

Adequate Supervision in Algeria: Tailoring Methods, Patterns, and Skills to Distinct Personality Traits.

Mohamed Naim Guenane^{1*}, Mohammad Reda Chenna²

¹ Laboratory of Neuropsychology, Cognitive and Social Psychology – El-Oued University;
email:

² Laboratory of Neuropsychology, Cognitive and Social Psychology – El-Oued University;
email:

Receipt date : 28/07/2025 ; Acceptance Date: 15/09/2025

Abstract: Considering the profound transformations affecting modern work environments, human and social dimensions of supervisory behavior are significantly increasing. Adequate supervision extends beyond technical and administrative competencies, including emotional intelligence and the ability to respond to employees' psychological and social needs. This shift is crucial for fostering a healthy organizational climate, enhancing job satisfaction, and reducing workplace conflict. Integrating these human-centered approaches into supervisory practices in complex and diverse sectors, such as the petroleum industry, proves essential for building effective team dynamics. This study proposes and evaluates a training model to develop supervisory behavior among industrial managers based on interactive leadership, strategic thinking, and emotional intelligence. By strengthening these competencies, the research highlights the direct impact of supervisory development on institutional performance, including improved decision-making, reduced organizational tensions, and enhanced team effectiveness-thereby achieving a balance between productivity goals and human needs.

Keywords: Supervisory Behavior; Emotional Intelligence; Strategic Thinking; Training Model; Petroleum Sector.

* Mohamed Naim Guenane

1- The Concept of Supervision

Contemporary organizations are characterized by adopting the principle of delegation of authority and distribution of responsibilities, where administrative burdens are no longer concentrated in the hands of a single individual. Instead, managers and supervisors are entrusted with supervisory roles that complement executive work, responding to the demands of modern organizations and ensuring the effective operation of organizational processes. Definitions of supervision have varied across different administrative schools of thought. Some of the most prominent are; Diersall (1963) views supervision as "the art of working with a group of individuals over whom some authority is exercised, aiming to achieve the highest possible joint effectiveness in task performance, within a framework of cooperation and sincere willingness from all parties involved, including the supervisor himself." Margaret Williams defines supervision as "an interactive process through which the supervisor provides support to employees to implement plans and programs in the best possible way" (Majda, 1990, p. 179). The Dictionary of Administrative Terms defines it as "the administrative leadership of employees at lower executive levels, where the supervisor is entrusted with monitoring their performance, guiding them, and ensuring task execution according to organizational plans" (Al-Barai & Al-Tuwaijri, 1993, p. 318). Al-Shami considers supervision "the coordination, direction, and guidance of employees' activities within the institution to achieve the set objectives" (Ansur, 2007, p. 25). Gray (1988, p. 28) summarized it succinctly as: "Supervision is getting things done through others." From these definitions, supervision can be understood as an administrative process that directs human resources toward achieving organizational goals by monitoring performance, correcting deviations, and providing necessary support within the scope of managerial responsibilities. The supervisor is the direct manager at the lowest administrative level, responsible for monitoring the performance of operational employees. They are accountable to their superiors for executing the assigned tasks (Gray, 1988, p. 58). The title "supervisor" may vary depending on the size of the organization and the nature of its organizational structure; it may be referred to as department head, section chief, sub-manager, workshop supervisor, or executive manager. Leadership is defined as "an individual behavior that directs group activities toward achieving specific goals" (Cowan, 1957). Belling (1984) describes it as "an effective influence process on the group to achieve organizational objectives." Muslim (2007, p. 131) emphasizes that leadership is integrated within the concept of supervision due to its continuous interaction and communication within the group. Authority refers to the powers granted to officials within an organization, enabling them to issue orders and make decisions. It is divided into line authority, related to the position's level within the administrative structure, and functional authority, which allows issuing directives to employees outside the immediate unit based on functional relationships (Abuway, 2007, p. 180; Al-Na'imi, 2001, p. 15). Power, on the other hand, is the personal ability to influence and persuade others, differing from authority as it depends on an individual's skills and competence rather than their official position. Supervisory responsibility involves the obligation of supervisors to monitor their subordinates' performance and be accountable for any shortcomings or errors resulting from inadequate guidance or control (Qutb, 1997). Supervision is considered one of the fundamental functions in the administrative process, as it seeks to ensure that employee behavior aligns with organizational expectations to achieve desired goals. This requires careful monitoring by the supervisor during task

