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Kay S. Davis
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**A STUDY TO COMPARE THE SUPERVISOR'S PERCEPTION
OF THEIR SUPERVISORY SKILLS AT FRIENDSHIP MANOR
NURSING HOME AFTER PARTICIPATING IN A SUPERVISORY
SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM TO THOSE OF THE
SUPERVISORS AT GUGGENHEIMER NURSING HOME WHO
HAVE NOT PARTICIPATED IN THE SUPERVISORY SKILLS
TRAINING PROGRAM**

A Research Paper

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Occupational and Technical Studies

Old Dominion University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Occupational and Technical Studies

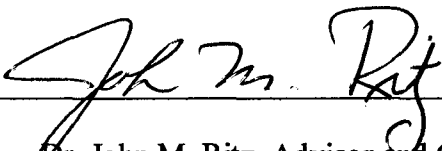
by

Kay S. Davis

April 2001

APPROVAL PAGE

This research paper was prepared by Kay S. Davis under the direction of Dr. John M. Ritz in OTED 636, Problems in Occupational and Technical Studies. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Occupational and Technical Studies.

APPROVAL BY: 
Dr. John M. Ritz, Advisor and Graduate
Program Director

DATE: 4-23-01

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Guggenheimer Nursing Home is a long-term care facility located in Lynchburg, Virginia, and Friendship Manor Nursing Home is a long-term care facility located in Roanoke, Virginia. Their supervisory structures are very similar in that the employees who are directly responsible for resident care are supervised by LPNs or RNs. The major difference in the two facility's supervisors is that the Friendship Manor supervisors have participated in a six-month supervisory training program and the supervisors at Guggenheimer have not.

This study will reveal the difference in the supervisor's perceptions of their supervisory skills from an analysis of surveys which have been designed to assess the supervisory skills relevant to their jobs.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to compare the supervisor's perception of their supervisory skills at Friendship Manor after participating in a supervisory skills training program to those of the supervisors at Guggenheimer who have not participated in the supervisory skills training program.

RESEARCH GOALS

The following goals were designed to guide this study:

1. Determine the supervisor's perception of their role as a supervisor.
2. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to effectively communicate with their employees.

3. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to effectively coach their employees.
4. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to manage multiple priorities.
5. Determine the supervisor's perception of the different factors involved in motivating their employees.
6. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to effectively solve problems.
7. Determine the degree to which the supervisors who had participated in the supervisory training had a higher perception of their supervisory skills.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The health care industry faces many challenges in staffing. In most situations, especially in a hospital or long-term care facility, the manager or supervisor in charge of a shift of employees is someone who has proven clinical proficiency, not necessarily management proficiency. In addition, the manager or supervisor typically has as much clinical responsibility as the subordinates in their charge, leaving them very little time to focus on effective management of human resources. Maryann Fralic, professor at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, noted during her address at the 1999 NLN Biennial Convention:

“Today's requirements are twofold: to make good clinical decisions coupled with good business decisions. By preparation and education, nurses are not primarily focused on business. This is a new orientation for us, and certainly for us as leaders. Is this easy? No, it is not.”(Fralic, 1999, p. 260)

Due to the highly technical nature of positions in the health care industry, most of the training employees receive revolves around the clinical components of their job. Because so many positions require long shifts and often involve the care of critically ill patients, stress levels tend to be high. The need for managers and supervisors to possess good management skills is critical, especially in the health care arena. Therefore, an analysis of the supervisor's perceptions of their supervisory skills with and without prior supervisory skills training will provide some insight into how supervisory training is best received by the supervisors.

LIMITATIONS

The limitations of this study are:

1. The individual supervisory styles of the respondents could limit the effectiveness of the training.
2. The survey does not permit the respondents to explain their answers and they might be forced to make a selection on the survey that does not reflect exactly the way they feel.

