

# THE PHI COACHING APPROACH<sup>®</sup> TO SUPERVISION

*Introductory Skills for Supervisors  
in Home and Residential Care*



Quality Care  
THROUGH  
Quality Jobs

*Building Skills.  
Strengthening Teams.  
Managing Change.*



**PHI** ([www.PHInational.org](http://www.PHInational.org)) works to transform eldercare and disability services. We foster dignity, respect, and independence—for all who receive care, and all who provide it. The nation’s leading authority on the direct-care workforce, PHI promotes quality direct-care jobs as the

foundation for quality care. Our high-investment/low-turnover/high-return strategy—also known as the quality care through quality jobs approach—has become a national model of successful sectoral workforce development.

## Coaching and Consulting Services

The PHI Coaching Approach® is a comprehensive suite of skill-building and change-management services that assist long-term care and disability services organizations to implement person-centered living and working environments. Our unique approach focuses on the core skills necessary for teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving, thereby creating a healthier, more efficient organization that can succeed in today’s rapidly changing health care environment.

For more information about the PHI Coaching Approach, our team, and our services, see [www.PHInational.org/consulting](http://www.PHInational.org/consulting).

## Workforce and Curriculum Development

For direct-care workers, PHI designs competency-based entry-level and advanced training programs that improve educational and employment outcomes as well as customer satisfaction. We design engaging, activity-based curricula for entry-level, in-service, and advanced trainings for nursing assistants, home health aides, and personal assistants. All of our training programs integrate core communication skills that strengthen the ability of direct-care workers to build relationships, solve problems, and provide quality supports and services.

For more information about PHI Workforce and Curriculum Development Services, see [www.PHInational.org/workforce](http://www.PHInational.org/workforce).

## Policy

PHI’s expertise in integrating industry practice and public policy has made us a valued partner to providers, national foundations, consumer and workforce advocacy groups, and policymakers throughout the country.

Our team of policy experts work with a range of stakeholders to strengthen the direct-care workforce and prepare our nation to care for a growing population of elders and people living with disabilities by promoting effective national and state policy solutions.

For more information about our policy initiatives, visit PHI PolicyWorks at [www.PHInational.org/policy](http://www.PHInational.org/policy).



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# THE PHI COACHING APPROACH® TO SUPERVISION



## *Introductory Skills for Supervisors in Home and Residential Care*

### **Acknowledgements**

### **Introduction**

#### **1. Day One, Morning Session**

- Introduction to the PHI Coaching Approach to Supervision
- Supervision: The Traditional Approach and the PHI Coaching Approach
- Active Listening: Body Language
- Active Listening: Introduction to Paraphrasing

#### **2. Day One, Afternoon Session**

- Verbal Communication Game
- Active Listening: Paraphrasing Practice
- Self-Awareness and Self-Management: Pulling Back
- Pull-Back and Paraphrase Role Plays

#### **3. Day Two, Morning Session**

- Self-Awareness and Self-Management: Blocks to Listening
- Self-Awareness and Self-Management: Checking Assumptions, Part I (Back Story)
- Clear Communication without Blame or Judgment

#### **4. Day Two, Afternoon Session**

- Active Listening: Asking Open-Ended Questions
- Self-Awareness and Self-Management: Checking Assumptions, Part II (Personal Styles)
- Coaching Skills Practice
- Requirements for Successful Coaching

# Acknowledgements

The PHI Coaching Approach® to Supervision: Introductory Skills for Supervisors in Home and Residential Care was first published in 2005, with funding from the U.S. Department of Labor. PHI developed the curriculum over several years with tremendous support from the supervisory staff in home and residential care settings, as well as instructors who participated in testing and evaluating the material.

In 2010, PHI released a revised edition, based on the learnings from our Center for Coaching Supervision and Leadership, a five-year demonstration project funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies and the John A. Hartford Foundation.

This, the third edition, released in 2014, brings a new round of revisions based on the cumulative experience of PHI's organizational change consultants and the hundreds of staff educators who have participated in train-the-trainer seminars and have made training in the PHI Coaching Approach an important element in their organizational staff development programs.

Though innumerable individuals have contributed to the development of this curriculum over the past decade, we want to specifically thank those who contributed to this third edition. PHI is grateful to Sara Joffe, PHI vice president for organizational learning, who initially developed the curriculum content and methodology at Home Care Associates of Philadelphia. Ms. Joffe, over the years, has continued to play a key role in supporting our Coaching and Consulting Services (CCS) team to reflect on their experiences, identify new learnings, and incorporate these into PHI Coaching Approach trainings.

We also thank the members of the CCS team who contributed to this edition of the curriculum: Renya Larson, who led the effort to revise the 2010 edition and did the bulk of the writing; Cean Eppelheimer; Kathy McCollett; MariaElena del Valle; and Susan Misiorski. A special thanks to Kate Waldo for her contributions as well.