execution and intervening when necessary to correct deviations (Al-Maleji, 2005, p. 315). The main objectives of supervision include monitoring work progress according to organizational programs and goals, providing necessary support to subordinates to help them perform their tasks effectively, and identifying and addressing operational difficulties. Additionally, supervision involves teaching subordinates the correct work methods, correcting mistakes, evaluating performance to motivate them, and assessing training needs. It also focuses on creating a work environment that encourages creativity, coordinating employees' efforts to ensure effective communication, building team spirit through efficient management, and fostering an organizational culture that supports excellence and distinction (Patricia, 2009, pp. 9-10).

1.2 The Concept of Leader-Member Relationship (Leader-Member Exchange - LMX):

This theory focuses on the quality of the exchange relationship between the leader and subordinates and its impact on organizational outcomes. This exchange is defined as a relationship in which each party provides something of value to the other, and the relationship must be fair and balanced to ensure its continuity (Gerstner & Day, 1997, as cited in Hamed, 2011, p. 4). Studies have confirmed that the quality of this relationship leads to higher levels of job satisfaction, improved individual and group performance, and increased organizational effectiveness (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Hamed, 2011, p. 4).

2- Methods of Supervision:

Supervision is a central organizational process that involves coordinating, directing, and guiding employees' activities within the institution to achieve set objectives. The methods of supervision vary depending on the supervisor's psychological traits and leadership personality, the prevailing management style within the organization-shaped by its organizational culture-environmental conditions, and the nature of the activity or service provided. Therefore, selecting the most appropriate supervision method depends on various factors related to the organizational and field context. Below are the primary adopted methods of supervision:

2.1 On-the-Job Field Observation: This is one of the traditional supervision methods, where the supervisor directly observes employees. At the same time, they perform their tasks, to ensure proper execution and provide support, when necessary, in case of errors or malfunctions. This method is prevalent in industrial settings, workshops, and manual labor fields such as loading, cleaning, and similar activities. A notable form of this approach is "close supervision," which may cause discomfort among workers, primarily if associated with the supervisor's suspicion or lack of trust in subordinates (El-Meligy, 2005, p. 316).

2.2 Regular Meetings: This method involves holding regular meetings, individually or in groups, between the supervisor and subordinates to assess overall performance, discuss work progress, and address issues. These meetings provide an opportunity to tackle operational challenges and enhance constructive interaction within the team.

2.3 Scheduled and Surprise Inspections: This method monitors employees' adherence to organizational instructions and procedures. It allows immediate intervention to correct errors or improve performance, ensuring discipline and operational efficiency.

2.4 Review of Work Reports: This approach relies on the supervisor's analysis of periodic reports (daily, weekly, or monthly) documenting work progress and outcomes. Based on these reports, the supervisor guides employees by identifying strengths and addressing areas of weakness (El-Meligy, 2005, p. 317).

2.5- Patterns of Supervisory Behavior:

The executive supervisor is a cornerstone of any organization's success, as strategic plans are translated into daily operational practices. The nature of the supervisor's relationships with various stakeholders in their professional environment, fellow supervisors, senior management, unions, and external partners shapes the supervisory behavior the supervisor establishes. Gray (1988) indicates that while the official job description outlines the responsibilities and expectations of the supervisor's role, the actual supervisory role is broader and more complex. It is influenced by the often-conflicting expectations of multiple parties, which requires the supervisor to demonstrate high levels of flexibility and balance in their performance amid psychological and institutional pressures. Based on the analysis of field practices, several patterns of supervisory behavior can be identified:

2.6 The Key Man:

In this style, the supervisor acts as the executive arm of management, firmly enforcing instructions, monitoring task execution, and ensuring discipline. This aligns with the traditional managerial view of the supervisor as a strict control agent.