ASSUMPTIONS

An assumption of this study is that the supervisors at Guggenheimer who have not participated in a supervisory training program will report lower levels of comfort with supervisory skills than the supervisors at Friendship Manor who have participated in a supervisory training program. It is also assumed that supervisory training can improve the effectiveness of supervision.

PROCEDURES

The supervisors at Friendship Manor participated in a six-month training program designed to improve their supervisory skills. A survey of the supervisors at Guggenheimer and the supervisors at Friendship Manor was conducted to determine their different perceptions of their supervisory skills. The population was determined to be all supervisors who directly supervised employees involved in the daily care of the residents. Both groups of supervisors were given the same survey questions to answer. Data on the responses were collected, organized and analyzed. Determination of the two groups of supervisor's perceptions of their supervisory skills was made based on the analysis of the surveys.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms were defined to assist the reader in reviewing this study.

Guggenheimer – Guggenheimer Nursing Home

Friendship Manor – Friendship Manor Nursing Home

The Supervisory Series – Six month supervisory training program at Friendship Manor

LPN – Licensed Practical Nurse

RN – Registered Nurse

Supervisor – RNs and LPNs who supervise staff which are directly responsible for resident care.

Supervisory/Managerial Skills – The competencies outlined in the job description of supervisors/managers required to oversee essential daily operations in their department.

Resident – Inhabitant of the nursing home

NLN – National League for Nursing, Inc.

Large Group discussions/exercises – A technique used in training which involves the entire class focusing on a topic together.

Small Group discussions/exercises – A technique used in training which involves an entire class divided into smaller groups of approximately 3 – 5 participants to focus on specific topics.

SUMMARY

Chapter I of this study dealt with the introduction of the problem of comparing two groups of LPN and RN supervisors in long-term care facilities to determine if their participation in a supervisory training program increased their perception of their supervisory skills. In addition to the introduction, this chapter includes the statement of the problem which gives a brief description of the major aspects of the research study, the research goals which provide a framework for the study and the background and significance of the study which outlines the value of the study. The limitations outline the boundaries of the study, the assumptions help to clarify the problem, the procedures describe the methods of collecting data and the definition of terms assist the reader with reviewing the study.

In the following chapter the literature related to the study will be reviewed. In addition, the methods and procedures used for the study will be explained and the findings will be assessed and presented along with conclusions and recommendations pertinent to the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter II of this study deals with the Review of Literature on major issues surrounding supervisory and management training skills. This chapter will outline the current thinking from experts on the subject of management and supervisory skills needed to be a successful manager. Most of this chapter will outline the specific components included in the six-month supervisory training program at Friendship Manor Nursing Home.

THE SUCCESSFUL MANAGER

What determines if a company is successful? Many of the experts in the field of management and leadership believe that a strong workplace is defined by the relationship employees have with their immediate supervisors. The Gallup Organization, who is best known for The Gallup Poll, focuses mainly on providing measurement, consulting, and education to many of the world's largest companies. In a recent study The Gallup Organization interviewed more than 80,000 managers in over 400 successful companies to determine what made the companies so successful. They discovered that the manager, not the pay, benefits, perks or even a charismatic corporate leader, was the critical player in building a strong workplace. (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999, p. 33) The most effective managers are ones that understand that leading people requires establishing personal relationships and nurturing them on a daily basis. Along with understanding relationships, effective managers also understand the importance of trusting in their employees and their competence. (Sholtes, 1998, p. 45)

People are the only long-term competitive advantage companies have and lifelong learning is the way to fully develop that advantage. Good managers understand the importance of developing their employees and they make the time for it. (Senge, 1994, p. 311)

The senior management at Friendship Manor understands the importance of a good management team and the development of their employees. Through interviews with the Director of Education for Friendship Manor, Barbara Johnson, and a review of the training literature, the following outline has been developed to describe each session of the Supervisory Series training program.

