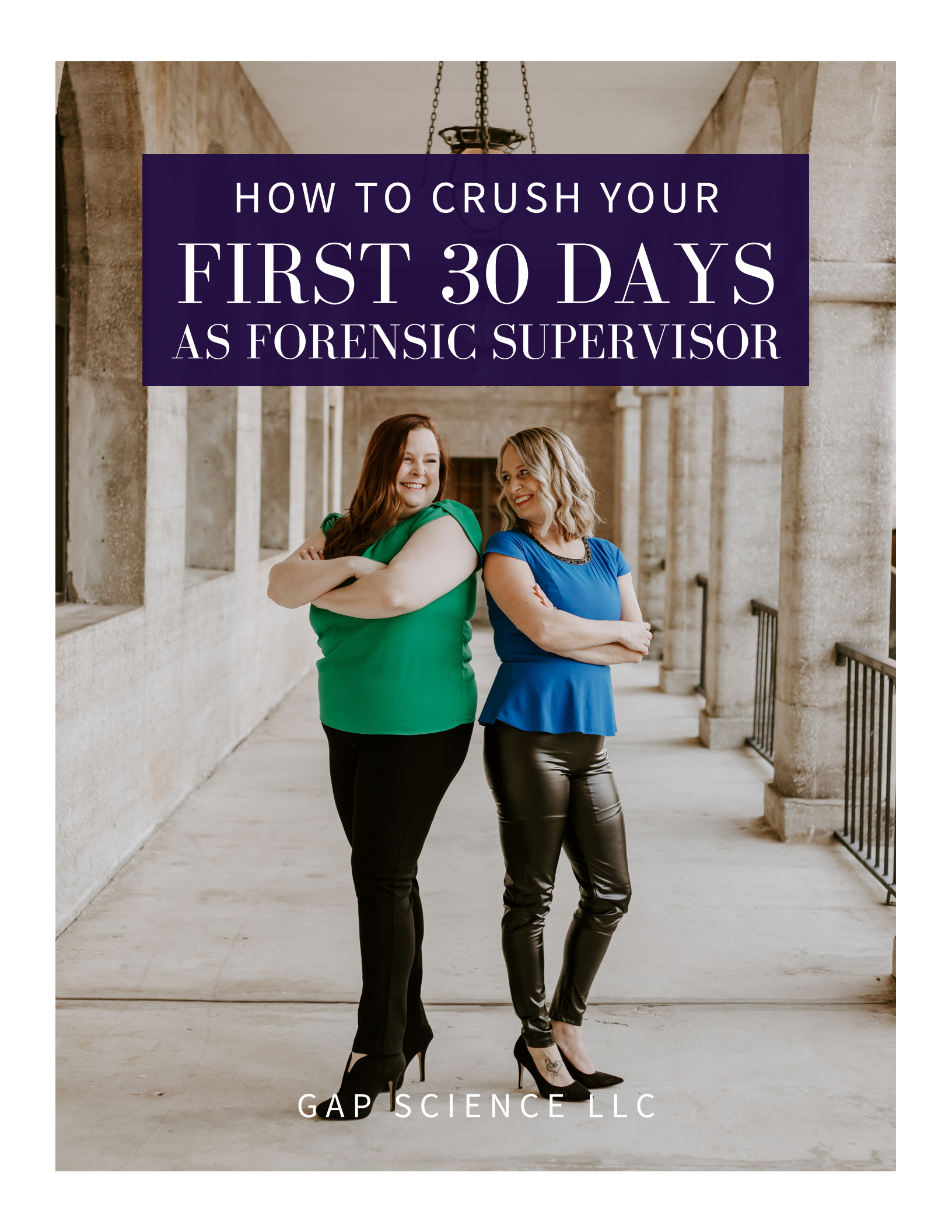


A photograph of two women standing back-to-back in a hallway with stone walls and columns. The woman on the left has long red hair and is wearing a green sleeveless top and black pants. The woman on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a blue short-sleeved top and black leather pants. Both are smiling and have their arms crossed. A purple rectangular box is overlaid on the top half of the image, containing white text.

HOW TO CRUSH YOUR FIRST 30 DAYS AS FORENSIC SUPERVISOR

GAP SCIENCE LLC



Welcome

Erin and Ashley started out as coworkers - Erin in charge of the Latent Print Unit and Ashley in charge of the Crime Scene Unit. While navigating their supervisory roles, they quickly realized the lack of training opportunities and resources for leaders in forensic science. We don't want that to happen to you! Our mission is to serve you with the tools you need to help you grow throughout your career.

You got this!

BRIDGING THE GAPS WITH
KNOWLEDGE TRAINING RESOURCES



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A photograph of two women sitting on a brick ledge outdoors. The woman on the left has long red hair and is wearing a green short-sleeved top. The woman on the right has blonde wavy hair and is wearing a blue short-sleeved top. They are both smiling and looking at each other. In the background, there is a large bush with bright red flowers and a stone wall. A large, semi-transparent quote mark is visible in the upper right corner of the image.

Look at you
getting promoted
and shit.

Introduction

Congratulations on your hard-earned promotion! We truly hope your agency gives you all the training and support you need to reach your full leadership potential. But if your experience is anything like ours, you have been tossed into your new role and are now in that initial "sink or swim" phase.