5.2 The Man in the Middle:

This pattern reflects the supervisor's struggle between meeting upper management's expectations and addressing subordinates' needs and aspirations. The supervisor is a mediator seeking a delicate balance between both sides, often resulting in continuous psychological pressure (Anser, 2007, pp. 43–44).

5.3 The Marginal Man:

This style is characterized by the supervisor's weak performance and marginalization within the organization. As a result, management resorts to alternatives such as technicians or consultants, reducing the supervisor's role to merely relaying instructions without engagement or initiative.

5.4 Another Worker:

In this case, the supervisor assumes a purely operational role, neglecting their supervisory responsibilities and blending in with the rest of the workers. Their involvement is limited to submitting periodic reports without actual monitoring or guidance.

5.5 The Human Relations Specialist:

This pattern emphasizes the human dimension of supervision. The supervisor demonstrates strong communication skills, understanding, and empathy toward

subordinates, making them an effective channel for communicating decisions and easing organizational tensions (Anser, 2007, pp. 46–47).

Gray (1988) identifies several essential field roles that reflect the supervisor's multifaceted organizational function. These include supporting subordinates in task execution, offering technical advice, influencing employees to maintain discipline while representing their interests, taking responsibility for decisions and mistakes, actively listening to concerns-especially during stressful times-evaluating performance, training new staff, participating in decision-making, and serving as a communication link between upper management and employees (Anser, 2007, pp. 48–50).

Overall, the supervisor assumes a distinctly leadership-oriented role that combines control, support, human interaction, and decision-making. However, the key difference between an administrative leader and a supervisor lies in the scope of authority granted to each, which can act as either a strength or a limitation depending on the organizational context and power structure.

6 - Supervisory Skills:

Numerous researchers emphasize that a supervisor's effectiveness in fulfilling leadership and managerial duties is closely tied to a set of core skills, typically categorized into four main types: personal skills, technical skills, human skills, and cognitive skills. Among these researchers are Katz (1955), Hawkins & Shohet (2006), Huffmire & Holmes (2006), and Kanaan (2009), whose studies confirm that mastering these skills is essential for leading teams successfully and achieving organizational goals efficiently.

6.1 Personal Skills:

These refer to individual traits and personal abilities that enable effective leadership, including:

- **Physical traits**, such as strength and appearance, can enhance leadership presence when used wisely (Kanaan, 2009).
- **Mental abilities**, like intelligence, visualization, and sense of humor, reflect mental flexibility and openness (Katz, 1955; Kanaan, 2009).
- **Initiative and innovation**, which Fayol linked to courage, decisiveness, and proactive thinking (Kanaan, 2009).
- **Self-control** is seen as a sign of emotional stability (Goleman, 1995; Kanaan, 2009).

6.2 Technical Skills:

These relate to practical and cognitive competence that enable supervisors to perform their tasks accurately, including:

- Responsibility and commitment to results (Huffmire & Holmes, 2006).
- In-depth knowledge of management, organization, and law (Kanaan, 2009).
- Decisiveness and firmness in decision-making (Kanaan, 2009).
- Belief in organizational goals enhances team motivation (Shartle, 1956).

Some studies highlight a debate: one view sees technical skills as sufficient for success, while another emphasizes combining technical and human skills for adequate supervision (Huffmire & Holmes, 2006).

6.3 Human Skills:

These refer to the supervisor's ability to interact effectively with others and build relationships based on trust and mutual respect. Key aspects include:

- Building strong relationships and understanding others' emotions.
- Involving employees in decision-making and shared accountability.
- Supporting subordinates' personal growth and development (Goleman et al., 2002; Hawkins & Shohet, 2006; Stark & Flaherty, 1999; Kanaan, 2009).

6.4 Cognitive Skills:

These are linked to strategic thinking, understanding the organizational environment, and making thoughtful decisions. They include:

- Managerial thinking, planning, and having a holistic view of the organization.
- Applying political and administrative knowledge in an integrated way (Katz, 1955; Kanaan, 2009).

Although Katz considered these skills more relevant to top management, modern organizational dynamics demand that supervisors at all levels possess such cognitive abilities.

