

Supervision  
THAT  
Improves  
Teaching AND Learning

EDITION

*Strategies & Techniques*

Susan Sullivan / Jeffrey Glanz

*Foreword by Karen Osterman*



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term *supervision* connoted a distasteful, even “disgusting” metaphor for school improvement. Instead of using the words *supervision* or *supervisor*, educators, or what Glickman called “risk-taking practitioners,” were more comfortable with terms such as *instructional leadership* and *instructional leader*. The transition that Glickman and the authors of this comprehensive account of supervision envisioned was one that valued collegiality. Supervision, in the words of Sergiovanni (1992), was viewed as “professional and moral.”

Other models and conceptions of supervision emerged in an attempt to extend democratic methods and to dissociate from bureaucratic and inspectional supervision. Clinical, developmental, and transformational supervision, among other models, had a common bond in that they emerged to counter the ill effects of supervision’s bureaucratic legacy (see Table 1.1, Model 7).

### Reflection/Microlab

*From your experience, are collegiality and democratic supervision viable options for your school, district, or state? Explain. Are you familiar with the implementation of any existing collegial or democratic processes? If so, which ones? How have staff and administration responded to them?*

## STANDARDS-BASED SUPERVISION

Although the democratic methods “changing concepts” model had an impact on supervision in the 1990s, over the past several years, especially since the turn of the new century, supervisory practice has been shaped and influenced by the general movement toward standards-based reform. Standards-based reform has affected supervision so greatly that we have identified a new and current model of supervision that has impacted and will in all likelihood continue to impact supervision as a field of study and practice. We call that model “Standards-Based Supervision” (see Table 1.1).

Although they are not new, standards-based teaching and learning have influenced curriculum, supervision, and teacher education in significant ways.

Supervisors and those concerned with supervision have been particularly challenged in the past several years to implement supervisory practices that ensure the technical competence of teachers. Receiving strong political backing from both state and national agencies, standards-based supervision has, in some quarters, relegated supervisors to relying on checklists to ascertain the extent to which teachers are meeting various curricular and instructional objectives embedded in core curriculum standards at various grade levels. Such supervisory practices thwart meaningful supervision aimed at fostering closer collaboration and instructional dialogue to improve teaching and learning. Pajak (2000) points to the compatibility problem of trying to use standards-based supervision with clinical supervision. He warns, “If we fail to provide empathy-based supervision, the current standards-based environment will ultimately prove stultifying for both teachers and their students” (p. 241).

To best understand standards-based supervision, some background knowledge on standards-based reform is necessary. The national movement toward standards-based education, including high-stakes testing, has served to legitimize and bolster local reform proposals that have influenced supervisory practices. Raising standards and promoting uniformity of curricular offerings to

**I**n the previous chapter, you became acquainted with the historical framework of supervision and began to examine your present personal beliefs within the current context of supervision. This chapter explores and develops the interpersonal skills that we believe are a prerequisite to all effective supervisory practice. After a brief introduction to the philosophical principles underlying the supervisory beliefs and methods presented in this book, we briefly discuss the various communication techniques that are essential for all effective interpersonal relationships: listening, nonverbal clues, and reflecting, clarifying statements. We then offer exercises that hone these techniques. A description of the three interpersonal approaches that we believe are most effective in working with teachers follows. Before practicing each of the three interpersonal approaches in a group, we introduce a reflective practice model and provide guidelines for reflective practice that are used throughout this book to build and reinforce skills. This chapter concludes with two exercises that permit you to begin to internalize these approaches prior to implementing them on site.

