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Supervision Questions & Answers

(1) Based on data documenting the difference between healthy and unhealthy organizations, which statement describes a HEALTHY as contrasted with an unhealthy organization?

- A. innovation is not widespread but exists in the hands of a few.
- B. risks are not avoided but accepted as a condition of change.
- C. decision-making is not dispersed but delegated to organizational levels.
- D. conflict is not overt but resolved.

(2) Which of the following management actions is NOT conducive to greater job satisfaction?

- A. diversifying tasks in the unit as much as feasible
- B. permitting workers to follow through on tasks rather than carry out single segments of the process.
- C. avoiding the use of "projects teams" or "task forces"
- D. delegating authority to each layer of the hierarchy to the maximum extent as possible.

(3) According to studies in personnel and industrial psychology, information that travels along the "grapevine" or informal communication systems in an organization usually follows a pattern BEST classified

- A. cluster—key informants that tell several individuals one of whom passes it on the same way.
- B. wheel—around through successive informants until it reaches the source.
- C. chain—double informants linked to successive pairs.
- D. random probability—informant tells anyone he happens to encounter, and so forth.

(4) Which of the following statements concerning performance appraisal systems is NOT correct?

- A. they require line management participation.
- B. they provide for periodic discussion of performance between the supervisor and employee.
- C. they are used primarily to uncover employee weakness.
- D. they require supervisor training to assure uniform appraisals.

(5) The BASIC fact which should underlie all attempts at problem solving is that

- A. problems must be solved quickly since they usually cost money.
- B. there may be many basic causes of a single problem.
- C. a problem cannot be solved unless its cause is known.
- D. the committee method is the best problem-solving technique.

(6) Of the following MAIN reason it is important for an administrator in a large organization to properly coordinate the work delegated to subordinates is that such coordination

- A. makes it unnecessary to hold frequent staff meetings and conferences with key staff members.
- B. Reduces the necessity for regular evaluation of procedures and programs, production

and performance of personnel.

- C. Results in greater economy and stricter accountability for the organization's resources.
- D. Facilitates integration of the contributions of the numerous staff members who are responsible for specific parts of the total workload.

(7) Of the following, a serious DISADVANTAGE of a performance evaluation system based on standardized evaluation factors is that such a system tends to

- A. exacerbate the anxieties of those supervisors who are apprehensive about determining what happens to another person.
- B. subject the supervisor to psychological stress by emphasizing the incompatibility of his/her dual role as both judge and counselor.
- C. create organizational conflict by encouraging personnel who wish to enhance their standing to become too aggressive in the performance of their duties.
- D. lead many staff members to concentrate on measuring up in terms of the evaluation factors and to disregard other aspects of their work.

(8) Of the following, the type of decision which could be SAFELY delegated to LOWER-LEVEL staff without undermining basic supervisory responsibility is on which

- A. involves a commitment that can be fulfilled only over a long period of time
- B. has fairly uncertain goals and promise
- C. has the possibility of modification built into it
- D. may generate considerable resistance from those affected by it.

(9) The one of the following which would be the MOST appropriate way to reduce tensions between line and staff personnel in public service agencies is to

- A. provide in-service training that will increase the sensitivity of line and staff personnel to their respective roles
- B. assign to staff personnel the role of providing assistance only when requested by line personnel.
- C. separate staff from line personnel and provide staff with its own independent reward structure
- D. give line and staff personnel equal status in making decisions

(10) The BASIC purpose behind the principle of delegation of authority is to

- A. give the supervisor who is delegating a chance to acquire skills in higher level functions
- B. free the supervisor from routine tasks in order that he/she may do the important parts of his/her job
- C. prevent supervisors from overstepping the lines of authority which has been established
- D. Place the work delegated in the hands of those employees who can perform it best

(11) The 'span of control' for any supervisor is the

- A. number of tasks he/she is expected to perform
- B. amount of office space he/she occupies
- C. amount of work he/she is responsible for
- D. number of subordinates he/she can supervise effectively

(12) Of the following duties performed by a supervising employee, which would be considered a LINE function rather than a staff function

- A. evaluation of office personnel
- B. recommendations for disciplinary actions
- C. initiating budget requests for replacement of equipment
- D. inspections, at irregular times, of conditions and staff in the field

(13) When a subordinate fails to perform a delegated task, the MOST important question for the supervisor to consider is

- A. why the subordinate did not perform the task
- B. whom he can get to perform the task
- C. whether the task should be performed
- D. how he might delegate more efficiently

(14) In training a new employee, it is usually advisable to break down the job into meaningful parts and have the new employee master one part before going on to the next. Of the following, the BEST reason for using this technique is to

- A. let the new employee know the reason for what he is doing and thus encourage him to remain in the unit
- B. make the employee aware of the importance of the work and encourage him to work Harder
- C. show the employee that the work is easy so that he will be encouraged to work faster
- D. make it more likely that the employee will experience success and will be encouraged to continue learning the job

(15) Typically, when the technique of "supervision by results" is practiced, higher management sets down, either implicitly or explicitly, certain performance standards or goals that the subordinate is expected to meet. So long as these standards are met, management interferes very little. The most likely result of the use of this technique is that it will

- A. lead to ambiguity in terms of goals
- B. be successful only to the extent that close direct supervision is practiced
- C. make it possible to evaluate both employee and supervisory effectiveness
- D. allow for complete dependence on the subordinate's part

(16) Of the following, the BEST way for a supervisor to increase employees' interest in their work is to

- A. allow them to make as many decisions as possible
- B. demonstrate to them that he is as technically competent as they are
- C. give each employee a difficult assignment
- D. promptly convey to them instructions from higher management

(17) The one of the following which is LEAST important in maintaining a higher level of productivity on the part of employees is the

- A. provision of optimum physical working conditions for employees
- B. Strength of employees' aspirations for promotion
- C. anticipated satisfactions which employees hope to derive from their work
- D. employee's interest in their work

(18) Of the following possible characteristics of supervisors, the one most likely to lead to failure as a supervisor is

- A. a tendency to seek several opinions before making decisions to complex matters
- B. lack of a strong desire to advance to a top position in management
- C. little formal training in human relations skills
- D. poor relations with subordinates and other supervisory personnel

(19) People who break rules do so for a number of reasons. However, employees will break rules less often if

- A. the supervisor uses his own judgment about work methods
- B. the supervisor pretends to act strictly, but isn't really serious about it
- C. they really enjoy their work
- D. they have completed many years of service

(20) Assume that a supervisor gives his subordinates instructions which are appropriate and clear. The subordinate thereupon refuses to follow these instructions. Of the following, it would then be most appropriate for the supervisor to

- A. attempt to find out what it is that the employee objects to
- B. take disciplinary actions that same day
- C. remind the subordinate about supervisory authority and threaten him with discipline
- D. insist that the subordinate carry out the order immediately

KEY

- 1. B
- 2. C
- 3. A
- 4. C
- 5. C
- 6. D
- 7. D
- 8. C
- 9. A
- 10. B
- 11. D
- 12. D
- 13. A
- 14. D
- 15. C
- 16. A
- 17. A
- 18. D
- 19. C
- 20. A