

CHAPTER**1**

ROLES OF THE SCHOOL SUPERVISOR

OBJECTIVES

After studying Chapter 1 you should be able to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Outline the historical development of the field of supervision.
2. Formulate a working definition of supervision.
3. Describe a conceptual model of supervision.
4. Identify supervisors in a school system.
5. List common tasks of supervision.
6. Describe various roles of supervisors.
7. State what you believe to be the minimal qualifications of a supervisor.
8. Discuss your thoughts about supervision as a career.

SUPERVISION DEFINED

One of the best-kept secrets outside the education profession and, to a degree even within the profession, is the existence of a large shadow army of school personnel known by the collective title of supervisors. Parents and sometimes teachers profess not to know of the presence of these specialists in the school systems of the nation. Although laypersons may be aware that school systems employ a variety of personnel, such as custodians, secretaries, cafeteria workers, and counselors, the concept of school personnel held by a typical layperson is that of a teacher in every classroom and a principal in every school. Were members of the community asked to identify a school supervisor, they would probably indicate the principal, who may or may not be the sole supervisor. Or they might refer to the superintendent, who plays a relatively small part in the type of supervision discussed in this book, namely, instructional supervision.

Yet as the alien watchers say about extraterrestrial beings, supervisors are “out there.” In fact, they are all around us. We could discover to what degree they are present if we had the power to equip every supervisor with a coal miner’s hat and to turn on all the light beams. If we could then photograph the light trails, we would trace a pattern of motion as astounding as any graphics drawn by a computer. We’d see almost endless movement as supervisors journey from class to class, school to school, and school system to school system. Whereas teachers are usually place-bound, supervisors are in periodic motion. A distinguishing feature of true supervisors is that they leave their offices frequently for the purpose of helping other school personnel—namely, teachers—do their jobs better.

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Considering the veritable army of supervisors on local and state levels of schooling throughout the country, it is surprising to find that the role of the supervisor in education remains rather ill defined. Business and industry are not troubled by this same malady. The position of commercial or industrial supervisor is highly visible and well defined in the managerial structure of the organization. Educational supervisors may or may not be a part of the managerial structure of school systems. The question of whether they should be part of management is, as we will discover later, a storm center among specialists in supervision.

Responsibilities of educational supervisors are not at all clear from locality to locality and from state to state. Even within localities, supervisory roles are often poorly delineated. To compound the problem, the titles of supervisors are almost as varied as their roles.

Ben M. Harris attributed the variations in roles to differing theoretical perspectives:

Supervision, like any complex part of an even more complex enterprise, can be viewed in various ways and inevitably is. The diversity of perceptions stems not only from organizational complexity but also from lack of information and absence of perspective. To provide perspective, at least, the total school operation must be the point of departure for analyzing instructional supervision as a major function.¹

To varying degrees, many occupations outside education use the services of supervisors, whether as office boss, telephone supervisor, floor manager, construction supervisor, department-store head, or assembly-line supervisor. These individuals carry out the task of supervision in the original sense of the Latin word *supervideo*, “to oversee.” They demonstrate techniques, offer suggestions, give orders, evaluate employees’ performance, and check on results (products).

HISTORICAL APPROACHES

Supervision has gone through many metamorphoses. If we look at some of the changes that have occurred in this field since the early days, we can a bit arbitrarily establish historical time frames for the evolution of instructional supervision. In analyzing the development of most aspects of education, we should keep in mind what we might call axioms.² Applied to curriculum development, these could include “School curriculum not only reflects but is a product of its time” and “Curriculum changes made at an earlier period of time can exist concurrently with curriculum changes at a later period of time.” The same axioms are valid if we substitute the word *supervision* for *curriculum*.

Supervisory behaviors and practices are affected by political, social, religious, and industrial forces existent at the time. Furthermore, traces of supervisory behaviors and practices that existed in earlier days of our country can be found even today among highly divergent practices and behaviors. History is forever with us. However, supervision has come a long way since colonial days, as we can see in Table 1.1, which outlines the major periods in the historical development of supervision.

Not until the establishment of organized schools did the need for specialized school supervisors materialize. When parents, “dames,” and tutors instructed youngsters in the home, these people were, in effect, both teacher and supervisor, but as the population grew, early colonists realized that they needed some formal structure for the education of their young. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed the famed Old Deluder Law of 1647, which

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required communities with 50 or more families to provide instruction in reading and writing and communities with 100 or more families to establish a grammar school. Thus, educated young people would not be led astray by the Old Deluder, Satan. Note the powerful effect of the church on early education in the colonies. Though church and state are more or less separated today, strong controversy still exists about the role of religion in the public schools.³

As schools became established, local school committeemen fulfilled the function of supervisors by giving directions, checking for compliance with teaching techniques, and evaluating results of instruction by the teachers in their charge. In an authoritarian mode, early supervisors set strict requirements for their teachers and visited classrooms to observe how closely the teachers complied with stipulated instructions. Departure from these instructions was cause for dismissal.

TABLE 1.1 Major Periods In The Historical Development of Supervision

Period	Type of Supervision	Purpose	Persons Responsible
1620–1850	Inspection	Monitoring rules, looking for deficiencies	Parents, clergy, selectmen, citizens' committees
1850–1910	Inspection, instructional improvement	Monitoring rules, helping teachers improve	Superintendents, principals
1910–1930	Scientific, bureaucratic	Improving instruction and efficiency	Supervising principals, principals, general and special central-office supervisors, superintendents
1930–1950	Human relations, democratic	Improving instruction	Principals, central-office supervisors
1950–1975	Bureaucratic, scientific, clinical, human relations, human resources, democratic	Improving instruction	Principals, central-office supervisors, school-based supervisors
1975–1985	Scientific, clinical, human relations, human resources, collaborative/collegial, peer/coach/mentor, artistic, interpretive	Improving instruction, increasing teacher satisfaction, expanding students' understanding of classroom events	Principals, central-office supervisors, school-based supervisors, peer/coach/mentor
1985–present	Scientific, clinical, human relations, human resources, collaborative/collegial, peer/coach/mentor, artistic, interpretive, culturally responsive, ecological	Improving instruction, increasing teacher satisfaction, creating learning communities, expanding students' classroom events, analyzing cultural and linguistic patterns in the classroom	School-based supervisors, peer/coach/mentor, principals, central-office supervisors

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Even in the eighteenth century, school people were anxious to appear at their best when visited by selectmen. Walter Herbert Small observed that as early as 1733 schools provided a dinner for schoolmasters, selectmen, and certain public officials on the occasion of the selectmen's visit to their schools.⁴ Taking a cue from their eighteenth-century predecessors, today's school faculty, administrators, and board members commonly extend the hospitality of an initial breakfast or dinner meeting to visiting teams from regional accrediting associations.

Limited schooling, primarily for boys, was the prevailing pattern through most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Benjamin Franklin's Philadelphia Academy and Charitable School, which opened in 1751, extended the curriculum and provided opportunities not found in the earlier Latin grammar schools. A growing population necessitated more schools, and an expanding curriculum revealed the need for specialists in instructional supervision.

Universal public education for boys and girls, poor and rich, was a phenomenon of the nineteenth century. The common elementary school grew rapidly in the first half of the nineteenth century, imitating Prussian and military models of graded organization. Horace Mann, secretary of the Massachusetts State Board of Education from 1837 to 1848, pushed the cause of public schools and created the first normal school in the United States for training teachers. He defined the state's responsibility for public education. During the same period, Henry Barnard, first secretary of the Connecticut State Board of Education, was also promoting public education.

The number of high schools in the country grew rapidly, spurred by political, social, and educational developments of the time. Among these developments were the creation of the first high school in Boston in 1821, the Massachusetts law of 1827 requiring a high school with a two-month program in towns of 500 or more families, and the famous Kalamazoo, Michigan, case of 1874 that affirmed the right of communities to levy taxes for secondary education. New institutions, new programs, expanded student bodies, and increased population called for new ways of supervising instruction. Selectmen, citizens' committees, clergy, and parents gave way to trained educators.

