

Getting The Most Out of Supervision

TIPS AND STRATEGIES FOR THE SUPERVISEE

Clinical Supervision

- ▶ Clinical supervision is a specialty in its own right.
- ▶ In addition to training, education, and experience for the supervisor, education for the supervisee is important.
- ▶ Learning how to be supervised by knowing the fundamentals of providing supervision (the supervisor perspective) is key.

Supervisee Attributes

- ▶ Qualities conducive to successful use of supervision include:
 - ▶ Psychological-mindedness and openness
 - ▶ Interest and desire
 - ▶ Motivation and initiative
 - ▶ Enthusiasm and Eagerness
 - ▶ Dependability
 - ▶ Interpersonal curiosity
 - ▶ Empathy
 - ▶ Willing to risk
 - ▶ Minimal defensiveness
 - ▶ Introspection
 - ▶ Receptivity to feedback
 - ▶ Demonstrates willingness to grow
 - ▶ Takes responsibility for consequences of own behavior
 - ▶ Actively participates in supervision sessions

The Supervision Relationship

- ▶ Understanding the Supervisor Role
 - ▶ Teacher, Counselor, Consultant
 - ▶ Supervisee can prepare for the corresponding role of student, client, and counselor.
- ▶ Forming Supervisory Relationship
 - ▶ Be mindful of first impressions and the degree to which supervisee conveys the list of qualities.
 - ▶ Learn the policies, documentation and records, procedures for informing clients of supervisory relationship, and guidelines for emergencies.
 - ▶ Identify times the supervisor is available and how to contact between supervision sessions.

Supervision Sessions

- ▶ Topics in Supervision
 - ▶ Process skills
 - ▶ Conceptualization skills
 - ▶ Personalization skills
 - ▶ Professional skills
- ▶ Agenda
 - ▶ Being mindful of the categories of supervision
 - ▶ Including anything that would be of concern to a supervisor
 - ▶ Do not be fearful of acknowledging mistakes or weaknesses
 - ▶ Prioritize when planning
 - ▶ Immediate issues (crisis situations, ethical dilemmas, client welfare).
 - ▶ Review caseload
 - ▶ Interventions, conceptualizations, personal reactions, or professionalism

Supervision Sessions

- ▶ Participating in Sessions
 - ▶ Come with a plan and remain flexible
 - ▶ Take an active role in setting a tentative agenda
 - ▶ Understand supervisor's roles to prepare for responding in a complimentary fashion (from the roles of student, client, counselor)
 - ▶ Initiate topics from the role of student, client, or counselor
 - ▶ Student: "I'm uncertain about whether I am going in a useful direction." "Can you give me ideas about how to avoid giving advice when clients keep asking?" "Would you please review documentation to see if my treatment plans have improved?"
 - ▶ Client: "I have a hard time paying attention to this client." "Can you help me explore the anger I'm feeling toward the client's parents?"
 - ▶ Counselor: "Can we spend some time discussing better ways to establish trust with this client?" "What kind of stress management techniques might work best for this client?" "I cannot really make sense of what keeps the client so stuck in this pattern of behavior."

Supervision Sessions

- ▶ Reflection
 - ▶ Monitor self and reactions for common occurrences in supervision:
 - ▶ Counselor anxiety
 - ▶ Transference and countertransference
 - ▶ Parallel process
 - ▶ 5 possible sources of threat for supervisee:
 - ▶ Evaluation anxiety
 - ▶ Performance anxiety
 - ▶ Personal problems of internal conflicts
 - ▶ Deficits in supervisory relationship
 - ▶ Fear of negative consequences for trying new or risky counseling interventions

Supervision Sessions

- ▶ Between Supervision Sessions
 - ▶ Take notes and review the session
 - ▶ Important points, strategies, and reflections
 - ▶ Commit to investing time before and after sessions to maximize supervision (and services provided)
 - ▶ Implement and translate what was learned/gained from supervision into specific plans for working with clients
 - ▶ Prepare for next session by reviewing client contact/cases, identifying priorities for the next session, and ongoing self-assessment of attitudes and receptivity to supervision

Supervision Tips

- ▶ Be proactive
- ▶ Remain flexible
- ▶ Ask for what you need
- ▶ Take responsibility for learning and growing in supervision
- ▶ Remember self-assessment and reflection are your best tools for improving
- ▶ Avoid blaming and focus on planning and solutions
- ▶ Instead of focusing on what your supervisor does not provide, ask what you can learn from your supervisor

Supervision Tips

- ▶ Expect every supervisor to be different
- ▶ Talk about expectations
- ▶ Don't be afraid to negotiate
- ▶ Be mindful of their license
- ▶ Talk to your DCT or follow the program's training policies about conflicts
- ▶ Don't be afraid to ask for clarification/confirmation
- ▶ Prepare questions in advance
- ▶ Be open to critiques and feedback
- ▶ Don't be afraid to take risks or be vulnerable
- ▶ Be on time

References

- ▶ Bernard, J.M. & Goodyear, R.K. (2019). *Fundamentals of Clinical Supervision* (6th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- ▶ Falender, C.A. & Shafranske, E.P. (2021). *Clinical Supervision: A Competency-Based Approach* (2nd ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- ▶ Falender, C. A., & Shafranske, E. P. (2012). *Getting the most out of clinical training and supervision: A guide for practicum students and interns* (1st ed.). American Psychological Association.
- ▶ Navigating supervision: Ten tips for psychology graduate students. APA Division 12. (n.d.) Retrieved from: <https://www.div12.org/navigating-supervision-ten-tips-for-psychology-graduate-students/>
- ▶ Pearson, Q. (2004). Getting the most out of clinical supervision: Strategies for Mental Health. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 26(4), 361-373.