7- Qualities of a Successful Supervisor

Considering the previously discussed supervisory behavior patterns, it is clear that a supervisor's effectiveness relies not only on technical or administrative skills but also on a mix of personal and behavioral traits that underpin successful leadership and supervision. Numerous studies indicate that a successful supervisor is characterized by qualities that aid in adapting to change, understanding organizational dynamics, and improving team performance. Hawkins and Shohet (2006) identified several essential qualities of an effective supervisor that extend beyond technical or organizational expertise. One of these qualities is flexibility-the ability to transition between theoretical concepts and practical applications while considering various alternatives when confronted with challenges. An effective supervisor also displays analytical competence, allowing for the evaluation of situations from multiple angles and facilitating thoughtful, context-sensitive decision-making. A clear supervisory methodology is equally vital, reflecting commitment to organizational rules while also permitting innovation and autonomy. Cultural awareness is another essential trait, entailing the capacity to understand and appreciate the diverse cultural backgrounds of team members-an important skill in multicultural work environments (Goleman et al., 2002). In addition, strong stress management skills are crucial, particularly in high-pressure or complex situations. Successful supervisors should also be open to continuous learning, gaining insights from everyday work experiences and interactions with subordinates (Argyris, 1991). They tend to be proactive in recognizing early indications of problems that may impact team performance, taking action before issues escalate. Moderation in exercising authority is also highlighted, as excessive authoritarianism can create a psychologically

unsafe workplace (Likert, 1967). Patience is key when navigating challenges and building healthy professional relationships, while a good sense of humor helps alleviate stress and fosters social cohesion within the team (Hawkins & Shohet, 2006). These traits emphasize the significance of emotional intelligence, cognitive flexibility, and effective leadership in supervisory performance-qualities that go well beyond technical proficiency.

7.1. The Supervisory Relationship in Light of Algerian Personality Traits

Understanding the supervisory relationship in Algerian organizations requires considering the psychological and cultural traits of both supervisors and subordinates. This relationship is shaped by ongoing communication influenced by shared values and expectations. Due to Algeria's cultural diversity, defining a unified "Algerian personality" is complex, as it is rooted in the "Maghrebian foundational personality" shaped by historical, social, and economic contexts. Ben Abdallah (2010) references studies such as Mooughrabi (1978), Sanwa (1974), and Glidden (1972), which highlight traits like profound modesty, fear of exposure, and anxiety about group nonconformity. Ammar (1964) and Al-Azm (1968) describe the "Fahlawi" type-socially adaptable, superficially friendly, and skilled at deflecting blame. Djait (1974) adds traits like aggression and narcissism that may hinder supervisory communication. In contrast, Ben Naaman (1988) emphasizes realism and honesty, reflected in popular proverbs like "Go naked before your Lord, and He will clothe you." Addoun (2004) notes perseverance and a preference for authenticity while warning about traits like rigidity, hypersensitivity, and authoritarianism. These insights are crucial when designing supervision training programs that reflect local realities.

7.2. The Importance of Supervisor Training: A key question is whether supervisor training is essential. Many supervisors succeed without formal training, claiming practical experience as their foundation. However, Gray (1988) warns that theoretical knowledge without application can render supervisors ineffective. He compares supervision to bicycle riding-experience is vital for balance and control. Effective training should combine cognitive learning and practical experience (Gray, 1988, pp. 36–38). Boyle and Johnson (2013) found that simulations and real-world applications enhance supervisory effectiveness. Hersey and Blanchard (2001) stress the importance of communication tools, motivation techniques, and decision-making skills. Comprehensive training that blends theory with practice is thus essential for boosting team performance and supervisory success.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, the need for effective administrative supervision stands out as a strategic imperative across contemporary organizations, regardless of their field of activity or size. Supervision should not be viewed simply as a traditional task; it is a multidimensional interactive process that directly contributes to achieving organizational goals by guiding and motivating individuals toward optimal performance. Both theoretical analysis and field insights have emphasized that effective supervisory behavior-rooted in constructive guidance, continuous support, and positive human relations-is a crucial factor in enhancing employee commitment, improving performance, and fostering organizational loyalty. The quality of the relationship between supervisors and subordinates plays a fundamental role in shaping a productive and motivating work environment. The study also revealed that relying solely on field experience to develop supervisory skills can lead