In the nineteenth century, local committees began looking to professionally trained persons to administer and supervise the schools. As early as 1837, Buffalo, New York, and Louisville, Kentucky, employed school superintendents. By 1870, some twenty-nine school systems were headed by superintendents.⁵ Superintendents in the early nineteenth century spent considerable time visiting and supervising schools, although their focus changed from looking for deficiencies meriting dismissal of teachers to helping teachers overcome difficulties.

Inspection, often derided as "snoopervision," was the prevailing approach in the nineteenth century. The appeal to authority was very evident in the widely reproduced set of instructions to teachers in Harrison, South Dakota, in 1872, shown in Figure 1.1. To some extent school supervisors, or inspectors as they are called in other countries, continue to fulfill their tasks with an authoritarian approach. The classic illustration of this—although not entirely accurate—is France, of which it has often been said that the Minister of Education can tell on any day exactly where each teacher is in any textbook anywhere in the country. Such a situation implies a highly structured form of instruction and a very centralized system of supervision.

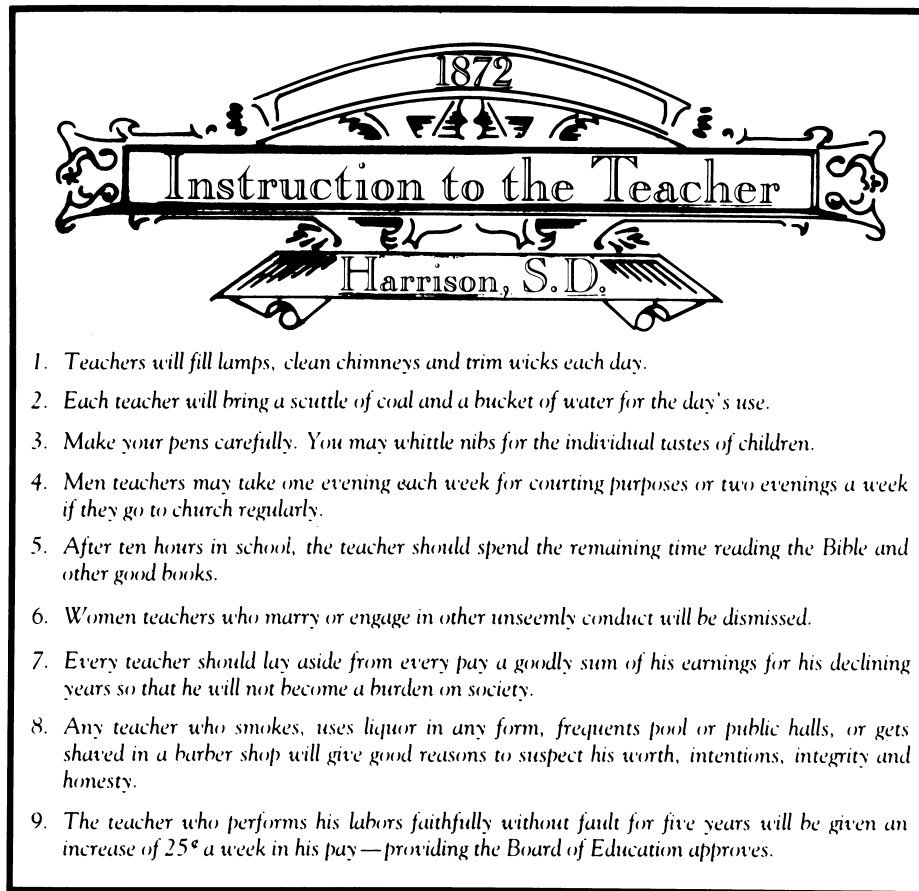


FIGURE 1.1 1872 Instruction to the Teacher. Source: Board of Education, Harrison, South Dakota, and Leo W. Anglin, Richard Goldman, and Joyce Shanahan Anglin, *Teaching: What It's All About* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), p. 11. Reprinted by permission of Board of Education, Harrison, South Dakota.

In America, we have no instructional inspectors in the foreign sense of the word. There are no inspectors from the U.S. Department of Education whose duty it is to check on teachers and schools. Some states do provide or have provided a limited type of inspection of teachers prior to full certification in a subject or grade level, but this is not particularly common. Even today, however, some individuals behave like inspectors, although their job specifications do not call for such behavior.

Our system of education does not begin to approach foreign systems in degree of centralization, but during the 1970s and 1980s we saw pronounced centralization at the state and school district levels. Some states either recommended or mandated minimal competencies or standards that students were (and to an increased degree still are) expected to achieve in certain subjects at each grade level. Some school districts, engaging in a process called curriculum alignment, specified detailed objectives that students were expected to master during

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each marking period in each subject. Learning activities and test items based on the objectives were designed for each marking period. In states that conducted student-assessment programs, local curriculum guides were keyed into the objectives assessed on the states' examinations. In the early 1990s, the movement toward centralization slackened somewhat, resulting in a degree of decentralization and empowerment of teachers and laypeople.⁶ At the beginning of the twenty-first century, however, we see a strong revival of centralization efforts, especially to be noted in the form of state and national standards and assessment programs.

As the population grew and schools increased in number, the superintendent could no longer supervise individual schools closely. In the late nineteenth century, principals and central office supervisors shared a major part of the burden of everyday supervision.

With the advent of the Industrial Revolution and the influence of people like Frederick W. Taylor and Max Weber in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, scientific and bureaucratic approaches to supervision replaced inspection. Scientific management and efficiency were buzzwords of the new approach. The assumption of these strategies was that if organizations followed established principles for efficiency, production would presumably be high. Supervisors had only to ensure the rigorous application of the principles.

While Taylor was expounding on scientific management, Weber was promoting the concept of bureaucratic management of organizations as the ideal model for achieving efficiency and productivity. The model provided for a hierarchy of authority and responsibility—from the chief executive officer at the top of the pinnacle to the lowliest worker at the bottom. The bureaucratic model became the pervasive organizational structure in all human institutions—business, industry, government, social organizations, church, and schools. In fact, the bureaucratic model has become so entrenched in our lives that *bureaucracy* has become, under some circumstances, a derogatory term.

Thus in the early part of the twentieth century, the bureaucratic model of organization became firmly rooted in our school systems with the superintendent at the top and the teacher at the bottom. In between came a whole echelon of generalist and specialist personnel. Although philosophies, attitudes, and operating procedures have changed since the early twentieth century, the bureaucratic model remains the dominant form of school organization despite predictions of an “emerging, pluralistic, collegial” concept of administrative organization⁷ and despite sporadic efforts by some organizations to apply principles of shared management as advocated by W. Edwards Deming.⁸

Describing the attitude of scientific managers during the early 1900s, William H. Lucio and John D. McNeil said that “teachers were regarded as instruments that should be closely supervised to insure that they mechanically carried out the methods of procedure determined by administrative and special supervisors.”⁹ “Scientific” supervisors look for fixed principles of teaching, drawn from research, that can be prescribed for teachers. The teachers' performances can then be judged on how well they follow the instructional principles in their teaching. To supervisors of this persuasion, teaching is a science rather than an art, and they believe that by following a prescribed set of rules, teachers are bound to be successful. Does this sound familiar to you in the new millennium?

Following research on instruction carried out through the 1960s and 1970s, many educators still perceive teaching as a science whose component skills—generic competencies—can be identified, learned, and mastered.