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For more information about PHI Coaching and Consulting Services, please visit [www.PHInational.org/consulting](http://www.PHInational.org/consulting) or email [consulting@PHInational.org](mailto:consulting@PHInational.org).





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THE PHI COACHING APPROACH<sup>SM</sup>

# Introduction

The PHI Coaching Approach<sup>®</sup> is a comprehensive suite of staff development and change-management services that assist long-term care and disability services organizations in developing healthy organizational cultures that deliver quality person-centered care.

At the core of the PHI Coaching Approach is a set of communication and problem-solving skills that improve relationships among staff and between staff and the individuals whom they support. Organizations implementing person-centered cultures have found that the PHI Coaching Approach provides essential skills to create and sustain change.

This curriculum introduces the PHI Coaching Approach to Supervision (also known as PHI Coaching Supervision<sup>®</sup>). The two-day seminar is intended for supervisory staff—including nurse supervisors, charge nurses, department heads, home care managers, and service coordinators—working in either residential care or home care settings.

The goal of the training is to strengthen core communication skills essential to good supervision:

- **Active listening**—using body language, paraphrasing, and asking clarifying questions to listen attentively and ensure understanding;
- **Self-management and self-reflection**—being conscious of assumptions and biases, and setting aside emotional reactions that impede communication and problem solving;
- **Clear, nonjudgmental communication**—communicating clearly and directly about expectations or concerns while using language free of blame and judgment.

With these skills, supervisors are better able to support their staff in reaching their highest level of performance. Supervisors who use the PHI Coaching Approach find that with clear communication, high expectations, and supportive problem solving, they are able to significantly reduce disciplinary actions and turnover among frontline workers while also improving relationships. This, in turn, results in better quality care and more satisfied customers.

Funded initially through the U.S. Department of Labor’s High-Growth Initiative, this curriculum is recommended for training supervisors participating in DOL’s certified apprenticeship programs for home health aides and certified nursing assistants. PHI Coaching Supervision, however, has been adopted by hundreds of long-term care organizations because it provides supervisors with the skills they need to grow a committed and valued staff that delivers the highest quality care.

## Why Adopt a New Approach to Supervision?

Supervisors face challenging work situations every day. Their jobs require independent thinking and decision making along with the ability to juggle competing priorities and to respond to the urgent needs of both consumers and the workers who support them. These are demanding, often stressful, and sometimes overwhelming positions.

Supervisors' jobs would, of course, be less stressful if the workers they supervised were consistently reliable and responsible and possessed the ability to resolve problems effectively and independently. But this is not always the case. Supervisors in home and residential care settings spend a great deal of time attending to performance issues with frontline staff, including repeated lateness, call-outs, and high turnover. Although it is tempting to blame the workers for poor performance, supervisors must remember that direct-care and other frontline jobs are also stressful and that workers do not always have the resources to address the sometimes conflicting demands of work and family.

In response to questions about job satisfaction, many frontline workers in long-term services and supports organizations indicate that what keeps them motivated are the relationships they form with elders and people with disabilities who need their support. What pulls them away from their work are the complex demands of their home lives and not feeling valued or respected on the job.

The most influential factor in whether workers feel valued and respected at work is their relationship with their supervisors. When supervisors value supervisees as people—for example, by creating and maintaining positive relationships and modeling effective communication skills—workers feel increasingly capable and successful and are better able to solve problems independently. As a result, they are more likely to remain in their jobs when facing personal or work-related challenges.

Unfortunately, the relationship-building and communication skills that supervisors need to effectively manage their staff have often not been formally included in supervisory training programs—if supervisors have had formal training at all. Most supervisors have learned a traditional, fairly punitive, approach to supervision that does not provide tools to successfully support and retain direct-care workers and other frontline employees.

This curriculum introduces supervisors to an innovative and highly effective approach to supervising and mentoring staff. This approach to supervision centers on building relationships with supervisees, constructively presenting and addressing problems, and helping workers develop problem-solving skills. When implemented successfully, PHI Coaching Supervision results in increased worker satisfaction and retention as well as improved quality of care.

## PHI Coaching Supervision Outcomes

Over the last decade, PHI has introduced the PHI Coaching Approach to numerous organizations providing long-term supports and services across a variety of settings.

In a multi-year demonstration project funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation, PHI measured the impact of the PHI Coaching Approach among 11 participating provider organizations. The results of the project evaluation demonstrated:

- Of staff trained in PHI Coaching Supervision, 77 percent reported that they used the skills they learned “often” or “always” one year after the training. This demonstrates that the training “stuck” and resulted in a change in supervisory behavior.

- Direct-care staff reported statistically significant increases in staff satisfaction.
- A third of participating supervisors reported significant time savings that allowed them to focus on strategic issues rather “putting out fires.”