THE SUPERVISORY SERIES

The six-month Supervisory Series training program at Friendship Manor consisted of one three hour session every month. Due to the work schedule of the supervisors (first, second and third shifts), the monthly sessions were delivered three times each. The sessions were delivered on the first Wednesday of each month from April through September 2000. The session times were 8:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Although at times supervisors from all three shifts were represented in one session, typically third shift supervisors stayed after their normal shift ended to attend the 8:00 a.m. session. First shift supervisors attendance was divided among all three sessions and second shift supervisors attended the 3:00 p.m. session. Since all three shifts had to provide coverage for shifts other than their normal shifts, the first Wednesday of the month proved to be a very long workday for the supervisors.

Considering the long workdays, the supervisor's attitude toward the training was remarkably one of gratitude. Most of the supervisors had never been exposed to formal

supervisory training and welcomed the opportunity to devote three uninterrupted hours to focusing solely on supervisory skills development. Not unlike many other industries, the health care industry tends to promote a RN or LPN who performs well in their jobs to supervisor or manager. Many times the job in which they performed so well did not entail supervisory functions at all. Because they were a good employee it was assumed they would be a good supervisor.

The content of the six-month curriculum was derived from the job descriptions of the supervisors. The skills and competencies required to perform the supervisory aspects of the RN and LPN supervisor jobs outlined in the job descriptions were transformed into the training goals and objectives of The Supervisory Series.

THE SUPERVISORY SERIES

The first session of The Supervisory Series was entitled *The Role of the Supervisor*. The learning objectives for this session were:

1. Review the business reasons for providing quality customer service/resident care.
2. Identify the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of a supervisor.

In this session large and small group discussions and exercises focused on the following topics:

- The definition of “customer service” at Friendship Manor.
- The Friendship Manor Promise (mission statement).
- Types of turnover in staff.
- Influencing.
- Planning.

- Organizing.
- Staffing.
- Directing.
- Controlling.

The Role of the Supervisor session was summarized by a discussion involving the above elements of supervision and how they relate to the *old way of managing* and the *new way of leading*.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The second session in The Supervisory Series was entitled *Effective Communication*. The learning objectives for this session were:

1. Practice key principles of communication.
2. Identify ways to build self-esteem in others.

In this session large and small group discussions and exercises focused on the following topics:

- Communication is two-way.
- All communication should meet a practical need and a personal need.
- Assumptions, preconceptions, prejudices and body language greatly influence the message received by the receiver.
- Perception is reality.
- How to build self esteem in oneself.
- How to build self esteem in others.

The *Effective Communication* session was summarized with small group

activities that involved role playing disciplinary situations using effective communication techniques while maintaining self esteem.

EFFECTIVE COACHING

The third session in The Supervisory Series was entitled *Effective Coaching*. The learning objectives for this session were:

1. Identify the three elements of effective coaching.
2. Practice coaching team members to obtain maximum performance.

In this session large and small group discussions and exercises focused on the following topics:

- Definition of coaching.
- When and where coaching is used.
- Maintaining and enhancing self-esteem.
- Focusing on specific behaviors and outcomes.
- Gaining commitment.

The *Effective Coaching* session was summarized with small group skill practices in which each participant was given a coaching situation and was asked to focus on the three elements of coaching.

MANAGING MULTIPLE PRIORITIES

The fourth session in The Supervisory Series was entitled *Managing Multiple Priorities*. The learning objectives for this session were:

1. Practice the basic techniques associated with managing multiple priorities.
2. Develop personal strategies for managing multiple priorities.

In this session large and small group discussions and exercises focused on the

following topics:

- Key areas of responsibilities.
- The Time Management Matrix, specifically quadrant two activities.
- Review of typical time wasters, with a focus of elimination from personal lists.
- A*B*C* method of prioritizing activities.
- Techniques in managing the priorities of others.
- Prioritizing tools.

The *Managing Multiple Priorities* session was summarized by small group skill practices in which participants were asked to prioritize several daily tasks and emergencies for themselves and their staff.

UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIORAL STYLES

The fifth session in The Supervisory Series was entitled *Understanding Behavioral Styles*. The learning objectives for this session were:

1. Practice the basic behavioral styles associated with team dynamics.
2. Develop personal strategies for accommodating and motivating different behavioral styles in the workplace.