Under the influence of people like Elton Mayo, Mary Parker Follett, Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippitt, Ralph K. White, Kenneth D. Benne, Paul Sheats, and Warren G. Bennis in the mid-twentieth century, supervision turned in the direction of human relations and group dynamics. Stress on the democratic process and the application of the behavioral sciences commanded the attention of supervisors. No longer did supervision constitute handing down methods to teachers and then monitoring their performances. Collaboration and partnership between supervisors and teachers became important. Supervisors began to realize that their success was dependent more on interpersonal skills than on technical skills and knowledge; they had to become sensitive to the behavior of groups and individuals within groups. They became more aware that they must respond to needs as determined by the people they served—the teachers—as opposed to satisfying their own needs based on their supposedly superior judgments. The prefix *super-* of supervision declined in importance. The word *supervision* itself became modified by such words as *collaborative*, *cooperative*, *democratic*, and *consultative*. This change of focus has continued and intensified into the present.

What we are seeing today is an amalgamation of practices and attitudes. True, we can find holdovers of the inspection mentality and we can still encounter the boss–employee mind-set, but we are experiencing more cases of cooperation and collaboration between supervisors and teachers than in the past. We find a definite acceptance of the idea that instructional supervisors are employed to help teachers build on their strengths, improve, and remain in the profession instead of probing teachers' deficiencies and seeking their dismissal.

We are finding principles of scientific supervision within a clinical yet supportive context. Even within a scientific framework, supervisors place heavy reliance on human relations. We also note that teachers themselves are acting as instructional supervisors to their peers. We are also experiencing newer focuses of supervision—human resources, artistic, interpretive, and ecological approaches. We will return to these later in the text.

Before exploring the newer directions in instructional supervision, it is helpful to note that of the three older approaches mentioned, today's supervisors would reject the first two and minimize the third.

- **The Authoritarian-Inspectorial Approach.** Professional supervisors realize that teachers, as professionals, can be persuaded but not coerced; many times, they have better answers to their own problems than do the supervisors.
- **Laissez-faire.** To some, supervision is a laissez-faire task. Supervisors who are thus inclined agree with many teachers that in the case of supervision, less is better. Nondirective in their approach, they may visit the teachers' classrooms or stop by the teachers' lounge for a cup of coffee. They tend to consider a classroom visit and an appearance in the teachers' lounge as equally important; some might rate the chat in the lounge as more important. They see their task as giving the teacher a benevolent pat on the back now and then.
- **Group Dynamics.** To others, supervision is a never-ending exercise in group process. They see improvement of instruction as a continuing exercise in human relations. Viewing themselves as resource persons to the group, they spend considerable time fostering a positive group climate, using social affairs to establish a happy, cooperative frame of mind among teachers. They hope that after a period of deliberation, groups will reach consensus on points under discussion.

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Neither an authoritarian nor a laissez-faire approach is adequate or suitable for today's schools, nor is an exclusively group-process approach. Supervisors may favor group processes, but they will be called on to work with both groups and individuals. They must be mindful that many of the innovations in schools are products of experimentation by one or two individuals rather than groups.

VARYING INTERPRETATIONS

This discussion, however, still leaves us unsure of what supervision is or should be. To create a sharp, clear-cut definition of supervision is extremely difficult, as acknowledged by Ralph L. Mosher and David E. Purpel:

The difficulty of defining supervision in relation to education also stems, in large part, from unsolved theoretical problems about teaching. Quite simply, we lack sufficient understanding of the process of teaching. Our theories of learning are inadequate, the criteria for measuring teaching effectiveness are imprecise, and deep disagreement exists about what knowledge—that is, what curriculum—is most valuable to teach. . . . When we have achieved more understanding of what and how to teach, and with what special effects on students, we will be much less vague about the supervision of these processes.¹⁰

Looking at the way specialists in supervision have defined the term may help us in our quest for a viable definition. Let's sample some past and present definitions. William H. Burton and Leo J. Brueckner gave supervision a broad interpretation, viewing it as a technical service requiring expertise, the goal of which is improvement in the growth and development of the learner.¹¹

Stressing the helping nature of supervision, Jane Franseth early on stated, "Today supervision is generally seen as leadership that encourages a continuous involvement of all school personnel in a cooperative attempt to achieve the most effective school program."¹² Ross L. Neagley and N. Dean Evans pointed to the democratic nature of modern supervision in their definition:

Modern supervision is considered as any service for teachers that eventually results in improving instruction, learning, and the curriculum. It consists of positive, dynamic, democratic actions designed to improve instruction through the continued growth of all concerned individuals—the child, the teacher, the supervisor, the administrator, and the parent or other lay person.¹³

Contemporary definitions of supervision stress *service*, *cooperation*, and *democracy*. In this book, you will find the emphasis placed on *instructional* supervision. Harris wrote: "Supervision of instruction is what school personnel do with adults and things to maintain or change the school operation in ways that directly influence the teaching process employed to promote pupil learning."¹⁴ Robert J. Alfonso, Gerald R. Firth, and Richard F. Neville offered a slightly different definition: "Instructional supervision is herein defined as: Behavior officially designated by the organization that directly affects teacher behavior in such a way as to facilitate pupil learning and achieve the goals of the organization."¹⁵

John T. Lovell, in revising the earlier work of Kimball Wiles, looked at instructional supervisory behavior as behavior that "is assumed to be an additional behavior system

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formally provided by the organization for the purpose of interacting with the teaching behavior system in such a way as to maintain, change, and improve the design and actualization of learning opportunities for students.”¹⁶ Don M. Beach and Judy Reinhartz, rejecting the use of the word *help* in defining supervision, see “supervision as a complex process that involves working with teachers and other educators in a collegial, collaborative relationship to enhance the quality of teaching and learning within schools and that promotes the career-long development of teachers.”¹⁷

Note how many definitions focus on (1) the behavior of supervisors (2) in assisting teachers (3) for the ultimate benefit of the student. Robert D. Krey and Peter J. Burke offered a comprehensive definition of supervision:

Supervision is instructional leadership that relates perspectives to behavior, clarifies purposes, contributes to and supports organizational actions, coordinates interactions, provides for maintenance and improvement of the instructional program, and assesses goal achievements.¹⁸

Advocating the replacement of “supervision as it is now practiced” by what they refer to as “normative” supervision, Thomas J. Sergiovanni and Robert J. Starratt saw supervision as taking place in schools that are “true learning communities,” where values, norms, and ideas are shared by supervisors, teachers, and students.¹⁹

John C. Daresh and Marsha A. Playko offered a concise definition, viewing supervision as “the process of overseeing the ability of people to meet the goals of the organization in which they work.”²⁰

Jon Wiles and Joseph Bondi viewed supervision as “a general leadership role and a coordinating role among all school activities concerned with learning.”²¹

Emphasizing process and function of supervision rather than title or position for the purpose of improving student learning, Carl D. Glickman, Stephen P. Gordon, and Jovita M. Ross-Gordon pictured those in supervisory roles as applying “certain knowledge, interpersonal skills, and technical skills to the tasks of direct assistance, group development, curriculum development, professional development, and action research that will enable teachers to teach in a collective, purposeful manner uniting organizational goals and teacher needs.”²²

You will note recurring themes, some similarities, and some differences in emphasis or perspective among the many definitions of supervision.

Supervision, as presented in this text, is conceived as a service to teachers, both as individuals and in groups. To put it simply, supervision is a means of offering to teachers, in a collegial, collaborative, and professional setting, specialized help in improving instruction and thereby student achievement. The words service and help should be underscored, and they are used repeatedly in this text.

PROBLEMS THAT COMPLICATE THE SUPERVISORY ROLE

Definitions by themselves do not reveal the complexities of the supervisory role. Supervision today is complicated by a number of factors, including diversity of conceptions of supervision and good teaching, mandates from the state level, and tensions between teachers and administrators/supervisors.

12 CHAPTER 1 ROLES OF THE SCHOOL SUPERVISOR**Continuing Diversity of Conceptions of Supervision**

Realizing that the term *supervision* by itself is subject to many different interpretations, some specialists in the field have found it expedient to add modifiers. Thus in the literature we encounter *administrative*, *clinical*, *consultative*, *collaborative*, *developmental*, *differentiated*, *educational*, *general*, *instructional*, and *peer*. Each of the adjectives offers a special interpretation of the term *supervision*.