Organizations that have fully integrated the PHI Coaching Approach into their organizational cultures—training not only managers and supervisors but all staff in coaching communication skills—also reported improvements in the quality of care. For example, Orchard Cove ([www.PHInational.org/casestudies](http://www.PHInational.org/casestudies)), a continuing care retirement community, measured significant reductions in residents with urinary tract infections and pressure ulcers.

## The Curriculum

### Goal

The goal of this curriculum is to introduce seminar participants to a new model of supervision and to teach fundamental communication skills that lay the foundation for improving relationships with workers and developing their critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. All skills are taught within the context of eldercare/disability services settings, making the seminar lively and practical for participants.

The communication skills introduced in the curriculum will not be entirely new to supervisors. Instructors can draw on participants’ existing knowledge and skills to enhance the learning experience. In large part, the seminar is an opportunity to strengthen key supervisory skills in a supportive atmosphere so that participants can use them consistently and effectively on the job. For those who are new to supervision, the curriculum’s emphasis on learning through practice is particularly helpful.

### Content

The seminar introduces PHI Coaching Supervision and three basic coaching skills. Opportunities to practice the skills individually and together provide a strong foundation on which to begin using the skills in the workplace. The curriculum is structured as four half-day modules, as follows:

#### Module 1: Day 1, Morning Session

- Introduction to the PHI Coaching Approach to Supervision
- Supervision: The Traditional Approach and the PHI Coaching Approach
- Active Listening: Body Language
- Active Listening: Introduction to Paraphrasing

#### Module 2: Day 1, Afternoon Session

- Verbal Communication Game
- Active Listening: Paraphrasing Practice
- Self-Awareness and Self-Management: Pulling Back
- Pull-Back and Paraphrase Role Plays

### Module 3: Day 2, Morning Session

- Self-Awareness and Self-Management: Blocks to Listening
- Self-Awareness and Self-Management: Checking Assumptions, Part I (Back Story)
- Clear Communication without Blame or Judgment

### Module 4: Day 2, Afternoon Session

- Active Listening: Asking Open-Ended Questions
- Self-Awareness and Self-Management: Checking Assumptions, Part II (Personal Styles)
- Coaching Skills Practice
- Requirements for Successful Coaching

### Activity Guides

Each module begins with a summary page describing:

- Each of the module's activities, along with the teaching methods and time requirements
- Supplies and handouts needed to complete the module
- Advance preparation necessary for each of the activities

Detailed guides for the activities follow the module summary page. Each activity guide includes:

- **Learning outcomes.** Participants should have adopted or be able to demonstrate these concrete, measurable behaviors by the end of the activity. The focus of each activity, they provide a basis for instructors to measure the effectiveness of the curriculum.
- **Key content.** This section contains the basic ideas and important points to be covered during the activity. This information is not to be read to participants but rather should be worked into discussions as the activity unfolds. If necessary, the instructors can summarize these points at the end of the activity, but again, they should not be simply read aloud.
- **Activity steps.** These guide the instructor logically through each activity. A time estimate is provided for each activity and its parts. However, instructors should be mindful of the needs and interests of participants and adapt both the steps and the time to meet those needs.
- **Teaching tips.** These tips are based on the experiences of PHI's organizational change consultants presenting the seminar literally hundreds of times to different audiences.
- **Teaching options.** These alternatives can replace suggested activities to accommodate time or other constraints.

Ideally, the entire curriculum will be taught from start to finish, as each module builds upon information learned in earlier ones, constantly reinforcing participants' new knowledge and skills. With each successive module, the role plays also become more challenging and complex. The most favorable results will occur from teaching the curriculum step by step rather than expecting participants to leap quickly into complicated case scenarios and role plays.

Keeping in mind the overall structure of the curriculum, instructors should feel free to experiment, make changes, and take risks outside the recommended activities. Each group of participants will possess different needs and dynamics, and instructors should adapt the curriculum to best suit their individual groups. In particular, it is important to be aware of a group's energy and to adjust activities accordingly; in some cases, teaching tips and options suggest possible alternatives.

## Instructors

This curriculum is intended to be taught by individuals who have successfully completed the PHI train-the-trainer program. The train-the-trainer seminar prepares instructors to use participatory, adult learner-centered activities to enhance self-awareness, reflection, and problem solving and to guide participants through emotionally charged discussions.

Ideally, a team of at least two instructors—experienced adult educators, social workers with group experience, or agency administrators with teaching experience—should co-teach the seminar. Both instructors should be comfortable facilitating open and free-flowing dialogue and be able to model the coaching communication skills throughout the seminar.

## Course Approach and Teaching Methods

### Course Approach: Focus on Relationships

At the core of PHI Coaching Supervision is a supervisor's ability to develop and maintain a relationship with each worker he or she supervises. *It is through this relationship that problems are addressed.* Throughout the curriculum, the emphasis is on nurturing the supervisor-worker relationship and on modeling in the classroom the importance of interpersonal connections. Given the focus on interpersonal relationships, the curriculum is designed to create an educational environment in which participants feel safe to share personal experiences, ideas, and viewpoints.