In this session large and small group discussions and exercises focused on the following topics:

- Identification of personal behavioral style through the use of a self assessment tool.
- Review of each style, discussing the strengths and weaknesses of each.
- Review of motivational factors and needs in each style.

The Understanding Behavioral Styles session was summarized with small group role plays in which participants were given several scenarios involving certain behavioral styles and were asked to determine the best approach to motivate that behavioral style.

INNOVATION: THE CREATIVE APPROACH TO PROBLEM SOLVING

The final session in The Supervisory Series was entitled *Innovation: The Creative Approach To Problem Solving*. The learning objectives for this session were:

1. Identify innovation as it relates to organizations and problem-solving.
2. Review the steps of creating the innovative mind-set.

In this session large and small group discussions and exercises focused on the following topics:

- Facts associated with innovation.
- The “Ready, Fire...Aim” process.
- Killer phrases and their impact on the organization.
- Idea Mapping.
- Capturing ideas for implementation.
- Ways to increase ideas in the organization.

The *Innovation: The Creative Approach to Problem Solving* session was summarized by participants in small groups creatively solving problems in which they were asked to mind map ideas and collectively determine the best solution.

SUMMARY

Chapter II of this study presented an overview of the different components of the Supervisory Series training programs implemented at Friendship Manor Nursing Home. Chapter III will address the methods and procedures used to collect data for this research study.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

To successfully complete this study, specific methods and procedures must be followed. The purpose of this study was to compare the supervisor's perceptions of their supervisory skills at Friendship Manor after participating in a supervisory skills training program to those of the supervisors at Guggenheimer who have not participated in the supervisory skills training program. The descriptive method was used in this study. This chapter will describe the population, description of the instrument, methods of data collection, procedures for statistical analysis and a summary.

POPULATION

There were two populations represented in this study. The first population was comprised of the supervisors at Friendship Manor which included forty-two LPNs, twenty-one RNs and one Director of Nursing. The Friendship manor supervisors have completed the six-month Supervisory Series training. The second population was comprised of the supervisors at Guggenheimer which include twenty-eight LPNs, seventeen RNs and one Director of Nursing. The Guggenheimer supervisors have not received the six-month Supervisory Series training.

DESCRIPTION OF INSTRUMENT

A survey was designed in which the questions reflected the research goals of this

study. The research goals were derived from the training objectives of The Supervisory Series training at Friendship Manor. The attitudinal measuring technique used for the survey was the Likert Scale. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A of this study.

METHODS FOR COLLECTING DATA

The surveys were given to the Directors of Nursing for both Friendship Manor and Guggenheimer. A cover letter was attached to each survey outlining the significance of the study and why it was important for the respondent to participate in the survey. A copy of the cover letter can be found in Appendix B of this study.

Both nursing homes administered their surveys through the interoffice mail and the respondents anonymously returned them through the interoffice mail. At both nursing homes, the surveys were returned to the Directors of Nursing who then returned them to the researcher.

PROCEDURES FOR STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

After the surveys were collected, the data were compiled and tabulated to determine the frequencies of response and examine the data with regard to the comparisons of the supervisor's perceptions at each nursing home. The result of this data were represented in figures and tables. The figures and tables depicted the results of the data analysis in the form of percentages and the measure of central tendency of median for each question from both populations. Also, a t-test was performed on the data.

SUMMARY

In this chapter the methods and procedures for collecting data were discussed. The survey was the only form of data collection used. Also in this chapter the population, instrument design, data collection and statistical analysis were outlined. The data received from the surveys will be further explained in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter is a presentation of findings determined through this research. The statistical results of the findings are reported in this chapter. A supervisory skills survey was given to supervisors at Friendship Manor Nursing Home and at Guggenheimer Nursing Home to determine their perception of their supervisory skills. The purpose of the survey was to compare the supervisor's perception of their supervisory skills at Friendship Manor after participating in a supervisory skills training program to those of the supervisors at Guggenheimer who have not participated in the supervisory skills training program.