## HOW WE LEARN

*People learn best through active involvement and through thinking about and becoming articulate about what they have learned. Processes, practices, and policies built on this view of learning are at the heart of a more expanded view of teacher development that encourages teachers to involve themselves as learners—in much the same way as they wish their students would.*

—Lieberman, 1995, p. 592

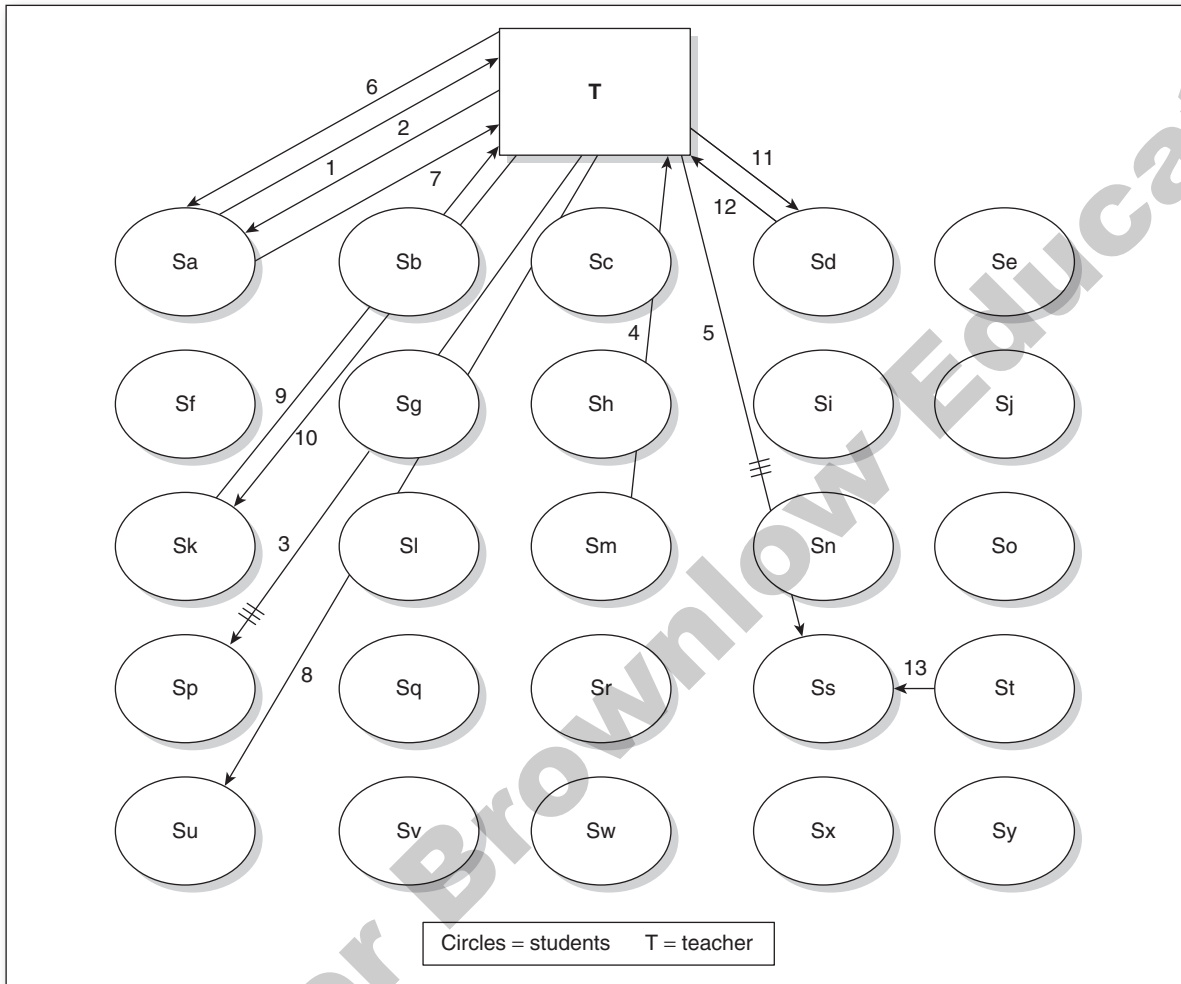
How many lectures have we all sat through during which the speaker expounded at great length about the importance of student-centered learning in the classroom? How many workshops have we attended where the presenter talked on and on about student-centered practices? A district superintendent recently hired one of us to facilitate a teacher-centered retreat, which he began with a two-hour speech. Ann Lieberman (1995) pointed out that “what everyone appears to want for students—a wide array of learning opportunities that engage students in experiencing, creating, and solving real problems, using their own experiences, and working with others—is for some reason denied to teachers when they are learners.” The main goal of this book is to “walk the talk”: to enable students of supervision not only to learn teacher-centered supervisory methods but also to have the opportunity to practice the skills and experience the perspectives as they are exposed to them.