In teaching a curriculum in which relationships are viewed as central, how people teach is as important as what they teach. Instructors must model the skills they are teaching by showing respect for participants, valuing participants' experiences and perspectives, and communicating clearly.

### Teaching Methods: Focus on Participation

This curriculum is based on an adult learner-centered approach to education. At the core of a learner-centered educational program is problem-based learning, teaching strategies that actively engage learners in "figuring things out." Rather than giving information to passive learners through lectures and demonstrations, instructors facilitate learning by building on what participants already know, engaging them in self-reflection and critical thinking and making problem situations come alive through role plays and other activities. *Communication and problem-solving skills cannot be taught by merely lecturing about them; it is crucial that participants practice these skills over and over in a variety of real and simulated situations.*

To encourage participatory learning, this curriculum uses a number of teaching methods, some focused on increasing self-awareness and others on building skills through practice. The primary modes of instruction include the following:

**Case scenarios:** Coaching skills are better learned in a reality-based context rather than as abstract concepts. Case scenarios are real-life examples used to illustrate a point or to challenge participants to devise effective solutions. These exercises present brief explanations of problem situations—usually ones that supervisors commonly experience—and ask participants to propose appropriate responses. Case scenarios and accompanying role plays (see below) become increasingly complex over the course of the curriculum, challenging participants to stretch their coaching abilities.

**Role plays:** Role plays make case scenarios come alive as participants act out situations they are likely to encounter on the job. In this curriculum, two types of role plays are used: demonstration role plays and practice role plays. Demonstration role plays, by showing common supervisory situations and various types of responses, provide excellent material for analysis and discussion. These role plays may be previously scripted.

During practice role plays, participants draw on prior knowledge and experience while also developing coaching skills. Participants try out different responses to a given situation and then are given feedback about which responses were most effective. Role plays are also used to reinforce new skills—for example, by asking participants to pull back from an immediate emotional response when confronted by an angry worker.

Role-playing encourages participants to take risks in a safe environment, where they can learn from mistakes. Although not all participants will be comfortable performing in front of others, risk taking is an essential part of learning. One way to lower the risk level, especially early on in the seminar, is to conduct role plays in small groups rather than in front of the whole group. Instructors can also demonstrate a role play, sharing their own thoughts and feelings about role-playing in order to make participants feel comfortable.

**Small-group work:** Small-group work helps ensure that all participants remain actively engaged in learning. It also facilitates cooperation and community building among participants. For small-group work, the instructor separates people into groups of four to six who sit together at a table or arrange their chairs in a small circle. Periodically changing the composition of the groups is recommended. Participants benefit from working with people with differing personalities, strengths, and weaknesses.

Small groups will work most effectively if given a clear task and roles (e.g., recorder, reporter, timekeeper) and a defined time limit. Instructors can help keep participants on task by walking around the room and checking in briefly with each group. The added benefit of small groups is that they teach about teamwork by embedding it in the learning process.

**Interactive presentations:** Rather than using a traditional lecture format, we recommend involving participants in interactive presentations, in which the instructor draws on participants' knowledge. This kind of participatory dialogue is much more engaging than a traditional lecture, wherein the lecturer provides all the information. The interactive presentation builds confidence and keeps participants interested, breaking down barriers between the teacher "expert" and the learner. One challenge is ensuring that the discussion stays focused on the topic at hand; instructors must continually guide participants back to the subject material and weave in participants' comments to deepen learning.

In an interactive presentation, the instructor starts by asking participants what they already know about the topic, then draws out participants by asking them to contribute their own experiences and explain what the experiences taught them about the topic under discussion. Participants are also encouraged to ask questions, and instructors provide concrete examples of how the material being taught is relevant to particular situations supervisors encounter.

## General Teaching Tips

### Planning and Preparation

- Given the level of interaction and practice in this seminar, the ideal number of participants is 12 to 16, with two instructors; activity steps and time are based on these numbers.
- To keep participants engaged, interactive presentations should be limited to 15 minutes or less. Facial expressions, varied voice tones, and movement by instructors will keep activities dynamic.
- Before teaching each module, instructors should review the activities and consider the arrangement of chairs that will work best for each. For example, activities involving role plays require a stage area that is easily viewed by the group. Check-ins and closings have a more intimate quality with chairs arranged in a circle. Participants can help rearrange chairs between activities.
- This curriculum is written with detailed instructions useful for new instructors. Experienced instructors will be able to draw from their own “toolbox” to vary some activities.

### Teaching Materials, Supplies, and Equipment

This curriculum requires a flip chart pad and easel, colored markers, masking tape, pens or pencils, paper for participants, nametags, and three-ring binders or folders for participants’ handouts. Instructors who want to use an LCD projector with computer as a visual aid during presentations can easily adapt the recommended flip charts and handouts for PowerPoint use.

