

FIRST-LINE SUPERVISORS OF PRODUCTION AND OPERATING WORKERS

A DEEP DIVE FOR SKILLS-BASED HIRING

REV: 04/04/16

Occupation Overview: First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers

Foundational Competencies

- **Active Listening:** Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- **Speaking:** Talking to others to convey information effectively.
- **Reading Comprehension:** Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
- **Critical Thinking:** Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.
- **Coordination:** Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
- **Time Management:** Managing one's own time and the time of others.
- **Management of Personnel Resources:** Motivating, developing, and directing people as they work, identifying the best people for the job.
- **Judgment and Decision Making:** Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
- **Monitoring:** Monitoring/assessing performance of yourself, other individuals, or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action.
- **Social Perceptiveness:** Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.

Occupation-Specific Competencies

- **Basic Administrative Functions:** Experience dealing with planning, budgeting, and organizing of different resources (human, financial, or physical); activities may include weekly scheduling, employee assessments, and managing expenses.
- **Basic Microsoft Office:** Relatively-advanced skills with Excel and basic proficiency with PowerPoint and Word.
- **Basic Business Process and Analysis:** Exposure to identifying business process needs and determining possible solutions including life-cycle analysis and process reengineering.
- **Intermediate Employee Training:** Assist staff in using various techniques, tools, strategies, and materials to complete jobs.
- **Intermediate Manufacturing Processes:** Awareness of different processes, including Six Sigma and Lean Manufacturing.
- **Basic Mathematics:** Familiarity with the mathematics being applied in the daily operations of staff.
- **Basic HR Management and Planning:** Identifies and manages the current and future HR needs of an organizations in ways like succession planning, job analysis, performance appraisals, organizational development, HR policies, and organizational analysis.
- **Intermediate Material Moving and Transport:** Can manage the internal/external distribution of physical resources in production of goods.
- **Basic Payroll:** Knows and effectively manages employee process for monitoring timeliness and accuracy of time and labor entries into payroll systems.
- **Intermediate Physical Inspection and Quality Assurance:** Inspection and tests of products to evaluate quality or performance using a set of test tools.

Job Description (Example)

Directly supervise and coordinate the activities of production and operating workers such as inspectors, precision workers, machine setters and operators, assemblers, fabricators, and plant and system operators.

- May organize, prioritize, and plan work to accomplish production goals.
- May gather, interpret, and act upon multiple information inputs tied to manufacturing process.
- May schedule events, programs, and activities, as well as the work of others.
- May monitor and review information from materials, events, or the environment, to detect or assess problems.
- May provide information to supervisors, co-workers, and subordinates by telephone, in written form, e-mail, or in person.

Activities (Example List)

- Enforce safety and sanitation regulations.
- Direct and coordinate the activities of employees engaged in the production or processing of goods such as inspectors, machine setters, and fabricators.
- Confer with other supervisors to coordinate operations and activities within or between departments.
- Plan and establish work schedules, assignments, and production sequences to meet production goals.
- Inspect materials, products, or equipment to detect defects or malfunctions.
- Observe work and monitor gauges, dials, and other indicators to ensure that operators conform to production or processing standards.
- Conduct employee training in equipment operations or work and safety procedures, or assign employee training to experienced workers.
- Interpret specifications, blueprints, job orders, and company policies and procedures for workers.
- Keep records of employees' attendance and hours worked.
- Read and analyze charts, work orders, production schedules, and other records and reports to determine production requirements and to evaluate current production estimates and outputs.

Prioritized Foundational Competencies: First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers

Most Common Required Competencies	
1	Coordination: Adjust resources – staff and machines – to meet production levels and targets (e.g., “re-arrange if one line runs fast and one runs slow”); figure out and then assign staff to their best use; manage purchasing and scheduling and arrange for production needs (e.g., expedite needed material; move people to production choke points).
2	Speaking: Coordinate between upper management and the floor staff; provide important updates, as needed, to management on key issues (e.g., production delays, staff problems, new ideas); emphasize consistency and accuracy both with the staff and management.
3	Judgment and Decision Making: Assign staff to their best use; know when someone on the team needs to be let go – and follow-through; provide leadership for the team’s QA process and help bring team members together to solve problems as they arise.

Most Common Break Point Competencies	
1	Management of Personnel Resources: Motivating, developing, and directing people as they work, identifying the best people for the job; know how to increase the skills of your people and make them more productive; use a tailored management style for each worker (“some work better with autonomy; others need direct management”).
2	Judgment and Decision Making: <i>See previous.</i>
3	Social Perceptiveness: Tailor communication to the individual staff member (“talk direct to some and sensitively to others”); be helpful to your team and management; build personal relationships (“know your people”); build healthy working relationships (“you are not a drill instructor”) but not friendships; be clear on what needs to be done and confirm people understand; view yourself as part of the team.

Most Preferred Competencies	
1	Critical Thinking: Production often includes high levels of danger - important to identify dangers and eliminate them on a continuing basis; “know what you do not know – and get help”; focus on what’s needed to get the optimal process, not what people do today or want to do tomorrow; identify risks to goals and limit them (e.g., take action before an issue becomes a crisis).
2	Social Perceptiveness: <i>See previous.</i>
3	Active Listening: Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times; sometimes just “listen to listen” to build productive relationships; give full attention to what other people say, understand key points, ask questions and do not interrupt at inappropriate times.

