

Umiker's Management Skills

FOR THE NEW
HEALTH CARE
SUPERVISOR

SEVENTH EDITION

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Preface

In moving from the sixth edition of *Umiker's Management Skills for the New Health Care Supervisor* to this seventh edition, I continued to preserve Dr. William Umiker's style and remain consistent with the manner of organizing and presenting material that characterized his earlier editions. Dr. Umiker always used a straightforward and uncluttered way of presenting information and advice in clear and concise terms. I believe his approach to the material is well-suited to students seeking careers in the healthcare industry and the aspiring, new, or even experienced first-line supervisor who wishes to do his or her very best in what has become a position of increasing responsibility, importance, and difficulty.

The principal strengths of the earlier editions were found in the clarity and simplicity of presentation, making the book an extremely usable text and reference. In addressing the *Seventh Edition*, it has been my intent to preserve the tone of the earlier editions, so with few changes I have retained the level of language and order of presentation of the previous editions. A number of chapters have been updated and a fair amount of new material has been provided, continuing, I hope, to enhance the book's value for classroom work, continuing-education activities, and self-study purposes.

All material carried over to this *Seventh Edition* has been "tuned up" in terms of language and syntax, and a few errors that had crept into the previous edition were corrected. Throughout the book the case studies, exercises, and questions were improved where possible, and some new anecdotal examples and case-study scenarios have been added within about half of the chapters. Also, some references were updated, and the lists of recommended reading and other resources were expanded for some of the chapters.

Among the more significant improvements is the addition of new Chapter 36, "Supervising in a Union Environment," recognizing the expanding involvement of unions in health care and describing how this involvement may affect the role of the first-line supervisor. Also essentially new is Chapter 37, "The Supervisor's Future," which combines, encapsulates, and updates the contents of the former Chapter 36, "The Supervisor's Career Development," and Chapter 37, "Politics, Networks, and the Supervisor's Future."

This book was written primarily for healthcare workers who have had little or no management training but who may be, or have been, promoted to supervisory positions or who aspire to such positions, and for students entering the educational processes leading to healthcare and health-related occupations. Seasoned first-line supervisors as well as middle managers will also find many practical suggestions for improving their effectiveness.

Supervisors continue to wrestle with smaller budgets, staffing limitations and restrictions, greater responsibilities, and more time pressure. Morale continues to decline in many organizations, and eroding job security is adding more stress to an already stressful environment. This seventh edition addresses these continually changing circumstances and their impact on supervisors.

To a considerable extent this book is about dealing with people problems, the difficult, frustrating, and time-consuming problems that go with the territory wherever working people provide goods or services for other people. The supervisor may sometimes feel that never-ending people problems take away from one's ability to address the "real work." For the supervisor, however, the people and their problems are, in fact, the core of his or her real work. It is certain that if there were far fewer people problems to address, far fewer supervisors would be needed.

Supervisors and other managers are judged not only by their personal performance but also by the performance of their subordinates. This book provides the guidance and tools they need to get maximum effort and results from their staff.

The limited amount of theory presented within these pages is offered only to provide the foundation for a few of the concepts addressed, and little will be said about managing an organization from a top-down perspective. The focus throughout is providing practical advice about getting things done through and with the people who do the hands-on work day in and day out. This includes not only what to do but also how to do it.

The advice and guidance provided by this book can help and enable you to:

- Hone your supervisory and management skills to secure a job and build a career in the healthcare industry
- Survive the transition from professional or technical employee to supervisor
- Improve customer satisfaction
- Plan, organize, and delegate work to achieve greater productivity
- Improve policies, position descriptions, and work standards
- Recruit, select, orient, and train new employees more skillfully
- Implement organizational changes and build high-performing teams
- Improve safety and cope with violence in the workplace
- Enhance your leadership, coaching, counseling, and disciplinary skills
- Cultivate your communication, meeting, and negotiating expertise
- Provide your employees with helpful performance feedback
- Cope with cultural diversity, conflict, and problem employees
- Adjust to changes, the requirements of managed care, and the demands of cost control
- Encourage creativity, solve problems, and delegate more
- Stimulate staff development and groom a potential successor
- Improve your personal use of time and reduce time lost from external influences
- Reduce workplace stress and prevent burnout
- Increase your personal marketability and career development
- Develop an efficient personal network
- Sharpen your workplace political skills