In general, for all visual materials, it is important to:

- **Write large:** Printed words on flip chart pages should be large and clear. Using colored markers for different concepts can help to delineate and highlight specific points.
- **Provide handouts:** Instructors have the option of creating handout packets in advance, or distributing each handout at the time of use. Some handouts are designed to review concepts, while others are worksheets to be completed during activities. These will become important reference sheets for participants when they apply their new skills in the workplace.

Two versions of a handout are sometimes included: one for residential care settings, where direct-care workers are supervised on site, the other for home care settings, where direct-care workers have little, if any, on-site supervision. Instructors will only need the version appropriate for their setting and participants.

### Teaching Techniques

- Throughout the seminar, it is important that instructors consciously model the material presented, using the three basic coaching skills in interactions with the participants.
- If two instructors are co-teaching, it is often effective for one to facilitate discussion while the other writes key points on a flip chart page or overhead.
- Instructors should draw out the quieter people in the group so that everyone speaks during a discussion. More talkative participants should not be allowed to dominate discussions.

- There are several opportunities in the seminar for participants to share stories from personal experience. Because this is a rare pleasure for many, such conversations can take on a life of their own. The instructor should keep stories focused on the main point of the activity and watch the time so that all participants get a chance to share.
- Participants' sharing may elicit questions or issues that cannot be tackled during the activity's allotted time. In such situations, the instructor may want to track these issues in a visual way by creating a "parking lot"—an ongoing list on a flip chart page. As time and interest allow over the course of the seminar, these issues can be addressed.
- The role plays are critical to the effectiveness of this curriculum but may be new to many participants. Some may feel reluctant to participate. Instructors should explain that the role plays involve practice, not performance, and that participants will not be judged negatively for their efforts. Participants will learn the most from the role plays if they take their roles seriously and do their best.
- Role plays may also be new to instructors. Instructors who feel nervous about them will pass on their nervousness to participants. Therefore, it is essential that instructors practice the role plays prior to the seminar until they are comfortable with them and can support participants in taking risks to participate.
- Participants sometimes pose questions for which instructors don't have answers. If this happens, instructors should acknowledge that the question is new to them and that they may be able to locate an answer before the next session. A willingness to research the question will demonstrate instructors' investment in participants and in the seminar.

### —Teaching Notes—



## MODULE 1: Day One, Morning Session

### Time

3 hours and 5 minutes (without breaks and lunch)

Training Activities	Methods	Time
<b>1.1 Introduction to the PHI Coaching Approach to Supervision</b>		
A: Group Introductions	Large-group exercise	10 minutes
B: PHI Coaching Supervision® in Home and Residential Care Settings	Interactive presentation	10 minutes
C: What a Supervisor Does	Individual work and large-group discussion	40 minutes
<i>Break</i>		<i>15 minutes</i>
<b>1.2 Supervision: The Traditional Approach and the PHI Coaching Approach</b>		
A: The Traditional Approach to Supervision	Demonstration role plays and large-group discussion	20 minutes
B: The PHI Coaching Approach to Supervision	Demonstration role play, large-group discussion, and interactive presentation	30 minutes
<b>1.3 Active Listening: Body Language</b>	Interactive presentations, demonstration role plays, large-group discussions, and paired role plays	35 minutes
<b>1.4 Active Listening: Introduction to Paraphrasing</b>	Interactive presentation, large-group exercise, and storytelling	40 minutes

### Supplies

- Flip chart, easel, and markers
- Three-ring binders (or folders)
- Colored sticky dots (five for each participant)
- Blank paper and pencils

## Handouts

- Handout 1.1:** “PHI Coaching Approach to Supervision—Agenda for Two-Day Seminar”
- Handout 1.2:** “Definition of PHI Coaching Supervision”
- Handout 1.3:** “Benefits of PHI Coaching Supervision”
- Handout 1.4:** “The Role of a Supervisor”
- Handout 1.5:** “Role Play: Traditional Supervision—TRAFFIC!”
- Handout 1.6:** “Role Play: PHI Coaching Supervision—TRAFFIC!”
- Handout 1.7:** “Coaching for Performance Improvement”
- Handout 1.8:** “Comparison of Performance Improvement Models: Traditional and PHI Coaching Supervision”
- Handout 1.9:** “The Primary Coaching Skills”
- Handout 1.10:** “Active Listening”
- Handout 1.11:** “Paraphrase Overview”
- Handout 1.12:** “Paraphrase Worksheet”

**Note:** The role play scenario in **Handouts 1.5** and **1.6** uses a residential care setting, but because there are very similar issues in a home care setting, it works well for those supervisors also.

## Advance Preparation

- Set up the workshop space to allow for interactive sessions, keeping in mind the physical needs of participants.
- Review the seminar materials for each activity.
- Copy **Handouts 1.1–1.12** for this session, and place them in a binder or folder to distribute to participants.
- Place the binders at each participant’s place prior to the seminar. (If you prefer to distribute handouts with each exercise, you may want to distribute the binders with only **Handout 1.1**, the seminar agenda.)