SURVEY RESULTS

Table I indicates the number of surveys that were collected as opposed to the number given out. A total of 64 surveys were given out at Friendship Manor which resulted in 29 completed and returned. The percentage rate on the returned surveys was 45%. A total of 46 surveys were given out at Guggenheimer which resulted in 19 completed and returned. The percentage rate on the returned surveys was 41%.

TABLE I

PERCENTAGE OF SURVEYS RETURNED

	Friendship Manor	Guggenheimer
NUMBER OF SURVEYS	64	46
COMPLETED SURVEYS	29	19
RESPONSE RATE	45%	41%

Table II indicates the median for each survey question answered by respondents from Friendship Manor and Guggenheimer. The median represents the middle value in the set of responses, above and below which lie an equal number of responses.

Friendship Manor medians are indicated in the yellow "FM" column and Guggenheimer medians are indicated in the green "G" column.

TABLE II

MEDIANS FOR EACH QUESTION FM G

1. I understand why it is important to provide quality customer service to all residents/patients.	1	2	3	4	5	5	
2. I have a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations involved in my position as a supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5	5	
3. I have some control over the level of turnover within my team.	1	2	3	4	5	3	
4. I am an effective organizer and planner.	1	2	3	4	5	4	
5. Most of the time I am able to influence people in a positive way.	1	2	3	4	5	4	
6. I am an effective communicator.	1	2	3	4	5	4	

7. I am able to listen to others without prejudices and assumptions getting in the way of their intended message.	1	2	3	4	5	4	█
8. I do a good job as a supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5	4	█
9. I am mindful of the feelings and emotions of others.	1	2	3	4	5	4	█
10. In disciplinary situations, I try to maintain the self-esteem of others	1	2	3	4	5	4	█
11. I understand the importance of coaching employees who need assistance in improving their performance.	1	2	3	4	5	5	█
12. In a coaching situation I try to maintain and enhance self-esteem.	1	2	3	4	5	4	█
13. In a coaching situation I try to focus on specific behaviors that I have observed and not on general attitudes.	1	2	3	4	5	4	█
14. In a coaching situation I try to focus on what I want the specific outcome to be.	1	2	3	4	5	4	█
15. Before a coaching session ends, I try to gain commitment from the employee.	1	2	3	4	5	4	█
16. I feel that I am able to manage all of my responsibilities effectively.	1	2	3	4	5	4	█

17. I have strategies for managing multiple priorities.	1	2	3	4	5	4	1
18. I am aware of typical time wasters and try to eliminate them from my day.	1	2	3	4	5	4	1
19. I am able to help others in managing their priorities.	1	2	3	4	5	4	1
20. I understand that all employees are not motivated by the same things.	1	2	3	4	5	5	1
21. I understand how to relate to the different behavioral styles within my team.	1	2	3	4	5	4	1
22. I am able to solve most problems without taking them to my manager.	1	2	3	4	5	4	1
23. I am able to get the employees on my team to think through problems before bringing them to me.	1	2	3	4	5	4	1
24. I try to encourage employees on my team to make suggestions on ways to improve working conditions or procedures.	1	2	3	4	5	5	1
25. I try to remain positive in my approach to problem solving and avoid negative language.	1	2	3	4	5	4	1

Table III indicates the percentage for each response from each nursing home.

The percentages are denoted under each question.