Administrative supervision covers the territory of managerial responsibilities outside the fields of curriculum and instruction. *General supervision* is perceived by some as synonymous with *educational supervision* and by others as that type of supervision that takes place outside the classroom. *Differentiated supervision* allows teachers to choose the types of developmental activities in which they will engage.

Whereas *educational supervision* suggests responsibilities encompassing many aspects of schooling, including administration, curriculum, and instruction, *instructional supervision* narrows the focus to a more limited set of responsibilities, namely, supervision for the improvement of instruction. *Clinical*, *consultative*, *collaborative*, *developmental*, and *peer supervision* are subsumed under *instructional supervision*.

Whether the supervisor perceives teaching as a science or as an art further colors the supervisor's role. The supervisor who follows a scientific approach believes that generic teaching skills can be identified and that all teachers at all levels should be able to demonstrate them. Such a supervisor believes that those skills can be described, observed, and analyzed. The supervisor who follows an artistic approach believes that teaching is a highly individualized activity that bears the stamp of the teacher's unique personality. This type of supervisor believes that the entire setting for instruction, the persons involved in the teaching act, and the general atmosphere of the classroom must be considered.

Some specialists would maintain that supervisors should devote all or most of their emphasis to a single approach or type of supervision. Others, including ourselves, see room for a more eclectic approach. We return to varying conceptions of supervision in later chapters of the book.

Differing Conceptions of Effective Teaching

Some specialists ascribe difficulty in defining *supervision*, as did Mosher and Purpel, to a lack of understanding of the teaching process, impreciseness of the criteria for assessing teacher performance, and lack of agreement on what should be taught.²³ Those who follow an interpretive or hermeneutic approach to supervision look at the unique characteristics of a particular learning situation and, with the teacher, seek to interpret the events that have taken place during a lesson. Some supervisors look at *process*, that is, the demonstration of teaching skills. Some focus on *product*, such as test scores of students. Others include the teacher's personal and professional attributes in their description of effective teaching. Certain supervisors are partial to particular models and styles of teaching. Some smile, for example, on discovery learning and frown on lecturing. Some favor direct instruction of entire groups, some champion cooperative learning, and others advocate individualized instructional techniques.

These differing conceptions of what constitutes effective teaching make the supervisory process difficult for both the teacher and the supervisor. Many research studies on effective teaching have been conducted in recent years. These studies furnish partial answers to some

of the pedagogical questions. They do not, however, provide answers to differing philosophical premises held by supervisors. We will discuss some of that research in Chapter 4.

Mandates from the State Level

Over the past three decades, many state legislatures have passed laws calling for sweeping reforms in public education. They have raised teacher salaries, mandated state testing of teachers, instituted on-the-job assessment, established student-assessment programs, prescribed aspects of the curriculum, and ordered annual evaluations of all school personnel. State departments of education have implemented and administered the many reforms mandated by their legislatures and state boards of education.

Although room has remained for some local decision making, increased direction from the state level has certainly reduced the flexibility of local school systems to make decisions based on their assessment of local needs and on their own philosophies of education. Local school systems have had to give priority to state mandates. After meeting state requirements, they may and often do go beyond the state directives.

The supervisor's role is heavily affected by state mandates: by state tests for both teachers and students, by state model instruments for evaluating teachers, by state-developed curriculum guides, and by state specification of teaching competencies. Supervisors who are in disagreement with state reforms are faced with intrarole conflicts. State assessments of student achievement, for example, are almost exclusively cognitive in nature. The supervisor who has a commitment to affective and psychomotor as well as cognitive learning will feel uncomfortable with testing restricted to only the cognitive domain. Nevertheless, the supervisor owes it to the teachers to help them produce high student test scores. State mandates have established priorities for local school personnel, including supervisors. For a brief period, state mandating peaked, and the responsibility for administration, supervision, curriculum, and instruction shifted more to the local schools. Movements toward decentralization, including site-based or school-based management, teacher empowerment, and parental participation in decision making, placed more responsibility and authority on the individual schools and less on the district and state levels. However, as the first decade of the twenty-first century unfolds, we are seeing renewed stress (in both its meanings of "emphasis" and "tension") on setting standards and testing coming from the district and state levels, and, as is the case of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the national level.

Tensions between Teachers and Administrators/Supervisors

The public and, to an increasing degree, the profession have expressed dissatisfaction with student achievement and with incompetent teaching. Increased emphasis on student achievement, accountability of teachers, and teacher competence have brought about increased pressure for evaluation of teacher performance. Consequently, evaluation of teaching has loomed large in recent years.

Teachers, especially through their organizations, have not wholeheartedly embraced current processes of evaluation. They have raised valid questions concerning the competencies on which they will be judged, who will do the evaluating, how the evaluation will be conducted, and what use will be made of the results.

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Teachers question the reliability of the data collected on their performances and the competence of the administrators or supervisors in making assessments. Furthermore, they want to be involved in the creation of the evaluation process.

The inability to separate supervisory service from evaluation, an issue addressed in Chapter 2, adds to the tensions. Teachers, as a rule, welcome real supervisory help. Yet many of them view supervisors with contempt, feeling, sometimes rightly and sometimes wrongly, that teachers are more capable than supervisors or that supervisors have nothing of value to offer them. Many teachers simply ignore supervisors, choose not to ask for their help, and avoid opportunities to work with them.

Many years ago, Arthur Blumberg pictured the tensions between supervisors and teachers as a “private cold war.”²⁴ To some extent progress in empowerment of teachers, human relations skills, and principles of collegiality and collaboration have reduced conflicts between supervisors and teachers but have not completely eliminated them.

Negative, fearful, or hostile attitudes are symptoms of the malaise brought on by uncertainties about the role, function, and effectiveness of the supervisory profession. Great needs exist to clarify duties and responsibilities of supervisors, to discover the most effective techniques and skills, and to identify who the supervisors are.

WHO ARE THE SUPERVISORS?

In the traditional meaning of supervision, anyone who oversees the work of another is a supervisor. Hence, every administrator is ipso facto a supervisor. If we limit the concept of supervision to management of resources and personnel, we are on firm ground in labeling the administrator a supervisor. But if we delimit supervision to the means of improving the curriculum and instruction, we may not conclude that every administrator is an instructional supervisor.

Logically, it would seem that any school official who assists teachers in improving curriculum and instruction is a supervisor. In practice, however, some individuals in the school system are charged with the management of resources and personnel as their primary task, whereas others are assigned the improvement of curriculum and instruction as their major function.

Many arguments are waged over whether the building principal, for example, is a supervisor. Although principals have responsibility for the curriculum and instruction of the school, supervision of those aspects is only one of their many tasks. Unfortunately, instructional supervision is often a secondary task for many school principals, who commonly lament that they do not have time to devote to curriculum and instructional leadership because they are too busy with the day-to-day operation of the school.

We hasten to add that in those small schools throughout the country that employ several teachers and a principal with no one to assist him or her, the principals do, by necessity if not by desire, perform the function of instructional supervisor. We might more accurately refer to those principals by a title used in earlier days, *supervising principals*, to distinguish them from *instructional supervisors*. We are witnessing, however, a desire for change, if not change itself, in the role of the building principal—from manager to instructional supervisor. The profession has begun to recognize the individual school as the locus of change, placing responsibility for instructional leadership squarely on the principal. Though some principals will continue to

devote less time to instructional supervision than to other duties and may, if possible, delegate much of the task to others, more principals are accepting responsibility for the role of instructional supervisor. Developments, such as state-mandated curricula, evaluation systems, merit pay, and career ladder programs, further push the principal into fulfilling instructional supervisory responsibilities.

“By their fruits ye shall know them” is more pertinent in the world of supervision than “by their titles ye shall know them.” Controversy swirls around the issue, which we examine in Chapter 2, concerning whether supervisors should assume administrative responsibilities. We should note at this point that the issue is not ordinarily reversed—that is, there is seldom discussion of whether administrators should assume supervisory responsibilities. For both legal and practical reasons, administrators already have these responsibilities.

