

**SIXTH EDITION**

# **Umiker's Management Skills**

for the New Health Care Supervisor

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# Preface

In moving from the fifth edition of *Umiker's Management Skills for the New Health Care Supervisor* to this sixth edition, I was careful 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 sixth 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 to some extent 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 sixth 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, 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 Chapter 7, "The Supervisor's Legal Environment," providing a capsule review of legislation and regulations that can potentially affect the way the supervisor must approach the job. As noted in "New to This Edition," some chapters containing overlapping material or addressing interrelated concepts have been combined, reducing the total chapters in the book from 40 to 37.

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. 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, fewer professional workers, 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 sixth 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.

Not a great deal of theory will be found within these pages, 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

Charles R. McConnell



# About the Author

Charles R. McConnell, MBA, CM, is an independent healthcare management and human resources consultant and freelance writer specializing in business, management, healthcare, 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 30 books and has contributed numerous articles to various publications. He is in his 32nd year as editor of the quarterly professional journal, *The Health Care Manager*.



# New to This Edition

The *Sixth Edition* maintains the overall organizational scheme of the previous edition, continuing to present the material in six parts by general topic but with some changes in titles.

A number of changes, improvements, and additions were made in response to helpful comments by readers and users. All chapters were reedited for the purpose of clarifying some material, correcting a few minor errors, improving language and syntax, and updating material in a number of places. Some chapters were merged and combined where overlapping information existed, reducing the total chapters in the book from 40 to 37. “Key Terms” were added for each chapter immediately following the “Chapter Objectives.”

The case studies, exercises, and questions that appear throughout the text were improved where possible, several references were updated, and lists of recommended resources were expanded for several chapters.

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

- Chapter 2, “Customer Service,” was slightly expanded to acknowledge the effects of continuing organizational fragmentation and the resulting necessity to develop a strong reputation for positive customer service.
- Chapter 3, “Basic Management Functions,” combines the former Chapter 3, “Planning,” with the former Chapter 4, “Organizing, Coordinating, and Controlling,” for the purpose of bringing the basic functions of management together in a consistent presentation.
- Chapter 7, “The Supervisor’s Legal Environment,” provides an essential overview of the laws and regulations that can affect the way a supervisor approaches his or her job. This chapter highlights those laws the supervisor must be mindful of and those laws that explain why human resources and administration do some of the things they do.

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- Chapter 8, “Personnel Recruitment,” includes a brief addition concerning credentialing and the need to be aware of the possibility of fraud.
- Chapter 9, “Interviewing and Employee Selection,” was updated due to specific changes in the law and provides more information concerning references, background checks, and privacy issues.
- Chapter 14, “Coaching and Counseling,” combines the former Chapter 14, “Coaching,” with the former Chapter 17, “Counseling: Preventing Bigger Problems,” recognizing the similarity of portions of the topics and the natural overlap of some of the material.
- Chapter 16, “Performance Feedback,” now includes some additional information on the benefits and drawbacks of self-evaluation in performance appraisals.
- Chapter 17, “Disciplining: Correction of Behavior” (formerly Chapter 18), was slightly expanded concerning some specific disciplinary issues.
- Chapter 18, “Cultural Diversity: Managing the Changing Workforce,” includes a new paragraph on waning organizational loyalty in today’s workplace and the rise of the “free agent” phenomenon among some employees.
- Chapter 23, “Personnel Retention,” has been expanded to include information on how to define and measure employee turnover.
- Chapter 24, “Privacy and Confidentiality: Employees and Clients,” includes revised, expanded, and updated information about the continuing implementation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Chapter 25, “Managed Care” (formerly Chapter 26), was updated to reflect present-day concerns about managed care and the dominance of health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and other forms of managed care.
- Chapter 27, “Change as a Way of Life,” results from the combination of the former Chapter 28, “Job Redesign,” with the former Chapter 29, “Managing Change,” owing to the overlap of these basic concepts.
- Chapter 31, “Written Communication,” has been expanded to include an introduction to the fundamentals of grant writing.