to inconsistent practices, often resulting in high time and organizational costs. Therefore, developing supervisory competencies within a structured training framework with theoretical knowledge and practical application represents the most effective approach to building capable and efficient supervisory talent. Based on these findings, the study recommends that organizations implement dedicated training programs to develop supervisory capabilities through internal training units or in collaboration with specialized training centers. These programs should be tailored to the specific organizational context and needs. As demonstrated, supervisory behavior is an acquired skill that can be scientifically developed and improved, ultimately contributing to more substantial team effectiveness and achieving desired organizational performance.

9. References and Referrals

- Al-Barai, A., & Al-Tuwaijri, F. (1993). Dictionary of administrative terms. Riyadh: Obeikan Library.
- Al-Hilu, M. (2007). Management and effective supervision. Cairo: University House.
- Al-Shami, A. M. (Cited in: Anser, 2007). Principles of modern management.
- Anser, M. (2007). Principles of modern management. Algeria: Houma Publishing.
- Qutb, M. (1997). Administrative responsibility. Cairo: Arab Thought House.
- Koan, R. (1957). Administrative leadership (Translated). (Cited in: Muslim, 2007).
- Muslim, A. (2007). Organizational behavior. Cairo: Zahraa Al Sharq Library.
- El-Meligy, M. (2005). Modern management: Concepts and functions. Alexandria: Modern University Office.
- Al-Nuaimi, A. S. (2001). Public administration: Foundations and functions. Amman: Dar Al-Shorouk.
- Hisham, S. (2008). Foundations of modern administrative supervision. Cairo: Dar Al-Fajr.
- Williams, M. (Cited in: Mustafa, M., 1990).
- Mustafa, M. (1990). Principles of management and supervision. Cairo: University Knowledge House.
- Abouwi, Y. (2007). Concepts of authority and organization in institutions. Damascus: Tlass Publishing.
- Hamed, A. (2011). The impact of the quality of the supervisor-subordinate relationship on administrative creativity development. *Journal of Administrative Sciences Studies*, 38(1), 1–19.
- El-Meligy, A. F. (2005). Organizational behavior: A theoretical and practical approach. Cairo: University House.
- Anser, A. K. (2007). Effective supervision in organizations. Algeria: Houma Publishing.
- Argyris, C. (1991). Teaching smart people how to learn. *Harvard Business Review*, 69(3), 99–109.
- Boyle, M. A., & Johnson, C. J. (2013). Workplace training for supervisors: Blending theory with practice. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 25(4), 223–235. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13665621311316428>

- Gerstner, C. R., & Day, D. V. (1997). Meta-analytic review of leader–member exchange theory: Correlates and construct issues. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82(6), 827–844. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.82.6.827>
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2002). *Primal leadership: Realizing the power of emotional intelligence*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Gray, C. F. (1988). *Supervision: The art of management*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Gray, J. L. (1988). *Organizational behavior: Concepts and applications*. Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.
- Hawkins, P., & Shohet, R. (2006). *Supervision in the helping professions* (3rd ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. H. (2001). *Management of organizational behavior: Utilizing human resources* (8th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Huffmire, D. W., & Holmes, J. D. (2006). *Supervisory management: The art of inspiring, empowering, and developing people* (7th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Katz, R. L. (1955). Skills of an effective administrator. *Harvard Business Review*, 33(1), 33–42.
- Likert, R. (1967). *The human organization: Its management and value*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Maslyn, J. M., & Uhl-Bien, M. (2001). Leader–member exchange and its dimensions: Effects of self-effort and other's effort on relationship quality. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(4), 697–708. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.4.697>
- Patricia, A. (2009). *Supervision in the workplace: A competency-based approach*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Shartle, C. L. (1956). *Executive performance and leadership*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Stark, P. B., & Flaherty, J. (1999). *The only negotiating guide you'll ever need*. New York: Crown Business.