As we try to identify supervisors, it might be helpful to depict the degree to which administrators and supervisors take on the role of guiding instructional improvement. Figure 1.2 illustrates how we can chart varying degrees of supervisory responsibility.

A full-time administrator (e.g., superintendent of schools; many principals, especially of large schools) is deep into budgeting, transportation, staffing, pupil personnel services, and public relations. He or she devotes little or no time to curricular and instructional supervision but delegates that duty to others. Some administrators, however, although preoccupied with managerial problems, expend some time and energy on instructional supervisory activities. They may visit—and in many cases they are required by law to visit—teachers in their classrooms, observe their teaching, make judgments, and offer advice. When they behave in this fashion, administrators become supervisors, if only for a portion of their time.

Some school personnel who by job description are classified as supervisors are charged with or assume on their own initiative administrative duties such as annual assessments of teacher performance. When they accept managerial tasks, they join the ranks of the administrators. Finally, those personnel who spend all of their time and efforts in helping teachers directly with the improvement of instruction may be called full-time instructional supervisors. Thus, with a nod to Izaak Walton, we have the Compleat Administrator on one side of the spectrum and the Compleat Supervisor on the other.

Types of Supervisors

The American system of education is a confusing diversity of systems that confounds people from abroad who attempt to study it. In fact, at times our system even perplexes Americans. This confusion extends to the provision of special services like supervision.

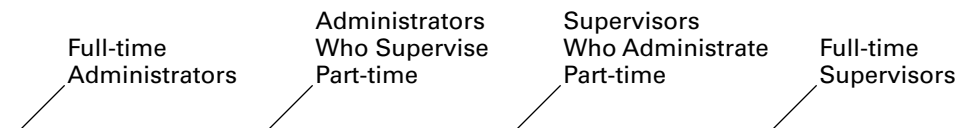


FIGURE 1.2 Continuum of Supervisory Responsibility.

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In this book, we talk about a person whom we call the supervisor. Unless otherwise specified, we are talking about the instructional supervisor. In agreement with many specialists, we include curriculum supervision within the context of instructional supervision.

Because of the great diversity in roles and duties of supervisors, we urge the reader to keep in mind the distinction between the *supervisor*, with *supervisor* emphasized, and the supervisor, with *the* emphasized. In discussing the *supervisor* we make the assumption that principles and practices of supervision may apply *generally, to most but not all situations and not to all persons* who wear the hat of supervisor. This book concentrates on the *supervisor*. Were we to talk about *the* supervisor, we would be conveying the erroneous notion that there is a single, accepted role that supervisors can, do, or should play. The effort to identify a single role applicable under all circumstances is akin to searching for that elusive will-o'-the-wisp, the best model of teaching.

Supervisors are special service personnel to be found on the staffs of administrators at the state, district, and school levels. In administrative parlance these service personnel are *staff* employees, whereas the administrators, equipped with the mantles of status and authority, are *line* employees. Staff employees are hired by and responsible to the line employees. Line employees below the top position (e.g., superintendent) are hired by and responsible to other line employees higher up in the chain of command.

Supervisors are often referred to as auxiliary personnel or staff. Although titles and responsibilities of these auxiliary personnel differ from state to state and from school district to school district, we can identify the major types of supervisors. Figure 1.3 shows some of the varieties of supervisors on different levels. Included among the types of supervisors are administrators who spend a portion of their time in supervising instruction as well as full-time supervisors. Figure 1.3 also distinguishes generalist supervisors, whose duties cut across disciplines and grade levels, from specialist supervisors, whose responsibilities fall within a subject or grade level.

State Supervisors The chief supervisor on the state level is the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. Although this position may bear other titles, this person's responsibility is to supervise the entire curricular and instructional program of the public schools in the state, with the help of staff members. The assistant superintendent interprets state department of education and state legislative mandates concerning education and is directly responsible to the state superintendent of public instruction. The assistant superintendent's office frequently directs teachers in the preparation of certain curricular materials and often supervises textbook adoptions. That office also provides consultant service to the schools, sponsors conferences on curriculum and instruction, and acts as liaison with the federal government in the preparation of proposals for grants for federal projects. This office encourages experimentation in curriculum design and instructional techniques.

The assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction is aided by a staff of specialists who may be designated supervisors, directors, consultants, or coordinators. Frequently these include specialists in curriculum and instruction, such as directors or supervisors of elementary, middle, and secondary education. These staff members aid in fulfilling the assistant superintendent's tasks. They generally confine themselves, however, to providing leadership at their own levels.

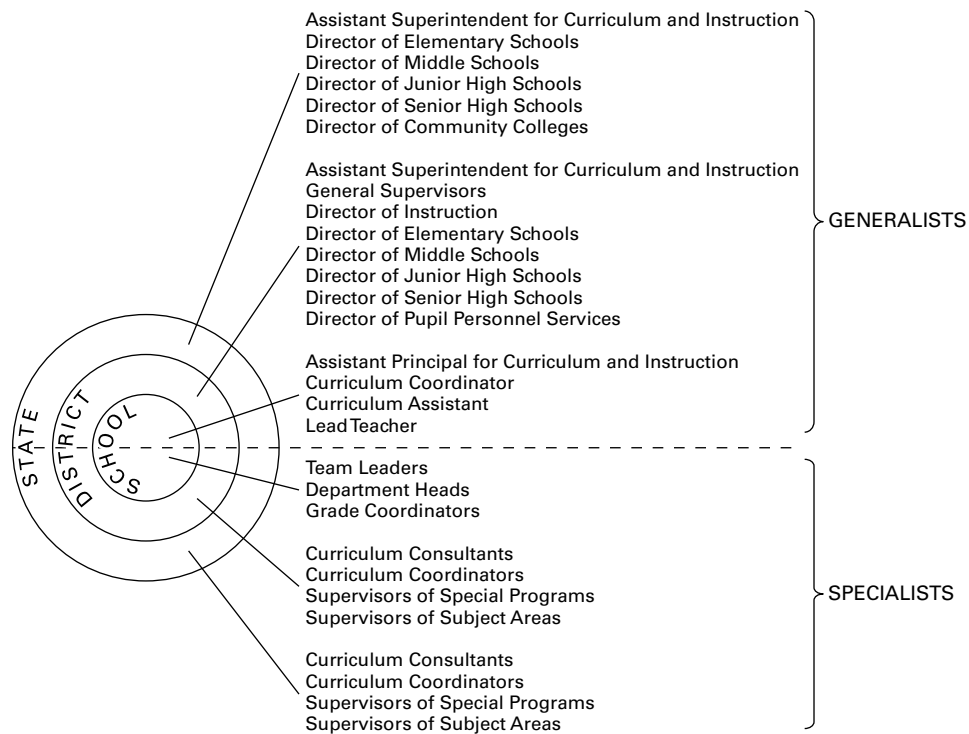


FIGURE 1.3 Types of Supervisors.

Well-developed state departments of education provide a variety of specialists in particular areas or disciplines, such as exceptionalities, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. These supervisors operate throughout the state in their own areas of specialization, assisting teachers, suggesting materials, giving advice, and demonstrating effective methods of teaching their specialties. They are generally responsible to the director of elementary education or director of middle schools, junior high schools, or senior high schools, depending on their level of responsibility. We sometimes find, for example, a supervisor of elementary language arts and a supervisor of secondary language arts on the assistant superintendent's staff.

Local Supervisors The presence and effectiveness of the supervisor is felt more keenly on the local than on the state level. The state supervisors' areas are so large and responsibilities so many that they cannot possibly make the rounds of all the schools and teachers demanding services. Consequently, local supervisors become key people in the school system.

District Level On the school-district level, supervisors are on the staff of the local school superintendent. They are referred to in the literature and in practice as central-office personnel, a designation that distinguishes them from school-based personnel employed to serve in particular schools.

