Supervising Student Employees

Dr. Leslie Mills
Career and Professional Development Center
WHAT IS YOUR JOB AS A SUPERVISOR?

Train  Motivate

Guide  Evaluate

In 1968 48% of 15-17 year olds reported working in any fashion in the prior year. In 2018 this number had dropped to 19%.
ESTABLISH CLEAR GOALS FOR THE STUDENT

• Orient the student to the department
• Outline all procedures, ASSUME NOTHING
• Review department handbook/policies
• Clearly outline expectations
• Always use constructive language
Many of our students this may be their first introduction to the professional world.

**SET A POSITIVE EXAMPLE**

- Be punctual and professional yourself.
- Always use constructive language when critiquing a project.
- Don’t lose your temper!
UNIQUE CHALLENGES WHEN SUPERVISING STUDENTS

Conflicts between academics and job.
Your challenge as a supervisor is to balance “school comes first” and teaching students that they must learn time management.

Set clear expectations in the beginning

- Can they study if their work is done?
- Are they allowed to take off to study for finals?
- What are the procedures to follow if they can’t come into work?
SHOW APPRECIATION FOR A JOB WELL DONE

✓ Positive feedback is the best training tool
✓ Everyone likes to know they are appreciated
✓ Give credit where it is due.
BE AN ACCESSIBLE SUPERVISOR

Try not to be intimidating

Ask for questions and concerns

Some students have never worked before. Remember their student employment is a learning experience!
ALLOW FOR STUDENT INPUT AND DELEGATE

- Students have a lot to offer.
- Ask for student suggestions
- Assume they are competent and responsible
- Provide opportunities for them to learn
- Train in procedures and skills for the job

Let your students know you trust them. Believing in them builds their self-esteem
YOUR ROLE AS A SUPERVISOR

BE A STUDENT
• Learn how to improve your skills
• Attend workshops
• Take classes
• Research and stay current

BE A TEACHER
• Share your knowledge and skills
• Be patient
• Understand that work may be a new experience
COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Practice open, honest communication

Practice good listening skills when discussing job performance

Discuss expectations, when an employee performance is not acceptable.

Is there a reason for poor job performance? What is going on in that student’s life.
HAVE A SUPPORT SYSTEM IN PLACE: UNEXPECTED THINGS HAPPEN, HELP YOUR STUDENTS BE PREPARED

- Who do they go to?
- What details are important to know?
- How will they contact help?
- When should they contact someone for help?
Reasons for poor job performance

Lack of knowledge about job description
• Provide additional training, job manual

Lack of skills for the job
• Provide job training and skill development

Personal Issues/problems
• Refer student to resources on campus

Conflict between other staff in the office
• Open communication, mediator

Lack of motivation
• Frequent feedback on performance, vary job responsibilities
DISCIPLINE AND TERMINATION

Your office should have procedures that are followed AND...

Students should have received a copy of the policy when they were hired

Verbal warning for poor performance

• Discuss problems and possible solutions, time frame

Second verbal warning with written documentation for continued poor performance (signed by the student)

• Discuss possible solutions and time frame
• Student must clearly understand expectations and consequences

Termination

• If poor performance continues, supervisor should consider termination

Immediate Termination for gross misconduct, including actions that threaten the safety of others, theft of university property, falsification of time sheets
Career & Professional Development Center
UC 304
Career.Center@tamucc.edu
361-825-2628