### Activity 1.1A: PHI Coaching Approach to Supervision in Home and Residential Care Settings

- If **Handout 1.1** does not accurately reflect your seminar agenda, revise it to meet your needs.

### Activity 1.1C: What a Supervisor Does

- Prepare the flip chart pages for:
  - “The Role of a Supervisor” (Step 2)
  - “Barriers to Being an Ideal Supervisor” (Step 7)

**Activity 1.2A: The Traditional Approach to Supervision**

- Prepare flip chart pages for:
  - “Workers don’t leave their jobs. They leave their supervisors.” (Step 2)
  - “Traditional Supervision: Five Steps to Performance Improvement” (Step 6)

**Activity 1.3: Active Listening: Body Language**

- Prepare flip chart pages for:
  - “Active Listening Is...” (Step 2)
  - “Examples of Inattentive Body Language” (Step 7)
  - “Examples of Attentive Body Language” (Step 9)
  - “Not Being Listened to Feels...” (Step 13)
  - “Being Listened to Feels...” (Step 15)
- Think of a personal story for the role play in step 6.

**Activity 1.4: Active Listening: Introduction to Body Language**

- Prepare the flip chart page for “The traffic is constantly getting backed up...” (Step 6).
- Prepare to tell a two-minute story in step 8 (or use the one provided).

—Teaching Notes—

## Activity 1.2: Supervision: The Traditional Approach and the PHI Coaching Approach

50 minutes

### A: The Traditional Approach to Supervision (20 minutes)

#### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- *Explain the importance of supervision in worker satisfaction and retention.*
- *Describe the traditional approach to supervision, including its five basic steps to performance improvement.*
- *Explain the limited effectiveness of traditional supervision in motivating and training workers, as well as in developing their problem-solving skills.*

#### Key Content

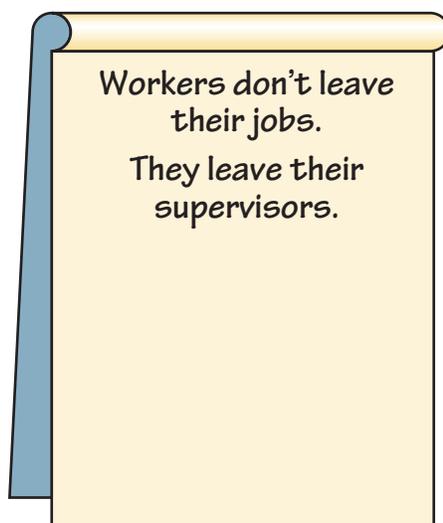
- Supervisors have a powerful impact on workers' lives. A worker's relationship with his or her supervisor is often the most influential factor in whether the worker feels valued and respected at work. Not surprisingly, feeling valued and respected is one of the biggest factors affecting a worker's decision to stay on the job or quit.
- Supervisors face challenging situations every day, especially in working with employees who have minimal work experience. Dealing with problems such as repeated lateness, no call/no shows, and negative or uncooperative attitudes can consume a significant portion of a supervisor's time and energy.
- Although blaming workers for poor performance is tempting, it is helpful to remember that low-wage workers, particularly those new to the workforce, often have few resources or limited experience to fall back on when the complexities of caring for their families conflict with the needs of the workplace.
- There is a disturbingly high turnover rate among newly hired direct-care workers. Given the complexities of many workers' personal and work lives, direct-care workers often need support in developing the communication and problem-solving skills required in a demanding workplace.
- Supervisors play major roles in helping workers to learn and grow, personally and professionally, and succeed on the job. The traditional model of supervision, however, does not provide supervisors with the tools needed to do this effectively.
- The five steps of the traditional supervisory approach to performance improvement, as illustrated in the role play, are:
  - Identify issues to be addressed;
  - Explain the rules clearly;
  - Explain the consequences of breaking the rules;

- Offer possible solutions to the problem; and
  - Request or direct the worker to comply with work rules.
- It is important to note that supervisors can and should use their coaching communication skills in all interactions, and that coaching is not solely a method to improve workers' performance. Coaching is a life skill that should not be reduced to a "a nicer way to write someone up."

## Activity Steps

### Demonstration role play (10 minutes)

1. **Reiterate the message from the discussion at the end of Activity 1.1c, "What a Supervisor Does."**  
Repeat that supervisors' jobs are demanding and stressful, and they frequently work in situations where they are understaffed and unsupported and have too few resources. In addition, people who are good at their jobs are often promoted to being supervisors, but given little or no training for the job. All these factors make it difficult for supervisors to excel in their positions. This is problematic because supervisors play a critical role in the retention of the workers who report to them.
2. **Display the following flip chart:**



3. **Ask for participants' reactions.** Ask for a volunteer to read the statement aloud. Ask participants for their reactions to this quote.