TABLE III
PERCENTAGES FOR EACH QUESTION

1. I understand why it is important to provide quality customer service to all residents/patients.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor				14	86
Guggenheimer				11	89
2. I have a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations involved in my position as a supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor				24	76
Guggenheimer			11	58	31
3. I have some control over the level of turnover within my team.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor	14	21	17	38	10
Guggenheimer		21	16	47	16
4. I am an effective organizer and planner.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			3	52	45
Guggenheimer			21	32	47
5. Most of the time I am able to influence people in a positive way.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			14	48	38
Guggenheimer			11	53	36
6. I am an effective communicator.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			14	62	24
Guggenheimer			5	58	37

7. I am able to listen to others without prejudices and assumptions getting in the way of their intended message.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			10	55	35
Guggenheimer				58	42
8. I do a good job as a supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			7	55	38
Guggenheimer			16	68	16
9. I am mindful of the feelings and emotions of others.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor				52	48
Guggenheimer				37	63
10. In disciplinary situations, I try to maintain the self-esteem of others	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			4	48	48
Guggenheimer			10	32	58
11. I understand the importance of coaching employees who need assistance in improving their performance.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor		3	4	31	62
Guggenheimer				42	58
12. In a coaching situation I try to maintain and enhance self-esteem.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor		4	7	41	48
Guggenheimer				47	53
13. In a coaching situation I try to focus on specific behaviors that I have observed and not on general attitudes.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			14	52	34
Guggenheimer			5	58	37

14. In a coaching situation I try to focus on what I want the specific outcome to be.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			8	65	27
Guggenheimer			5	42	53
15. Before a coaching session ends, I try to gain commitment from the employee.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			20	45	35
Guggenheimer		5	11	58	26
16. I feel that I am able to manage all of my responsibilities effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			21	45	34
Guggenheimer		11	16	47	26
17. I have strategies for managing multiple priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			28	38	34
Guggenheimer			16	47	37
18. I am aware of typical time wasters and try to eliminate them from my day.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor		3	14	59	24
Guggenheimer			5	58	37
19. I am able to help others in managing their priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			21	52	27
Guggenheimer			26	53	21
20. I understand that all employees are not motivated by the same things.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor				34	66
Guggenheimer			11	26	63

21. I understand how to relate to the different behavioral styles within my team.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			10	66	24
Guggenheimer			11	37	52
22. I am able to solve most problems without taking them to my manager.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor		4	10	62	24
Guggenheimer			11	47	42
23. I am able to get the employees on my team to think through problems before bringing them to me.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor	4	4	41	41	10
Guggenheimer		11	26	52	11
24. I try to encourage employees on my team to make suggestions on ways to improve working conditions or procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			10	38	52
Guggenheimer				58	42
25. I try to remain positive in my approach to problem solving and avoid negative language.	1	2	3	4	5
Friendship Manor			3	59	38
Guggenheimer				58	42

SUMMARY

In this chapter the results of the survey were presented. Table I illustrates the response rates for each survey. Table II illustrates the median responses for each question from each nursing home. Table III illustrates the percentages for each response from each nursing home. The statistics gathered from the surveys were calculated in this chapter, while the findings will be used to determine the conclusions and recommendations in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter was to summarize what has been accomplished in the other four chapters. Conclusions were derived to answer research goals established for this study. Recommendations were drawn on the finding.

SUMMARY

The problem of this study was to compare the supervisor's perception of their supervisory skills at Friendship Manor after participating in a supervisory skills training program to those of the supervisors at Guggenheimer who have not participated in the supervisory skills training program. To find the answer to this problem, research goals were established. They consisted of the following:

1. Determine the supervisor's perception of their role as a supervisor.
2. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to effectively communicate with their employees.
3. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to effectively coach their employees.
4. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to manage multiple priorities.
5. Determine the supervisor's perception of the different factors involved in motivating their employees.
6. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to effectively solve problems.

7. Determine the degree to which the supervisors who had participated in the supervisory training had a higher perception of their supervisory skills.

One of the many challenges the health care industry faces today is proper staffing. In the case of supervisors who are also RNs or LPNs, it is very difficult to find the time to properly train these supervisors in all of the clinical components of their job, much less the supervisory components. It is critical that supervisory training be targeted to specific areas in which the supervisor's skills are the most deficient. Therefore, an analysis of the supervisor's perceptions of their supervisory skills with and without prior supervisory skills training will provide some insight into how supervisory training is best received by the supervisors.