Most Hard-to-Find Competencies	
1	Management of Personnel Resources: <i>See previous.</i>
2	Critical Thinking: <i>See previous.</i>
3	Judgment and Decision Making: <i>See previous.</i>

Most Evolving Competencies	
1	Critical Thinking: Evolution driven by new work environments, projects and safety regulations; changes make it more important to identify and eliminate dangers on a continuing basis; “know what you do not know – and get help”; focus on what’s needed to get the optimal process, not what people do today or want to do tomorrow; identify risks to goals and limit them.
2	Management of Personnel Resources: Evolution due to new employees, hiring practices, and work processes; changes increase value of identifying the best people for the job and knowing how to increase the skills of your people and make them more productive; use a tailored management style for each worker (“some work better with autonomy; others need direct management”).
3	Active Listening: Evolution driven by increasingly diverse workforce and complicated production; changes make it more important for supervisors to communicate effectively and build productive relationships with subordinates; giving full attention to what other people are saying, understanding key points, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.

Prioritized Occupation-Specific Competencies: First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers

Most Common Required Competencies	
1	Manufacturing Processes: Demonstrate an aptitude for process improvements (specific training not needed); demonstrate an ability to learn; knowledge of production processes a plus but not need to have; valuable to understand how the company measures itself (e.g., Six Sigma, utilization, equipment availability).
2	Employee Training: Identify training needs and staff strengths; demonstrate skills to staff and use simple explanations (“be detail oriented and very specific”); connect high skill to low skill staff on your team and bring people together.
3	Physical Inspection and Quality Assurance: Inspection and tests of products to evaluate quality or performance using a set of test tools including a caliper, SPC chart; know enough about quality metrics and process to understand quality staff; identify QA problems but mostly rely on others to fix.

Most Common Break Point Competencies	
1	Employee Training: <i>See previous.</i>
2	Manufacturing Processes: <i>See previous.</i>
3	HR Management and Planning: Use company tools to schedule staff work and to perform staff appraisals; communicate and enforce company policies consistently (glasses, ear covers); communicate effectively and succinctly with HR and/or temp agencies to fill staffing needs as needed and to bring someone on full-time.

Most Preferred Competencies	
1	Employee Training: <i>See previous.</i>
2	Manufacturing Processes: <i>See previous.</i>
3	HR Management and Planning: <i>See previous.</i>

Most Hard-to-Find Competencies	
1	Manufacturing Processes: <i>See previous.</i>
2	Employee Training: <i>See previous.</i>
3	Business Process and Analysis: Able to break down production process and identify ways to improve on regular basis; able to communicate with others (e.g., management) to figure out how to change the production process to better meet customer needs, reduce cost, or decrease production time.

Most Evolving Competencies	
1	Employee Training: Evolution due to new hires, hiring practices and skill requirements; changes make it more important for supervisors to understand requirements, identify staff training needs and strengths; demonstrate skills to staff and use simple explanations (“be detail oriented and very specific”); connect high skill to low skill staff on your team and bring people together.
2	Business Process and Analysis: Evolution driven by emergence of new technologies and business/production processes; changes increase value of breaking down processes and regularly identifying opportunities for improvement; able to communicate with others to figure out how to change the production process to better meet customer needs, reduce cost, or decrease production time.
3	Manufacturing Processes: Evolution due to new or improved manufacturing processes; changes make it more important to understand how company measures itself (e.g., Six Sigma, utilization, equipment availability) and to demonstrate an aptitude for continuous process improvements (specific training not needed).

Occupation Deep Dive: First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers

Job Titles Within This Occupation

- Production Supervisor
- Supervisor
- Area Supervisor
- Plant Manager
- Manufacturing Supervisor
- Shop Supervisor
- Assembly Supervisor
- Department Manager
- Molding Supervisor
- Production Manager
- Shift Supervisor

- Team Leader
- Production Aide
- Shift Coordinator
- Shift Lead

Certification and Education Preferences (Example)

- Commercial Drivers License (CDL)

Tools Used (Example List)

- Time Accounting Software (Kronos, WorkTech Time)
- Forklifts
- Payroll Administration Tools (ADP)
- Employee Training Programs
- Materials Management Software
- Enterprise Resource Planning Software
- Databases (SQL, Oracle)

Other Relevant Foundational Competencies

1	Active Listening
2	Speaking
3	Reading Comprehension
4	Critical Thinking
5	Coordination
6	Time Management
7	Management of Personnel Services
8	Judgment and Decision Making
9	Monitoring
10	Social Perceptiveness
11	Writing
12	Persuasion
13	Complex Problem Solving
14	Active Learning
15	Learning Strategies
16	Negotiation
17	Instructing
18	Operation Monitoring
19	Quality Control Analysis
20	Operations Analysis
21	Systems Evaluation
22	Service Orientation
23	Systems Analysis
24	Operation and Control
25	Troubleshooting

Other Relevant Occupation-Specific Competencies

1	Administrative Functions
2	Microsoft Office
3	Business Process and Analysis
4	Employee Training
5	Manufacturing Processes
6	Mathematics
7	HR Management and Planning
8	Material Moving and Transport
9	Payroll
10	Physical Inspection and Quality Assurance
11	Packaging
12	Operations Management
13	Warehouse/Inventory Management
14	Employee Relations
15	Machinery
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