### Teaching Tip

- ▶ **It's important to focus this conversation on participants' own experiences of being supervised. Did they ever leave a job (or want to leave a job) because of a supervisor?**

**When requesting reactions to the statement, ask participants to be brief. Explain that you only want to know whether the statement makes sense in their experience. Be sure no one calls out a "bad" supervisor by name.**

4. Ask participants to refer to **Handout 1.5: “Role Play: Traditional Supervision—TRAFFIC!”** Have two volunteers read it aloud, each taking a part, or each instructor can play a part.

### Teaching Tip

- ▶ **The role play scenario is the core of this activity, so it is important that it be performed effectively. Before asking for two volunteers to read it aloud, explain that you are looking for people who enjoy acting and are comfortable reading out loud.**

### Large-group discussion (10 minutes)

5. Invite comments from participants on what happened in the interaction. Ask the group:

*What did the supervisor do?*

*How did the worker react?*

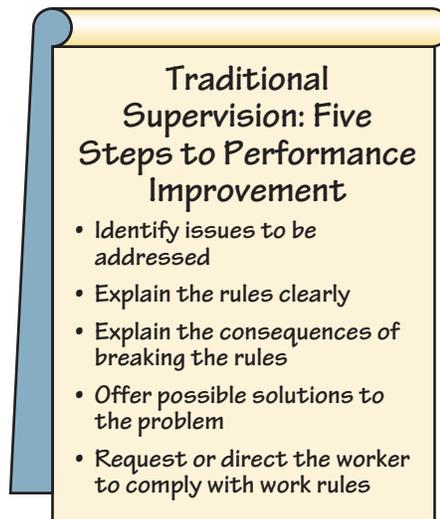
*What is the likely outcome of this interaction?*

### Teaching Tip

- ▶ **Participants’ reactions to the role play can range from “The supervisor did fine; the worker was clearly not committed to the job” to “The supervisor was cold and uncaring and didn’t give the worker a chance to explain herself.” Explore both extremes and help participants see that neither extreme is entirely true.**

**While the supervisor’s approach is not likely to result in the worker becoming a better problem-solver or becoming more invested in her job, it’s also true that this supervisor probably has little time to address these kinds of performance problems, and from her perspective, the employee probably seems uncooperative. Acknowledge that many supervisors use this traditional approach to supervision, in many cases because it is the only approach they know.**

6. Turn to the prepared flip chart page “**Traditional Supervision: Five Steps to Performance Improvement.**” Have a volunteer read the steps aloud.



**Traditional Supervision: Five Steps to Performance Improvement**

- Identify issues to be addressed
- Explain the rules clearly
- Explain the consequences of breaking the rules
- Offer possible solutions to the problem
- Request or direct the worker to comply with work rules

**7. Ask:**

*How was each step demonstrated in the role play scenario?*

**8. Summarize.** Ask the group:

*What impact do you think this supervisory intervention had on the relationship between the supervisor and the worker?*

*What chance do you think this intervention has of resolving the problem?*

*What chance do you think this intervention has of retaining the worker?*

**Teaching Tip**

- ▶ **Ask participants if they have ever received a speeding ticket. Ask if the fact that they were given a ticket has stopped them from speeding (most will say “no!”). This is an example adult learners relate well to as the process used by the police officer to give a ticket is very similar to traditional supervision. It is a helpful example of why “writing someone up” often doesn’t solve the problem, and it creates a lighthearted, humorous moment in the classroom.**

## **B: The PHI Coaching Approach to Supervision (30 minutes)**

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- *Relate their own experiences with supervision to the demonstration role play.*
- *List the five basic steps of performance improvement in the PHI Coaching Supervision model.*
- *Compare how the traditional approach to supervision differs from the PHI Coaching Approach with respect to the relationship between worker and supervisor and potential outcomes.*
- *Name the three primary coaching skills taught in this seminar.*

### **Key Content**

- Workplace relationships are one of the most important contributors to job satisfaction. In particular, relationships are at the heart of work with people who are elderly, chronically ill, or living with disabilities. A number of studies have shown that the opportunity for relationships with clients draws workers to home health and long-term care—and the quality of relationships with coworkers and supervisors keeps them in their jobs.
- Quality relationships underlie quality care. When an agency focuses on developing the staff’s communication and problem-solving skills, the entire organization benefits from increased efficiency, delivery of better quality care, and a more positive organizational culture.