The limitations of this study are the individual styles of the respondents which might limit the effectiveness of the training. The survey does not permit the respondents to explain answers therefore, they might be forced to make a selection that does not reflect exactly the way they feel.

The two populations who participated in this study were comprised of forty-two LPNs, twenty-one RNs and one Director of Nursing at Friendship Manor and twenty-eight LPNs, seventeen RNs and one Director of Nursing at Guggenheimer. The Guggenheimer supervisors have not received the six-month supervisory training program.

The instrument used to gather data in this study was a twenty-five question survey. The attitudinal measuring technique used for this survey was the Likert Scale. Both nursing homes administered their surveys through the interoffice mail and the

respondents anonymously returned them through the interoffice mail. At both nursing homes the surveys were returned to the Directors of Nursing who then returned them to the researcher. The result of the data from the surveys were presented in the form of percentages, a t-test and the measure of central tendency, median, for both populations.

CONCLUSIONS

Answering the research objectives, the study revealed the following:

1. Determine the supervisor's perception of their role as a supervisor.

Questions 1-5 and question 8 address this objective. The medians for these questions for both nursing homes were the same except in questions 2 and 3. In question 2 the median was one response lower for Guggenheimer which would lead to the conclusion that Friendship supervisors feel they better understand what is expected from them as a supervisor than the Guggenheimer supervisors. In question 3 the median was one response lower for Friendship which would lead to the conclusion that Friendship supervisors feel they have less control over turnover in their department than the supervisors at Guggenheimer feel they do.

2. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to effectively communicate with their employees.

Questions 6, 7 and 9 address communication. Questions 6 and 7 had the same median for both groups. In question 9 the median was one response lower for Friendship which would lead to the conclusion that Friendship's supervisors feel they are less mindful of the emotions and feeling of others than supervisors at Guggenheimer.

3. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to effectively coach their employees.

Questions 10 – 15 address coaching. The medians for questions 11, 13, and 15 were the same for both groups. In question 10 the median was one response lower for Friendship which would lead to the conclusion that Friendship supervisors feel they do not try to maintain the self-esteem of others in disciplinary situations as much as the Guggenheimer supervisors feel they do. In question 12 the median was one response lower for Friendship which would lead to the conclusion that Friendship supervisors do not feel they enhance self esteem in coaching situations as much as the supervisors at Guggenheimer feel they do. In question 14 the median was one response lower for Friendship which would lead to the conclusion that Friendship supervisors feel they do not focus on specific outcomes in coaching situations as much as the supervisors at Guggenheimer feel they do.

4. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to manage multiple priorities.

Questions 16 – 19 address management of multiple priorities. The medians for these questions were the same for both groups.

5. Determine the supervisor's perception of the different factors involved in motivating their employees.

Questions 20 and 21 address motivation. The median for question 20 was the same for both groups. In question 21 the median was one response lower for Friendship. This would lead to the conclusion that Friendship supervisors feel

that they do not understand how to relate to different behavioral styles as much as the supervisors at Guggenheimer feel they do.

6. Determine the supervisor's perception of their ability to effectively solve problems.

Questions 22 – 25 address problem solving. In these question the medians were the same for both groups except in question 24 in which the median was one response lower for Guggenheimer. This would lead to the conclusion that supervisors at Guggenheimer do not feel they encourage their team to make suggestions to improve working conditions as much as the supervisors at Friendship feel they do.

7. Determine the degree to which the supervisors who had participated in the supervisory training had a higher perception of their supervisory skills.

Out of 25 questions, the medians for both groups were the same in 17 questions. Of the 8 questions that the medians differed in, all but one question resulted in a higher response by Guggenheimer. Except for 2 questions, Friendship Manor had a broader range (from lowest to highest on the scale) than Guggenheimer in Table III, percentages for each questions. In the questions where the medians differed, the difference was only by one response. Although only slightly, the supervisors at Guggenheimer rated their supervisory skills higher than the supervisors at Friendship rated their supervisory skills.

