GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISORS OF STAFF EMPLOYEES

These guidelines state responsibilities which apply to all University employees who supervise staff personnel--academic, management, and staff. They describe supervisory practices essential to maintaining an atmosphere in which all employees can strive to enhance the excellence of the University.

INTRODUCTION

As a supervisor of University of California staff employees, you are important to the achievement of the many and diverse tasks required for fulfillment of the University's teaching, research, and public service functions. Supervisors of staff employees include faculty, staff, and management personnel who are responsible for the performance of staff employees.

To be effective in your role as supervisor, you must be able to maintain effective work relationships; to set and meet goals for your work unit; and to implement personnel actions, within the framework established by the University's policies and procedures. The following guidelines are intended to help you meet these responsibilities in a manner reflecting the values of the University.

WORK RELATIONSHIPS

The development and maintenance of effective work relationships, that is the ability to accomplish tasks with or through the efforts of other people, are essential to effective supervision. In this important sense, supervision is working with people. For example, in your own work unit you delegate work assignments and coordinate the activities of your employees; and as a member of a management team, you work with your peers and other administrative personnel in coordination of your unit's work activities with those of other units to accomplish broader organization goals. To do this requires personal skill in communication, motivation and conflict management. Further, maintaining effective work relationships requires that the supervisor provide opportunities for an employee to participate in planning, problem-solving and decision-making processes; and that the supervisor recognizes an employee's good performance and treats each employee fairly.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As a supervisor, you are responsible for participating in the goal-setting process, for understanding the goals of the work group you supervise, and for establishing objectives in support of those goals. For example, a supervisor of clerical employees typically has as a goal the completion of clerical tasks with a minimum of errors in a timely manner. Two objectives for meeting this goal might be: 1) to design a system for proofreading all typed materials, and 2) to design a system for equitable work distribution among employees supervised. Although goals for non-routine activities, such as research, are more abstract specifying goals and setting objectives are possible and essential to the work process.
Organizing to meet goals and objectives may seem an obvious requirement to you; however, supervisors sometimes attempt to direct the work of a unit without well-defined objectives or without reaching agreement with their own supervisor as to the appropriate goals of their work group. Only through understanding the purpose of your unit within the University can you conduct the planning, organizing, and evaluation necessary to effectively accomplish the required tasks.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Just as you need to be aware of your unit's goals and objectives, you also need a good working knowledge of Campus or Laboratory policies or procedures that guide the operation of your work unit. University policies and procedures are designed to: 1) provide the direction and coordination essential to all University operations, 2) ensure fair and equitable treatment of all University personnel, and 3) ensure conformity with federal and state law. Particularly important to you as a supervisor are the policies and procedures governing personnel actions. The employees you supervise depend on you for the fair administration of policies establishing the terms and conditions of their employment.

As you may supervise employees who are represented by employee organizations, you also need to be aware of policies and procedures governing the activities of union representatives in the work place.

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Personnel actions generally represent the most time-consuming aspects of your responsibilities. They include selection, orientation, evaluation, development, corrective action, and, when necessary, dismissal. All personnel actions should be consistent with the goals of the work unit and with the University Affirmative Action policy and objectives. The Affirmative Action policy states:

"... The University will not engage in discriminatory practices against any person because of race, color, religion, marital status, national origin, sex, physical or mental handicap, status as Vietnam-era veteran or disabled veteran, or within the limits imposed by law or University regulations, because of age or citizenship."

You must be aware of affirmative action [policies] affecting your unit and your responsibility for their accomplishment. Your campus or Laboratory Affirmative Action Officer is available to assist in matters relating to affirmative action or equal employment opportunity.

Selection: Selection involves identifying and hiring the most qualified applicant for a particular position. The process requires that each position is clearly defined and the knowledge, skills, and other qualifications required to accomplish the responsibilities of the position are accurately stated. The selection process is governed by a variety of legal requirements designed to assure equal employment opportunity and fair employment practices. University policies and procedures have been established to ensure that legal requirements and professional personnel standards are met; it is helpful to review these policies and procedures when selection opportunities occur.
Orientation: After an individual is appointed to a position, you are responsible for seeing that the new employee's orientation to the University, the unit, and the job, is accomplished.

Specifically, an employee needs to be provided with information about employee rights and responsibilities under University policies and procedures, the goals of the employee's work unit, and the tasks for which the employee will be held accountable. You must also communicate the standards by which the employee's performance and conduct will be assessed. It is primarily through discussion with you that the employee understands what is expected of a staff member both as an employee of the University of California and as a member of your work unit.

Evaluation: Subsequent to informing an employee of the standards that will be used to assess the employee's work, you are obligated to provide informal and formal assessments of the employee's job performance. Informal assessment is an ongoing aspect of your relationship with an employee and should be regularly discussed with the employee.

University policy requires that you provide a formal, written performance evaluation on a regular basis to each employee reporting to you. The formal appraisal process requires analysis and evaluation of the employee's work performance and accomplishments during the period covered by the evaluation. It also requires setting goals for the employee's future efforts. During this evaluation, emphasis should be placed on performance-related strengths and weaknesses, identification of problems, and other factors contributing to the employee's level of performance.

Development: A first step in improving an employee's performance is to provide opportunities for training and development. The primary objective of such development is to enhance an employee's ability to meet the standards established for the accomplishment of present job responsibilities. Another objective is to provide the opportunity for an employee to develop the knowledge, skills, and other qualifications required to effectively pursue a career within the University. Employee development may be accomplished by coaching, on-the-job training, cross-training, or participation in formal training programs offered either by the University or an external agency.

Corrective Action: You should initiate necessary and appropriate corrective action whenever an employee fails to meet the required standards of conduct or performance. Policies governing corrective actions provide a means for positive discipline in an effort to improve an employee's less-than-satisfactory performance. Corrective actions range from written warnings to suspension without pay. When taking the corrective action, it is necessary to identify and discuss with the employee particular performance problems and develop an explicit plan for improvement.

Dismissal: A decision to dismiss an employee is typically one of the most difficult decisions you must make. It is normally made only after corrective action has been unsuccessful. Dismissal, like selection, cannot be an arbitrary process. Specific procedures have been developed to assure fair and equitable treatment to all employees and those procedures must be followed.
RESOURCES FOR THE SUPERVISOR

These Guidelines only outline the responsibilities of a supervisor of University staff employees. Yet, even in this general form, they present a formidable task. Recognizing this, the University provides resources to assist you in accomplishing your task. The most obvious resource is your own supervisor who has the same responsibilities to you as you in turn have to your staff.

An additional important resource is the [Human Resources Department. Human Resources] representatives provide assistance in staffing and organizing, in resolving employee conflicts, and in planning and presenting employee development programs. In addition, they are able to advise you where to obtain other management assistance. Supervisory development programs and confidential consultations are available on all campuses and at the Laboratories to assist you in meeting these and additional standards established for the successful accomplishment of your job.

SUMMARY

As a supervisor of staff employees, you have an opportunity to make a significant contribution to the University. Your effectiveness, and that of the work unit you supervise, in large part will be determined by how you meet the supervisory responsibilities of your position. These responsibilities include maintaining effective work relationships, participating in setting and meeting the goals of your work unit, and implementing personnel actions, all within the framework established by University policies and procedures.

These guidelines are provided to assist you in meeting your responsibilities and to make explicit the University's expectations for academic, management, and staff personnel who supervise staff employees. Your supervisor and members of the [Human Resources Department] are available to provide assistance to you in meeting your supervisory responsibilities.