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On the central-office staff, customarily an assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction or sometimes a director of instruction provides curricular and instructional leadership throughout the local district. This key local official aids teachers in developing materials, encourages experimentation and research, provides schools with up-to-date materials and consultants, leads the district in the continuous task of curriculum development, and meets with teachers and administrators on problems of curriculum and instruction.

Helping the assistant superintendent are personnel of various types. Often these include one or more general supervisors, responsible for supervision from kindergarten through twelfth grade. They are frequently in the schools assisting individual teachers and groups of teachers in a variety of fields. These persons are familiar with learning theory, adolescent psychology, methods of handling groups and individuals, and new ways to organize for instruction. Some of the smaller school districts limit their central-office personnel to positions of this type.

Larger school systems employ supervisors or directors of elementary, middle, and secondary education. Whereas the general supervisor must be spread thin over the entire school system, these three specialists may concentrate on their individual levels.

Large school districts often provide a variety of supervisors or consultants in special fields, such as reading, guidance, foreign languages, and vocational education. Some of the special-area supervisors divide their time between the elementary, middle, and secondary levels as, for example, in art, music, and physical education; others confine their work to one level. These specialists are in a strategic position for effecting change in individual classrooms. They have expertise in a particular field and may devote their full time and energies to the development of curriculum and instruction in their specialties. They can be knowledgeable about the latest content, materials, and methods in their fields.

School Level Within the individual schools of a district are people who could be labeled supervisors. Often a school will employ an assistant principal whose main duty is the supervision of curriculum and instruction. This person devotes full energies to developing the curriculum of his or her own school and helping teachers improve instruction.

Curriculum coordinators or lead teachers are sometimes found in the individual schools either as assistants to or replacements for the assistant principal for curriculum and instruction. Their task is to assist teachers with curricular and instructional problems and to give leadership to the development of the curriculum and the improvement of instruction.

Team leaders, grade coordinators, and department heads in the individual schools can, should, and sometimes do serve as supervisors. With the team-staffing patterns followed by many schools, the person who heads an instructional team plays a significant role as supervisor for that team. The department head in middle, junior high, and senior high schools fulfills for a department a supervisory function similar to that fulfilled by the team leader. Because elementary schools are ordinarily not departmentalized, the grade coordinators for all sections of a grade level and the team leaders for each section of a grade level serve as quasi-department heads who carry supervisory responsibilities. In middle, junior high, and senior high schools, we may find both team leaders and department heads, with team leaders within departments responsible to the department heads.

School-based supervisors should lead in curriculum development, assist teachers in the production of instructional and curricular materials, arrange for staff development, and help

teachers improve their teaching methods. Principals have the obligation of freeing their coordinators and leaders so that they will not become bogged down, as so often happens, with either administrative details of running their grades, teams, or departments or with full-time teaching schedules. These activities can prohibit them from giving adequate time to instructional and curricular leadership. Newer practices in supervision enlist the services of peers, coaches, and mentors in the process to help avoid this overload.

Unlike state supervisors, whose interaction with district-based and school-based supervisors is infrequent, central-office supervisors work frequently and collaboratively with school-based supervisors and teachers to assist in achieving district goals.

You may question whether those personnel shown in Figure 1.3 who hold line or administrative positions are truly supervisors—for example, the assistant superintendents and directors on both state and district levels who often work only minimally with teachers. The assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction and frequently the directors on the local district level occupy line rather than staff positions. Depending on the school district, line personnel may or may not work directly with teachers. In Figure 1.3, however, these line officials are classified as supervisors because they devote at least part of their time to supervisory duties. Whereas some specialists in supervision restrict their concept of a supervisor to those staff persons who work full-time directly with teachers, others include within their concept line officers who have responsibilities for curriculum and instruction. Because many line administrators do engage in supervision, they should be trained in supervision as are those who pursue full-time careers in supervision. It is an unfortunate commentary on the licensing process in many states that the requirements for preparation of administrators and supervisors, which are often minimal, are identical. By taking a handful of college courses in educational administration and supervision, a person can become certified in both administration and supervision.

However delightful such an arrangement is for prospective administrators and supervisors, as one preparation program opens up two job markets, differentiation in training programs for administrators and supervisors remains a serious need of the profession. The training requirements of these two related careers are not identical.

TASKS OF SUPERVISION

We can gain a clearer insight into the field of supervision by focusing our attention on what supervisors actually do. As long ago as 1922, William H. Burton listed the tasks he saw as pertinent to the supervisor. These tasks, which some might label *arenas*, are shown here:

1. The improvement of the teaching act.
2. The improvement of teachers in service.
3. The selection and organization of subject matter.
4. Testing and measuring.
5. The rating of teachers.²⁵

Burton's listing has been viewed as "the first modern statement and concept" of supervision.²⁶ This list looks surprisingly current when we examine the numerous tasks that today's supervisors actually perform.

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Writing a half century later, Harris enumerated ten tasks of supervision in the following rather detailed list:

- Task 1. Developing curriculum.
- Task 2. Organizing for instruction.
- Task 3. Providing staff.
- Task 4. Providing facilities.
- Task 5. Providing materials.
- Task 6. Arranging for in-service education.
- Task 7. Orienting staff members.
- Task 8. Relating special pupil services.
- Task 9. Developing public relations.
- Task 10. Evaluating instruction.²⁷

Harris classified tasks 1, 3, and 4 as preliminary; 6 and 10 as developmental; and the others as operational.²⁸ You will note both similarities and differences in the Burton and Harris listings. We can find supervision specialists who would be willing to accept either compilation of supervisory tasks. On the other hand, we can find experts in the field who would reject both lists. Those who view supervision as a one-to-one, clinical relationship between the teacher and supervisor would eliminate many of the tasks from both lists. Those who view supervision as a field distinct from administration would delegate administrative tasks like scheduling, staffing, and public relations to the administrator rather than to the instructional supervisor.

Holding that “traditional supervisory practices of helping and evaluating individual workers” are “no longer useful except with respect to contract decisions,” Karolyn J. Snyder viewed the supervisor’s task in the following light:

The primary supervisory task is to develop professional learning communities, in work teams, that not only acquire new knowledge and skills but also learn how to study and respond exceptionally well to their natural work and learning environments.²⁹

Snyder perceived “the new work of the supervisor” as “building the energy mass, school by school and team by team.”³⁰

What is more revealing about the roles and functions of supervisors are the statements of expectations as shown in job descriptions of various school personnel. Were we to compare job descriptions across school systems, we would inevitably discover differences in the duties assigned to personnel with the same titles. What is universally true throughout school systems, however, is that much is expected of all supervisors.

A MODEL OF SUPERVISION

The supervisor plays a variety of roles within certain domains, and the expertise demonstrated in the particular domains is derived from a number of bases or foundations. One way to explain the dimensions of supervisory behavior is in the form of a conceptual model. Figure 1.4 depicts the concept of supervision followed in this text.

The model shows three large domains or territories within which supervisors work (instructional development, curriculum development, and staff development) and the four primary roles of the supervisor within those domains (coordinator, consultant, group leader, and evaluator). The domains and roles rest on a foundation—the supervisor's knowledge and skills.

The model conveys the notion that supervision is both service-oriented and dynamic. The supervisor serves teachers dynamically by playing all or any of the roles within all or any of the domains. The two-headed arrows connecting the three domains show that all are interrelated. For example, a supervisor who works as a group leader in curriculum development (say, in mathematics) may at the same time work in the domain of instructional development (e.g., by helping teachers try out new techniques of presenting geometric concepts) and/or the domain of staff development (e.g., by conducting seminars on new techniques).