Overall, there was very little difference in the results of the surveys. A t-test score of 4, using 46 degrees of freedom, was found to be insignificant at the .05 level. An explanation for the slightly higher perception of supervisory skills by the supervisors at

Guggenheimer is their possible lack of knowledge of specific supervisory skills that are taught in supervisory training and are truly necessary for a successful supervisor to possess. They may not know what they do not know. It is typical during a training session for a participant to learn a new skill that they did not realize the importance of before attending the training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The supervisors at Friendship Manor should participate in follow-up sessions to address the areas in which they rated their skills at a three or below. The follow-up sessions would not be mandatory which would allow only the supervisors who needed the development to attend.
2. The supervisors at Guggenheimer should participate in the six-month Supervisory Series training program. A pre-test and post-test should be given measuring the increase in their knowledge of specific supervisory skills.
3. At the completion of the six-month Supervisory Series a study should be conducted to compare Guggenheimer supervisors perception of their supervisory skills compared to the survey results of Friendship Manor supervisors in this study.

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APPENDIX A
SAMPLE OF RESEARCH SURVEY

Supervisory Skills Survey

Directions: Please circle one numbered response for each of the following questions.

1 = strongly disagree

2 = disagree

3 = undecided

4 = agree

5 = strongly agree

1. I understand why it is important to provide quality customer service to all residents/patients.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations involved in my position as a supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I have some control over the level of turnover within my team.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am an effective organizer and planner.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Most of the time I am able to influence people in a positive way.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am an effective communicator.	1	2	3	4	5

7. I am able to listen to others without prejudices and assumptions getting in the way of their intended message.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I do a good job as a supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am mindful of the feelings and emotions of others.	1	2	3	4	5
10. In disciplinary situations, I try to maintain the self-esteem of others.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I understand the importance of coaching employees who need assistance in improving their performance.	1	2	3	4	5
12. In a coaching situation I try to maintain and enhance self-esteem.	1	2	3	4	5
13. In a coaching situation I try to focus on specific behaviors that I have observed and not on general attitudes.	1	2	3	4	5
14. In a coaching situation I try to focus on what I want the specific outcome to be.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Before a coaching session ends, I try to gain commitment from the employee.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I feel that I am able to manage all of my responsibilities effectively.	1	2	3	4	5

17. I have strategies for managing multiple priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am aware of typical time wasters and try to eliminate them from my day.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am able to help others in managing their priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I understand that all employees are not motivated by the same things.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I understand how to relate to the different behavioral styles within my team.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am able to solve most problems without taking them to my manager.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I am able to get the employees on my team to think through problems before bringing them to me.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I try to encourage employees on my team to make suggestions on ways to improve working conditions or procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I try to remain positive in my approach to problem solving and avoid negative language.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

APPENDIX B
SAMPLE OF COVER LETTER

November 10, 2000

To all Supervisors,

I am a graduate student at Old Dominion University. As part of a research study that I am conducting on the effectiveness of supervisory training, I would very much appreciate your responses to the attached survey.

I have spoken with your Director of Education who believes your responses to this survey will also be instrumental in the development of future programs designed to aid you in becoming more successful in your supervisory/management position. As you know, training programs are much more effective when the participants have had the opportunity to provide valuable input into the design of the program.

The attached survey should take approximately ten minutes to complete. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of collecting data for the research study and as an aid in the development of your future training programs.

Sincerely,

Kay Davis

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE OF FOLLOW-UP LETTER

February 23, 2001

To all Supervisors,

I would like to thank all of you that took the time to complete the supervisory survey. Your time is much appreciated and your responses will be very helpful in the culmination of data for my research paper as well as providing valuable information to help focus the design of future training on your specific development needs.

For those of you who haven't had the opportunity to complete the survey, I would appreciate your responses no later than Friday, March 2, 2001.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kay Davis