy

SUPERVISOR STRATEGIES
- Lead by example
- Communicate openly
- Promote knowing each unit member personally
- Not place blame
- Discourage cliques
- Discuss trust issues
Highly Functioning Unit Characteristic

4: CULTURE OF RECOGNITION

A positive work environment where individual and unit achievements are celebrated.

KEY SUPERVISORY TRAITS
- Active Engagement
- Developing and Empowering
- Supportive Supervision
- Transformational Leadership

SUPERVISOR STRATEGIES
- Allow and encourage staff to recognize each other
- Let staff make important decisions, as appropriate
- Give little surprises like unexpected treats or fun activities
- Be transparent
- Request their feedback
Highly Functioning Unit Characteristic

5: USES DATA TO DRIVE DECISIONS

Focuses efforts to efficiently achieve measurable results consistent with agency and unit goals. Incorporates data into planning, monitoring, and improvement of activities.

KEY SUPERVISORY TRAITS

- Continuous Process Improvement
- Understands and Interprets Data
- Change Management

SUPERVISOR STRATEGIES

- Regularly use data in discussions with staff
- Communicate and model clear expectations that staff use data to regularly guide their work
- Establish the expectation that improving practice and monitoring outcomes is an essential part of unit culture
- Involve staff in determining appropriate measures of individual and unit performance
- Communicate that data is to be used to learn how to improve unit performance, not to penalize staff

Taking Action: Keys to Using Data and Information
6: SHARES
DECISION-MAKING

A collaborative process in which staff are involved in decision making, when possible.

KEY SUPERVISORY TRAITS
- Negotiation
- Consensus Building
- Facilitation
- Managing Group Dynamics

SUPERVISOR STRATEGIES
- Ask for staffs opinions on upcoming decisions
- Involve staff in decisions about their professional development
- Create ad hoc groups within the unit to look into issues further and ask them to present their findings to the entire unit
TYPES OF PROBLEMS

- Routine
- Non-Routine
- Expected
- Unexpected
- Crisis

DECISION-MAKING STRATEGIES

INDIVIDUAL
- Supervisor Only

GROUP
- Supervisor After Group Discussion
- Majority Rules
- Consensus

CHOOSE THE BEST DECISION-MAKING STRATEGY

- **YES**
  - SAGD
  - MR
  - C

  Is the decision to be made important to the group?

  **YES**
  - SAGD
  - MR
  - C

  Is there time to gather information from staff before a decision must be made?

  **YES**
  - SAGD
  - MR
  - C

  Do you need a high level of buy-in?

  **NO**
  - SO
  - C

  **NO**
  - SO
  - C

  **NO**
  - SO
  - C
7: COLLABORATES EFFECTIVELY

Develops, maintains, and strengthens relationships while working together to achieve results.

KEY SUPERVISORY TRAITS
- Teamwork
- Inclusiveness
- Relationship Building
- Conflict Resolution

SUPERVISOR STRATEGIES
- Share your vision
- Understand the respective missions of other parties
- Provide feedback on what is needed
- Follow-through on agreements
- Model collaboration for staff

Measuring the Maturity of a Unit
Embraces Diversity

- _____ Always
- _____ Almost Always
- _____ Occasionally/Sometimes
- _____ Almost Never
- _____ Never

Values Driven

- _____ Always
- _____ Almost Always
- _____ Occasionally/Sometimes
- _____ Almost Never
- _____ Never

Has Trust and Cohesion

- _____ Always
- _____ Almost Always
- _____ Occasionally/Sometimes
- _____ Almost Never
- _____ Never

Culture of Recognition

- _____ Always
- _____ Almost Always
- _____ Occasionally/Sometimes
- _____ Almost Never
- _____ Never

Uses Data to Drive Decisions

- _____ Always
- _____ Almost Always
- _____ Occasionally/Sometimes
- _____ Almost Never
- _____ Never

Shares Decision-Making

- _____ Always
- _____ Almost Always
- _____ Occasionally/Sometimes
- _____ Almost Never
- _____ Never

Collaborates Effectively

- _____ Always
- _____ Almost Always
- _____ Occasionally/Sometimes
- _____ Almost Never
- _____ Never

Think of your unit's current functioning. Based on what you’ve learned in this workshop, place an X next to the frequency in which your unit demonstrates each characteristic.
Involving Staff in Decisions which Affect the Entire Unit

In truly effective units, members exhibit behaviors that encourage team spirit and respect for every person’s point of view. As a group, unit members should determine what behaviors they consider harmful, and thus want absent from its membership.