A conceptual model can clearly reveal the concepts held by the person who designs it. Thus one could take this same basic design but follow a different set of assumptions. Some people, for example, might take issue with the three domains, cut them into one or two, or expand them beyond three. They might eliminate supervisory duties in curriculum development, leaving only instructional development and staff development. They might restrict supervision to instructional development and limit it to clinical supervision. They might remove instructional development as well as curriculum development, allowing only staff development to remain (e.g., if they feel that staff development means assistance to teachers in improving both personal and professional qualities, then instructional development becomes a by-product or part of staff development). In restricting the domain of supervision to staff development alone, these people might perceive the roles of the supervisor as dual: consultant to individual teachers and consultant to groups of teachers. Some might go even further and restrict the supervisor to one role: consultant to individual teachers, or simply trusted colleague.

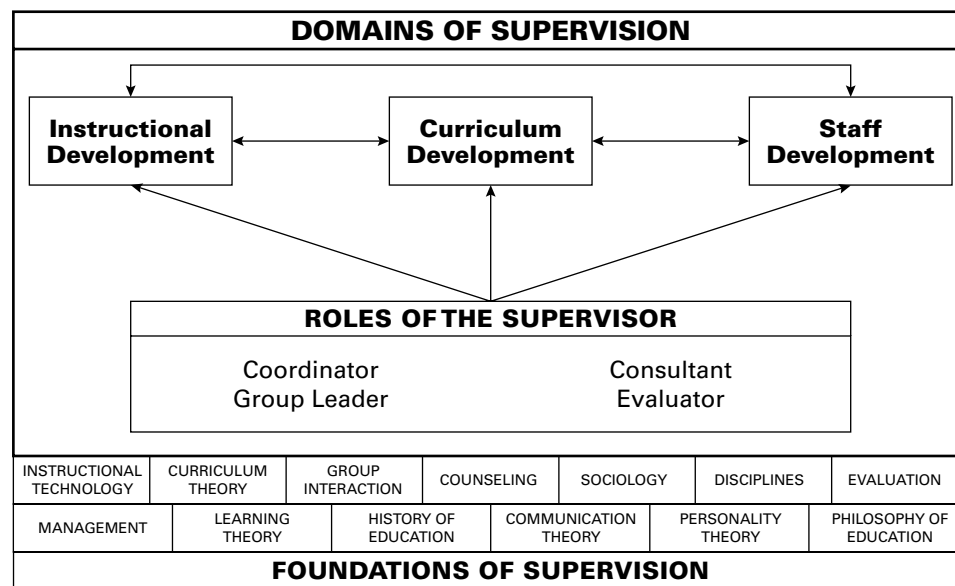


FIGURE 1.4 A Conceptual Model of Supervision.

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In presenting the model of supervision shown here, we have taken the position that supervisors do and should work in all three domains and carry out at least the four roles. This model can also accommodate the required administrative functions of supervisory personnel, through the four roles already charted. In contrast, whereas this text presents a generalized supervisory model, Bernadette Marczely offered a differentiated conception of supervision encompassing a number of models from which supervisors may choose on a “case-by-case basis.”³¹

Domains of Supervision

As we’ve seen, the supervisor exercises various roles within each of three domains: instructional, curricular, and staff development. That is, the supervisor acts as coordinator, consultant, group leader, and evaluator to assist teachers in the improvement of instruction, curriculum planning, and personal and professional growth and development. In doing so, the supervisor must bring to bear a wide repertoire of knowledge and skills. Floyd C. Mann referred to the skills needed by supervisors as a “skill-mix,” consisting of technical, managerial, and human relations skills.³² Alfonso, Firth, and Neville have also given attention to the skill-mix necessary to instructional supervision.³³

Edward Pajak headed a study on identification of supervisory proficiencies sponsored by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. By reviewing the literature on supervision and surveying instructional leaders, Pajak affirmed twelve domains, with relevant knowledge, attitudes, and skills in each domain.³⁴ These domains and their definitions are as follows:

- Community Relations—Establishing and maintaining open and productive relations between the school and its community;
- Staff Development—Developing and facilitating meaningful opportunities for professional growth;
- Planning and Change—Initiating and implementing collaboratively developed strategies for continuous improvement;
- Communication—Ensuring open and clear communication among individuals and groups through the organization;
- Curriculum—Coordinating and integrating the process of curriculum development and implementation;
- Instructional Program—Supporting and coordinating efforts to improve the instructional program;
- Service to Teachers—Providing materials, resources, and assistance to support teaching and learning;
- Observation and Conferencing—Providing feedback to teachers based on classroom observation;
- Problem Solving and Decision Making—Using a variety of strategies to clarify and analyze problems and to make decisions;
- Research and Program Evaluation—Encouraging experimentation and assessing outcomes;
- Motivating and Organizing—Helping people to develop a shared vision and achieve collective aims;
- Personal Development—Recognizing and reflecting upon one’s personal and professional beliefs, abilities, and action.³⁵

Eleven of these twelve domains—essentially ways of working with individuals and groups within the schools—are discussed in this volume. The external aspects of the supervisor's job—that is, community relations, which is certainly an important domain not only for supervisors but also for administrators, teachers, and other school personnel—find less treatment here. For help in the domain of community relations, the reader should consult some of the literature on public relations, building community support, and power structure.³⁶ Building positive community relations is extremely important for every school person. However, the designated administrator should assume the primary task of leadership in community relations and allow the instructional supervisor to concentrate on the task for which he or she is uniquely equipped: service to teachers.

Varying Roles

The roles supervisors play vary from locality to locality and from state to state. They are defined by the superintendents or principals to whom the supervisors are responsible and, as happens in most positions of leadership, by the supervisors themselves. Although some variation will be found in the roles supervisors may fulfill, more than likely the service-oriented supervisor will perform at varying times each of the four roles shown in the model.³⁷

Coordinator The supervisor serves as a coordinator of programs, groups, materials, and reports. It is the supervisor who acts as a link between programs and people. He or she knows the disparate pieces of the educational process and directs the actions of others to make the pieces blend. As a director of staff development, the supervisor plans, arranges, evaluates, and often conducts in-service programs with and for teachers.

Consultant The supervisor serves in a consulting capacity as a specialist in curriculum, instructional methodology, and staff development. In this capacity, he or she renders service to both individual teachers and groups. At times, the supervisor may simply furnish necessary information and suggestions. At other times, he or she may help teachers define, set, and pursue goals. The supervisor should be a prime source of assistance to teachers wishing to improve either their generic or specialized teaching skills. Though some will disagree with us, we believe the supervisor-consultant should be able to demonstrate a repertoire of teaching strategies.

Group Leader The supervisor as group leader works continuously to release the potential of groups seeking to improve the curriculum, instruction, or themselves. To perform this role the supervisor must be knowledgeable about group dynamics and must demonstrate leadership skills. The supervisor assists groups in consensus building, in moving toward group goals, and in perfecting the democratic process. As a group leader, the supervisor seeks, identifies, and fosters leadership from within the group.

Evaluator As an evaluator, the supervisor provides assistance to teachers in evaluating instruction and curriculum. The supervisor helps teachers find answers to curricular and instructional problems, identify research studies that may have a bearing on their problems, and conduct limited research projects. Additionally, the supervisor helps teachers evaluate their classroom performance, assess their own strengths and weaknesses, and select means of overcoming their deficiencies.

24 CHAPTER 1 ROLES OF THE SCHOOL SUPERVISOR**Foundations of Supervision**

The foundations of supervision (see Figure 1.4) are areas of learning from which the supervisor derives expertise. The large number of areas from which a knowledgeable and skilled supervisor must draw suggests the need for a broad training program in preparation for work as a supervisor.

When we study the conceptual model of supervision, with its domains, roles, and foundations, we can deduce competencies that supervisors should be able to demonstrate. Supervisors should possess (1) certain personal traits and (2) certain types of knowledge and skills.

Personal Traits The literature on supervision is remarkably silent on what personal characteristics are necessary for successful supervisory behavior. Perhaps this silence can be attributed to one or more of the following reasons.

