

Supporting the delivery of good service

How leaders can support staff to deliver a good service.

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Guideline – supporting delivery of a good service

Supervisors should support staff to deliver a good service by:

- being clear about what is expected of staff in their specific roles and their contributions to wider organisational objectives
- providing clear direction, support and assistance to help staff do their work
- identifying, enabling and encouraging staff to take up opportunities for professional learning and development that support their individual career plans
- having honest and open conversations, and using reflective practice to encourage staff to consider their own performance, learning and how to improve
- providing timely, specific and constructive feedback, acknowledging good work, discussing areas for development and addressing shortfalls in performance

Evidence summary

There was moderate evidence on the importance of supervisors providing support and assistance to staff to help them do their work (see [Building effective relationships](#)), which was associated with a range of positive outcomes, including increased employee job satisfaction, wellbeing, organisational commitment and improved performance. Evidence also identified a link between supportive and transformational leadership approaches by supervisors (see [Introduction](#)) and positive employee performance outcomes, including generating extra effort, conscientiousness, motivation and engagement.

There is moderate evidence that has linked supervisory feedback with positive performance outcomes, with higher-quality feedback linked to higher organisational commitment. A combined perception of supervisor support and adequate feedback on performance has also been linked with better morale in police support volunteers.

Although there was limited supporting evidence in relation to some of these guidelines' areas of focus, particularly learning and development (see [Capability](#)), the Guideline Committee considered all aspects to be essential components of effective supervision. There were also substantial amounts of practitioner evidence around the perceived importance of supervisor–staff conversations to support wellbeing, learning and performance, as well as the ability to have difficult conversations with staff when necessary.

Empirical evidence

Moderate

Practitioner evidence

Available

Performance conversations

Supervisors should carry out a formal PDR with each member of their staff at least once a year, where objectives are set and performance is reviewed. Supervisors are also expected to have regular conversations with their staff about their performance, development and wellbeing. These conversations might be carried out through a range of different methods, on a one-to-one basis and/or in a team setting, and both formally and informally. Skilled supervisors can also use coaching conversations to support staff to think about their own development. The emphasis should be on frequent ongoing two-way engagement with staff.

Reflective supervision

The use and benefits of reflective supervision are well established in clinical, social care and victim support services. Formal reflective supervision is provided for some specialist staff in forces, most often those working in high-stress environments to support their wellbeing, development and performance. It is also a requirement of the Reflective Practice Review Process, as set out in the [Police \(Conduct\) Regulations 2020](#). Its purpose is to support staff to reflect on and discuss their work and their personal and professional responses.

Supervisors should consider adopting some of these approaches in their discussions with staff. Typically, a reflective supervision session will support staff to:

- engage in critical self-examination and reflect on their skills, performance and personal responses

- identify performance issues and consider a range of approaches
- develop skills and expand knowledge through discussion, review and positive challenge
- consider future training and development needs
- discuss home life, personal issues and wellbeing, where these have an impact on performance or vice versa

Supporting resources

- [Professional development review](#)
- [Continuing professional development \(CPD\)](#)
- [Career pathways](#)
- [Reflective practice resources \(pdf\) 506.9 KB](#)

Tags

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