

Foreword, effective supervision

The guideline committee chair on how this guidance will help develop the skills and organisational support needed to be a good supervisor.

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Whatever your role in policing, be it a constable on the front line, member of police staff, volunteer or senior manager, the relationship you have with your supervisor is crucial to your performance, development and wellbeing. We can all recount that great (or poor) supervisor who directly affected these areas of our career, as well as our wider life.

It is no surprise that being a supervisor can be difficult, given the constant challenge of balancing supervisory responsibility and individual workloads. This is especially true in policing, where the operational demands and associated risk magnify the importance of the supervisory role in being able to manage competing responsibilities.

These guidelines have been developed to focus specifically on the skills and organisational support needed to be a good supervisor. Implementing them will provide greater consistency in the way that we supervise staff and will benefit us all, including the public who we serve.

The guidelines are based on the best available evidence, following an extensive review of studies and current practice, which included reviewing feedback from over 2,500 people working in policing. A Guideline Committee of frontline staff, subject matter experts and academics subsequently worked with the College of Policing to distil the findings into a set of guidelines. Although the content of the individual guidelines is not new, taken together they provide a framework that all forces and supervisors should now aspire to deliver – whether that is a chief constable looking to provide the necessary support required by guidelines 1-3, or a supervisor endeavouring to support their staff using guidelines 4-10.

A key challenge in implementing these guidelines will be creating the time for meaningful and effective dialogue with staff. Sometimes urgent operational requirements must take precedence, but prioritising time for supervisors to focus on the wellbeing and development of their staff is an

essential investment that will support them in providing the best service to the public. I do not underestimate the challenge this presents. However, it is incumbent on chief constables, as laid out in these guidelines, to review current practices and seek innovative ways to create capacity and prioritise these important interactions.

These guidelines form part of an ongoing portfolio of products and services being provided by the College to support those in supervisory roles, particularly in light of the requirements of the Police Uplift Programme. With that in mind, I'm not advocating that, as supervisors, you look to implement all of the guidelines straight away. Take time to review and understand them, familiarise yourself with the supporting materials, and look to incorporate them into your supervisory activities over a period of time.

I'm also conscious that the evidence underpinning these guidelines is limited in some areas, and I would encourage the service and universities to undertake research to help develop the evidence base further. The College will launch a further call for practice to coincide with the release of these guidelines, where they will seek to identify and share examples of good practice, particularly in the area of 'making time'.

Staff have told us that they want more time with their line managers for performance reviews and personal development. These guidelines provide the framework to do so, as well as being a great opportunity for the service to focus on the benefits that effective supervision can bring.

Tags

Supervision