1. Personal characteristics can be inferred from the skills supervisors should possess. Thus, if supervisors are expected to demonstrate a high degree of skill in human or interpersonal relations, they should exhibit human and humane traits like empathy, warmth, and sincerity.
2. Educational research has been notably unsuccessful in identifying personal qualities common to all successful administrators and supervisors. The presence of generally valued personal traits in a leader does not guarantee success on the job, nor does the absence of these traits ensure failure. Because the search for universal traits has been unproductive, the experts have concentrated on the more certain requisite knowledge and skills.
3. Personal traits necessary for success in positions of leadership appear so obvious that they need no elaboration. Some specialists in the field may feel that a compendium of supervisory traits is similar to the oath that Boy Scouts take, promising to be trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, and so on.
4. The search for personal traits is a somewhat dated activity at a time when researchers are attempting to identify competencies that school personnel should demonstrate.

Nevertheless, despite these encumbrances, let's briefly consider the question of personal characteristics needed by supervisory personnel. The successful supervisor is in constant contact with people and should possess those personal traits of warmth, friendliness, patience, and a sense of humor that are essential not only to supervision but also to teaching. As a service-oriented agent for improvement, the supervisor must be imbued with the spirit counselors refer to as "the helping relationship," the desire to give of oneself to be of assistance to others. Beyond this, the supervisor needs the kind of persuasiveness and infectious enthusiasm that inspires teachers to want to make changes for the better.

The supervisor should be an "idea person," one who leads people to think about new and improved ways of doing things. He or she needs to convey the attitude of valuing and seeking the ideas of others while not appearing to have answers to all the problems teachers face.

The supervisor who is a helper to teachers is able to effect a democratic environment in which the contributions of each participating member are valued. Above all, the supervisor needs to possess a predisposition to change and must constantly promote improvement. If

supervisors, whose chief responsibility is to bring about improvements, are satisfied with the status quo, they can be sure that the teachers will be, too. The supervisor must be able to live with change and help teachers adapt to the changing needs of society and of children and youth. To accomplish this mission, the supervisor should be able to work effectively in both one-to-one relationships and in groups.

Knowledge and Skills Although personal traits of supervisors are not often discussed, we can find an abundance of statements about the knowledge and skills successful supervisors need. There is general agreement that supervisors should have

- A sound general education program.
- A thorough preservice professional education program.
- A major field of study.
- A solid graduate program in supervision.
- Three to five years of successful teaching at the elementary, middle, or secondary school level.

In preservice and in-service training programs, supervisors should develop a grounding in

- Learning theory and educational psychology.
- Philosophy of education.
- History of education, especially of curriculum and instructional development.
- The role of the school in society.
- Curriculum development.
- Instructional design and methods.
- Group dynamics.
- Conferencing and counseling.
- Assessment of teacher performance.

Lovell and Wiles pointed to necessary knowledge and skills when they wrote that supervision is

- Releasing human potential
- Leadership
- Communications
- Coordinating and facilitating change
- Curriculum development
- Facilitating human development.³⁸

Alfonso, Firth, and Neville drew implications for instructional supervisory behavior from organization leadership, communication, decision making, and change theories.³⁹

Read the table of contents of any textbook on supervision and you will see the broad knowledge and special skills demanded by the profession. To identify knowledge and skills required for effective supervision, we may also turn to Figure 1.4 and analyze the domains, roles, and foundations presented in the conceptual model. To perform effectively, the supervisor must possess broad knowledge of both a general and professional nature and be able to

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translate that knowledge into skillful practice. At appropriate points in this book, you will encounter further discussion of the knowledge and skills essential to instructional supervisors.

People considering the job of supervisor might begin by taking a look at themselves. They should decide whether they possess the fund of knowledge and skills required by the job. Prospective supervisors should ponder whether they have the personality for dealing with teachers in a supervisory capacity. They should know whether they enjoy working intimately with people in a helping relationship. A beginning point in supervision is the determination by the prospective supervisor of his or her adequacy to fill the roles demanded.

SUMMARY

The roles and titles of supervisory personnel vary among the school systems of the nation. *Supervision* is defined in this text as a service provided to teachers for the purpose of improving instruction, with the student as the ultimate beneficiary.

A supervisor is a trained auxiliary or staff person whose primary function is the provision of service according to a conceptual model. The model presented in this chapter portrays the supervisor as fulfilling the roles of coordinator, consultant, group leader, and evaluator within the domains of instructional, curricular, and staff development.

The supervisor should possess personal traits that will enable him or her to work harmoniously with people and sufficient knowledge and skills to perform all functions effectively. Leadership, interpersonal, and communications skills appear to be especially important to successful supervision. Supervisors should possess a judicious mix of technical, managerial, and human relations skills.

Supervisors perform a wide variety of tasks, which may or may not include administrative duties. The focus of this book is on instructional supervision, which is an inclusive term to signify service to teachers in developing the curriculum, instruction, and themselves.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Are there other domains of supervision besides those shown in Figure 1.4 or cited from the Pajak study?
2. Do supervisors have roles besides those shown in Figure 1.4?
3. Are there other foundations of supervision besides those shown in Figure 1.4?
4. How would you describe the current state of instructional supervision?
5. Are there too many supervisors in our school systems? Support your response.

ACTIVITIES FOR FURTHER STUDY

REFLECTIVE

1. Cite at least four definitions of supervision to be found in the bibliography of this chapter, show their similarities and differences, state whether you agree or disagree with each definition, and give reasons for your position.

ACTIVITIES FOR FURTHER STUDY 27

2. Formulate your own definition of supervision.
3. State your position on the following questions:
 - a. Is the principal a supervisor? Why or why not?
 - b. Would our system of education be better if the U.S. Department of Education employed inspectors to check on instruction throughout the country? Give reasons for your answer.
 - c. Would our system of education be better if state departments of education regularly sent out inspectors to check on instruction throughout their states? Why or why not?
 - d. How much teaching experience is essential for a person to be an effective supervisor?
4. Write a short paper, using references in the bibliography at the end of this chapter, expanding on the list of qualifications of supervisors discussed in the chapter.
5. Write a short paper, using references in the bibliography at the end of this chapter, expanding on the functions, roles, or tasks of supervisors discussed in the chapter. See, for example, Beach and Reinhartz, pp. 16–18 (see bibliography) on roles of the supervisor.
6. Following the concept of a skill-mix, list specific (a) technical, (b) managerial, and (c) human relations skills that you believe are needed by a supervisor.
7. Write an analysis of your own knowledge, skills, and personal traits as they bear on the role of the supervisor. Describe your strengths and indicate areas in which you feel you need improvement.

APPLICATION

1. Examine the staffing pattern of a school system you know well and list as many different types of supervisors as you can discover.
2. Design your own conceptual model of supervision.
3. Poll a sample of teachers and inquire (a) whether they know what supervisory help is available to them and (b) how they perceive the functions of each supervisor.
4. Identify at least two improvements in curriculum and/or instruction that have been made in a particular school system in the last three years and determine what role, if any, a supervisor played.
5. Inquire of several teachers how often supervisors visited them in their classrooms during the past school year. Identify the supervisors by title, such as assistant principal for curriculum, supervisor of language arts, and so on.
6. Interview and obtain a job description, if available, for one or more of the following supervisors and write a brief description of their chief duties based on the interview:
 - a. Assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction
 - b. General supervisor
 - c. Team leader
 - d. Grade coordinator (grade chairperson)
 - e. Lead teacher
 - f. Department head
 - g. Director of elementary, middle, junior, or senior high schools
7. Describe supervisory assistance available to teachers in your field from the following sources:
 - a. State department of education
 - b. Cooperative (regional) educational service agencies (intermediate school district level)
 - c. School superintendent's office
8. Outline a desirable university training program for supervisors and compare it with a training program with which you are familiar.

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9. Tape an interview with a supervisor on the central-office staff and write a summary covering the following points: (a) How does the supervisor perceive his or her role? (b) What are major problems in supervision as he or she sees them? (c) What training is required for the job?
10. Outline the state requirements for certification as (a) a school principal and (b) a supervisor. Write a brief summary contrasting the differences, if any, and comparing the similarities.

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