The approaches to providing feedback outlined in this chapter and the methods presented for becoming proficient in their use are based on constructivist principles. In the Preface to *In Search of Understanding: The Case for Constructivist Classrooms*, Catherine Twomey Fosnot (1993) draws on a synthesis of work in cognitive psychology, philosophy, and anthropology to define constructivism as a theory not about teaching but about knowledge and learning. Knowledge is defined as temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and



**Figure 3.3** Diagram of Verbal Interactions

**Class:** 10-517  
**Date:** 11/15  
**Time:** 10:15 a.m.



Source: Glickman, Carl D.; Gordon, Stephen P.; Ross-Gordon, Jovita M., *SuperVision and Instructional Leadership: A Developmental Approach*, 8th Edition, © 2010. Reprinted by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, NJ.

**Reflect and Practice**

*Postnote.* How might the use of audiotaping assist or hinder interpretation of the nature of verbal interactions in a lesson?

**Tool 5a: Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences**

*Explanation.* Well versed in Gardner’s intelligences theory, both observer and observee have collaboratively decided to record the extent to which Gardner’s intelligences are incorporated in a fifth-grade science lesson (see Table 3.9). A specified period of time to observe the lesson is agreed upon. The observer

### Reflection

*What does Elena do to take some of the heat off of Sylvia? What strategies does she use in giving suggestions? Why do you think Sylvia gets so excited? Which approach did Elena choose and why?*

for videotaping volunteers. The following day, I'll explain the reflector's new role, and we'll try our first practice. How does that sound to you?

**Elena:** Terrific. How about meeting next week at the same time to touch base on how it's working? If it's going as planned, we can brainstorm some other refinements. Your feedback can help us decide if I need to revisit that class or if we can move on to another area.

### Key Steps: Directive Informational Approach

1. Identify the problem or goal and solicit clarifying information.
2. Offer solutions. Ask for the teacher's input into the alternatives offered and request additional ideas.
3. Summarize chosen alternatives, ask for confirmation, and request that the teacher restate final choices.
4. Set up a follow-up plan and meeting.

### Scenario B

Judy has been a French and Spanish teacher at New Hope for five years. As part of a state grant, all the world-language teachers have a bank of computers in their classrooms for the first time. Very little staff development accompanied the grant, so the teachers have been struggling to use the computers effectively. Elena is trying to get some funds to pay the world-language teachers to work on lessons for the wired world-language classroom.

In the meantime, Elena thought she might get the dialogue started by observing one of Judy's classes. At the planning conference, they decided that Elena would use the Student On-Task and Off-Task Behaviors tool (Table 3.8) to determine what is going on in the groups working on projects while Judy is helping the students on the computer. Elena gave a copy of the observation to Judy after class.

**Elena:** Did the on-task, off-task tool provide any helpful information?

**Judy:** It was actually pretty depressing. The students were off task much more than I had thought while I was helping at the computers. I guess that I was so immersed that I didn't realize how little work was getting done. On the other hand, when I left the computer group, they really stayed on task. I wonder what that means.

**Elena:** The students really can get involved in the computer work. It really has a lot of potential for world-language work. Your guiding them is so important. They are getting off on the right foot. What do you think you can do to get the rest of the class to stay on task while the computer group still needs assistance?