How comfortable are you with allowing your staff to establish rules of behavior for the unit?

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<tr>
<td>Not Comfortable At All</td>
<td></td>
<td>Extremely Comfortable</td>
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</table>

Is your staff ready to handle the responsibility of establishing rules of behavior for the unit? (circle response below)

YES NO I'M NOT SURE

How will you (or do you) know when you and/or your staff are ready?

How will you turn this responsibility over to them?
Unit Improvement Plan

**Unit Objective**  
**6 Month Goal**

1. **What is working well in the unit?** (i.e., What successes are you already having?)
2. **What made this work or caused this success?**
3. **What are the benefits of achieving your unit objective?**
4. **Is the objective essential to the unit and agency mission?**
5. **What can you do more, better, or differently to move closer to the objective?**
6. **Who will do what, and by when?**
7. **How will progress be measured?**
Guidelines for Sustaining Highly Effective Units

Establish clear goals
Ensue staff understand unit goals. Unclear goals often result in wasted time, effort, and frustration.

Ensure agreement prior to action
Use consensus to achieve agreement about the need for unit improvement and desired outcomes.

Build realistic timetables
Growth and change come slowly; unit members may change at different speeds.

Consult with unit members frequently and genuinely
Treat staff as "the experts in the room." Consultation increases commitment.

Relate the improvement process to the agency mission
Use regular unit meetings and/or projects as growth opportunities.

Encourage openness and frankness
Do not sweep issues under the rug. Deal with "the elephant in the room."

Model and reward desired behavior
To staff, supervisors' actions speak louder than words. Be careful to "walk the talk."

Learn from mistakes
Supervisors should admit when they are wrong, and consider staff mistakes as learning opportunities.

Reorganize work if necessary
Developmental activities take time.

Do not raise false expectations
Promise only what can be delivered; broken promises discredit.
What would you say?

To begin the initial discussion about becoming a highly effective unit.

To managing staff frustration in the storming stage.

To provide feedback regarding a poor CPOE rating.

To celebrate the unit’s developmental progress and/or accomplishment.
QR Code Links

- OCWTP Distance Learning Course: Transcending Differences (page 7) - qrs.ly/u976bcn
- Differential Response Practice Profiles (page 7) - qrs.ly/uv76bcs
- Team Player Roles (page 8) - http://qrs.ly/i8757nm
- Rethinking Generational Differences (page 9) - http://qrs.ly/vi7km0t
- Measuring the Maturity of a Unit (page 20) - http://qrs.ly/r373lzz
There is a set of fundamental supervision and management knowledge and skills needed in order to be an effective supervisor. Whether on the job for two months or several years, these concepts should be regularly reviewed by a supervisor and their manager to achieve a high level of supervision.

**How to use Training Transfer Indicator’s (TTIs):** Following Supervisor Core Module 6, use the TTIs during supervision with your direct supervisor to discuss what you learned and to assess your understanding of the knowledge and skills taught in this module. The TTIs will help you further develop your skills in these fundamental areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic: Group Development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the five stages of group development?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe how you would work with your unit in the Storming Stage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name three things you can do to make a new person feel welcomed into an established unit.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic: Characteristics of Highly Effective Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name four characteristics of highly effective units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the four characteristics you identified, what strategies might you use to help your unit achieve these characteristics?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To ensure agreement before taking action, what form of decision-making is recommended and why?</td>
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<td>Training Transfer Indicators</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Topic: Building a Highly Effective Unit</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe the importance of unit meetings for building and sustaining a highly effective unit.</td>
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<td>What are some strategies you will use to ensure effective unit meetings?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explain why it is important for units to establish rules of behavior for all its members?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Topic: Sustaining a Highly Effective Unit</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Name five strategies for sustaining unit progress.</td>
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<td>What will your process be for guiding your staff in setting clear, attainable unit goals?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How will you create and maintain an environment where making mistakes is an opportunity for learning?</td>
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**Additional Comments:**