About the Author

Charles R. McConnell, MBA, CM, is an independent healthcare management and human resources consultant and freelance writer and editor specializing in business, management, health care, and human resources topics. For 11 years, he was active as a management engineering consultant with the Management and Planning Services (MAPS) division of the Hospital Association of New York State (HANYS) and later spent 18 years as a hospital human resources officer. As an author, coauthor, and anthology editor, he has published a number of books and has contributed numerous articles to various publications. He is in his 36th year as editor of the quarterly professional journal *The Health Care Manager*.

New to This Edition (Seventh Edition)

The *Seventh Edition* maintains most of the overall organizational scheme of the previous edition, continuing to present the material in several “Parts” by general topic but with some changes within chapters.

A number of changes, improvements, and additions were made in response to helpful comments by readers and users. All chapters were re-edited for the purpose of clarifying some material, correcting a few minor errors, improving language and syntax, and updating material in a number of places. Two chapters were combined into one and an additional chapter was provided, maintaining the book at 37 chapters.

The case studies, exercises, and questions that appear throughout the text were improved where possible. A considerable number of additional cases and examples have been provided, most of them embedded within chapters in the form of anecdotes and scenarios offered for consideration. Several references were updated, as were some lists of recommended resources.

The more significant changes from the *Sixth Edition* to the *Seventh Edition* are encapsulated as follows:

- Chapter 1, “Do You Really Want to Be a Supervisor?” has been expanded to address promotion to supervision by way of an anecdotal example.
- Chapter 3, “Basic Management Functions,” expands the material offered concerning the basic management functions and provides a comprehensive illustration of the management functions in action.
- Chapter 5, “Position Descriptions and Performance Standards,” provides expanded consideration of the various origins of performance standards.
- Chapter 9, “Interviewing and Employee Selection,” provides essential updates concerning the interview process and offers an embedded anecdotal example of a potential trap in an interview process.
- Chapter 12, “Safety and Workplace Violence,” the introductory material is expanded, with statistics updated.
- Chapter 15, “Motivation, Reward, and Recognition,” has been expanded to include a significant section addressing the foundations of motivational theory as affects work organizations.
- Chapter 16, “Performance Feedback,” has had several sections added to clarify and expand upon the topic of performance evaluation.
- Chapter 20, “Employees with Problems,” has been expanded with a major illustrative scenario addressing chronic absenteeism.

- Chapter 25, “Managed Care,” has an added section on the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and its effects on managed care, plus a new section addressing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010.
- Chapter 33, “Decision Making and Problem Solving,” provides an additional section addressing the effects of stress and emotion of decision-making processes.
- Chapter 36, “Supervising in a Union Environment,” is an entirely new chapter that addresses why employees turn to unions, how supervisors must act during union organizing, and how a supervisor’s role is affected when it becomes necessary to interact with a union on a day-to-day basis. This chapter is provided in recognition of the increasing incidence of unionization in the healthcare industry.
- Chapter 37, “The Supervisor’s Future,” a new chapter that condenses and combines the former Chapter 36, “The Supervisor’s Career Development,” and Chapter 37, “Politics, Networks, and the Supervisor’s Future.” This chapter addresses the need to develop personal marketability, to learn how to survive in a highly political environment, take advantage of personal networking, and relate successfully with organizational superiors. Overall this chapter addresses the need for a balanced approach in fulfilling the responsibilities of supervision while also preparing for career advancement.