- PHI Coaching Supervision is an approach to working with direct-care workers and other employees that uses effective communication skills to build positive supervisor–worker relationships and stronger problem-solving skills. The PHI Coaching Approach differs from the traditional approach that was modeled in the earlier role play in its emphasis on helping workers develop critical-thinking and problem-solving skills and in the way coach supervisors behave toward workers.
- The outcome of the scenario described in this activity’s role play is likely to be more positive than the outcome of the first role play. The worker is more likely to have more positive feelings about herself and her supervisor, and to stay on the job as a result of the interaction. She is also more likely to be able to address the underlying cause of her lateness.
- The PHI Coaching Approach takes more time in the early stages. In the long run, however, this investment of time pays off because coach supervisors retain more workers and spend less time dealing with problems.
- The five basic steps of performance improvement in the PHI Coaching Supervision model are:
  - Create a relationship with the worker;
  - Clearly present the problem;
  - Gather information about the worker’s perspective;
  - Engage in problem-solving with the worker; and
  - Help the worker commit to action steps.
- The coaching skills used in the PHI Coaching Supervision model are:
  - **Active Listening:** Using skills such as body language, paraphrasing, and asking open-ended questions to listen attentively and ensure understanding.
  - **Self-Awareness and Self-Management:** Being conscious of assumptions and judgments, and setting aside emotional reactions and other listening blocks that can get in the way of hearing a worker’s perspective.
  - **Clear Communication without Blame or Judgment:** Using clear and objective language, especially when addressing performance problems with workers.

### Activity Steps

#### Demonstration role play (10 minutes)

1. Ask participants to refer to [Handout 1.6: “Role Play: PHI Coaching Supervision—TRAFFIC!”](#) Ask two volunteers to read the parts aloud.



#### Teaching Tip

- ▶ **Ask the people who played the supervisor and the worker in the role play that demonstrated traditional supervision to play the same roles again. This will make it easier for participants to see the contrast between the two supervisory models.**

**Large-group discussion** (10 minutes)

2. Invite comments from participants on what happened in the interaction. Ask the group:

*What did the supervisor do?*

*How did the worker react?*

*What impact do you think this intervention will have on the relationship between the supervisor and the worker?*

*What chance do you think this intervention has of resolving the problem?*

*What chance do you think this intervention has of retaining the worker?*

3. Ask participants to consider the importance of time. Point out that, in this role play, the supervisor spent more time with the worker than in the previous role play. Ask:

*How could the extra time that the supervisor spent coaching the worker save the supervisor time in the long run?*

**Interactive presentation** (10 minutes)

4. Ask participants to refer to **Handout 1.7: “Coaching for Performance Improvement.”** Review the five steps by asking participants to read them aloud. Relate each step to specific actions taken by the coach supervisor in the role play.
5. Ask participants to refer to **Handout 1.8: “Comparison of Performance Improvement Models: Traditional and PHI Coaching Supervision.”** Review the similarities and differences. Explain that the rest of the seminar will focus on developing the key coaching skills that are needed to carry out the first three steps in the PHI Coaching Approach to performance improvement. Note that these steps are fundamental and lay the groundwork for workers to become engaged in problem-solving with the supervisor.

**Teaching Tip**

- In this seminar, we focus on the first three bullets of the Coaching Model for Performance Improvement because these are likely to be the most unfamiliar to participants. You may review the fourth and fifth bullets in greater detail if you offer follow-up sessions after this seminar. PHI has developed specific problem-solving tools for this purpose. Contact PHI for more information.

In addition, note that this role play offers an excellent example of the difference between the two approaches as it relates to employee accountability. Coaching conversations are *not* limited to performance improvement. Nondisciplinary examples of coaching conversations are included throughout the remainder of the curriculum.

**6. Ask participants to refer to Handout 1.9: “The Primary Coaching Skills” and review the skills:**

- **Active Listening:** Using skills such as body language, paraphrasing, and asking open-ended questions to listen attentively and ensure understanding.
- **Self-Awareness and Self-Management:** Being conscious of assumptions and judgments, and setting aside emotional reactions and other listening blocks that can get in the way of hearing a worker’s perspective.
- **Clear Communication without Blame or Judgment:** Using clear and objective language, especially when addressing performance problems with workers.

**7. Explain that the coaching skills are interrelated.** This means that mastering any one of the coaching skills also requires knowledge of the other skills. It also means that there is overlap between the skills—for example, a supervisor will often need to practice self-management in order to be able to actively listen. Let participants know that some of what will be covered under each coaching skill could also easily be cross-referenced with other skills.

**8. Explain how coaching skills are particularly useful when addressing workers’ performance issues.**

Explain that coaching skills are useful—and essential—when using the Coaching Model for Performance Improvement. In fact, without the coaching skills, it would be impossible for a supervisor to address a performance issue in a coaching way. Emphasize that a supervisor can also use his or her coaching skills outside of performance improvement conversations. In fact, coaching skills can be used with *anyone* and in any kind of interaction. In particular, supervisors can and should use their coaching skills consistently in daily interactions with workers because this will help them establish and maintain the kind of trusting relationships that are the cornerstone of this approach to supervision. Coaching is most effective when it becomes “a way of being” or a cultural norm for how people communicate with one another in the workplace. Explain that participants will have the opportunity to practice the coaching skills in the remainder of the seminar.

—Teaching Notes—