

## Boot Camp for New (and lightly-trained) Supervisors Week 3, Day 1: Knowledge Is Power and Respect

Great supervisors know what tasks their employees perform and are able to do those tasks themselves. Knowing what everyone does is easy for new supervisors that were team members before they were promoted. For supervisors who have been promoted from outside the group that they now supervise, it's more difficult.

Employees have a hard time respecting someone who knows less than they do. As a result, it's important to take the time upfront to be sure that we understand the roles, tasks, and responsibilities of each person. We also want to be sure that we understand how the actions of each person contribute to the overall goal of the team and the organization. We gain respect by putting ourselves in our employees' place and taking the time to fully understand how they spend their days.

Knowing how to do employees' tasks is good, but it's not enough. We also need to be willing to do those tasks when it is needed. Delegating tasks is important, and supervisors shouldn't routinely take on the tasks of their employees. However, there is a balance. Every now and then it's crucial for supervisors to roll up their shirtsleeves and help. Having an attitude of "that work is beneath me, and it's not my job" damages the relationship with employees.

In summary, the two key concepts to ensure that supervisors earn the respect of their employees are:

1. Know what your employees do and how to do it yourself. Understand how the work of each employee relates to the overall goals of the organization.
2. Don't hesitate to help when your help is needed.