Your staff, chain of command, and agency will be paying attention to how you handle your first 30 days and your actions can have a lasting impact on their confidence in you as a leader. You never get a second chance to make a great first impression!

This e-book was created with the intent to toss you a life raft that you can use to stay afloat during this stressful and exciting time! We like to set the stage with this quote: "As you embark on a new journey, keep an open mind. You never know what could be until you try - waste no opportunity."

Ready - set - let's LEVEL UP!



Three Phases

01

ORIENTATION WEEK

You can't make informed decisions without doing your research first.

Schedule a meeting with your supervisor and complete the following:

- Get acquainted with your unit
- What needs your attention right now?
- Clarify roles & responsibilities
- List out your expectations.

02

FOCUS ON YOUR PEOPLE

You'll be sharpening those listening skills the next couple of weeks!

Schedule a meeting with your unit and unit supervisors during the second week **and individual staff meetings** the following week.

- Choose your meeting topics
- Learn the DiSC styles on your team

03

GROW INTO YOUR ROLE

Once you soaked in all that information, you can finally start implementing a plan! It's about to get real, real quick.

- Get organized
- Build connections
- Our final advice

Monthly planner

DATES TO REMEMBER

IMPORTANT

☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____
☐	_____

S

M

T

W

T

F

S

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How to Crush Your First 30 Days as Forensic Supervisor, First Edition by
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Disclaimer

This document is intended to be a reference tool and provide a starting point for any newly promoted forensic supervisor. This is not an all-inclusive list. You and your agency must determine what is best for you.

GAP SCIENCE LLC

The background of the image shows a light-colored building with arched windows and doors. A large, leafy bush with bright red flowers is in the upper left. In the lower half, two women are sitting on the ground, leaning against each other and smiling. The woman on the left has long red hair and is wearing a green top and black pants. The woman on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a blue top and black pants. A dark purple semi-transparent rectangle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

An attitude of
"whatever it takes"
is impossible to
stop.

GO ON, GET AFTER IT!



www.gapscience.com



PHASE 1 Orientation Week

PUMP THE
BRAKES!
YOU'VE
GOT SOME
RESEARCH TO DO

HOW TO CRUSH
YOUR FIRST
30 DAYS AS
FORENSIC
SUPERVISOR

Meet with *YOUR* Supervisor

Schedule a meeting with your direct supervisor as soon as possible and address the following questions. Make sure you have a crystal clear understanding before you move on to the next step!

What are their expectations of you? What responsibilities are you expected to take care of?

What units are you responsible for (and NOT responsible for)?

Where does your authority start and stop? What can you approve by yourself and what must have higher approval?

What are their goals and the agency's goals for your unit(s)?

What type of issues do they expect you to notify them of?

What, if any, are the primary issues they want you to work on resolving right now?

What is their direct contact information and their preferred method of contact? Share yours with them as well!

Try to get a feel for how supportive or hands-off your supervisor is going to be. Can you make decisions on your own or do you need to run everything through them first? Are they going to constantly check up on you, or just expect you will come to them if there is a major issue?

Get Acquainted with Your Unit



Are you familiar with your unit(s) and how they function, or were you promoted over unit(s) you've never worked in?

STEP 1

It's easy for employees to pull a fast one on supervisors that don't understand what they're supposed to be doing.

STEP 2

What expectations does the agency have and is your unit(s) meeting those expectations?

Why or why not? What's the root cause? And how do we fix it?



Are you short personnel? Equipment? Resources? What can you provide your staff to make sure they have what they need to do their job?

STEP 3

STEP 4

Refer to your unit stat logs. Does your unit have a backlog? Are they behind on reports? If so, why?

*Don't have stat logs? No problem! Check out our webinar "**Stats & Logs, Scheduling, and Audits**".*



What needs your undivided attention?



*What tasks need your attention **right now**? These tasks usually keep the unit functioning and are often dropped on a supervisor without mention or explanation. Identify what these tasks are and if you understand how to do them. If needed, get some guidance ASAP! Some examples are included below.*

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Timecards & Stat Logs |  Training of Personnel |
|  Audits & Safety Inspections |  Presentations & Unit Tours |
|  Vehicle Inspections |  Budget Maintenance & Supply Ordering |
|  Technical & Administrative Reviews |  Repair & Maintenance of Equipment |
|  Evaluations |  Justifications, Proposals, & Memos of Understanding |

Roles & Responsibilities



What would
you say you
do here?
-Office Space

Many times the role of a supervisor and employee are poorly defined and/or blurred. This can lead to confusion or lack of understanding what each person is supposed to be doing. This is your opportunity to clear things up and write them down!

- What are you responsible for?
- If you have supervisors or team leaders, what are they responsible for?
- What are your employees responsible for?

If some responsibilities bleed over, make it clear who is primarily responsible for that duty. For example, casework may be a primary responsibility for a technician and a secondary responsibility for a supervisor (in which case they fill that responsibility as needed).

Finally, compare your list to the essential job functions outlined in each job description. You may need to update the job descriptions to reflect the responsibilities you plan to uphold your staff to.

You may find our webinar "**Job Descriptions, Interviews & Evaluations**" helpful!

What are your expectations?



Write them down! Identify what your expectations and pet peeves are. Think back to supervisors you had in the past. What actions did you appreciate and respect? What actions made you upset or lose respect?



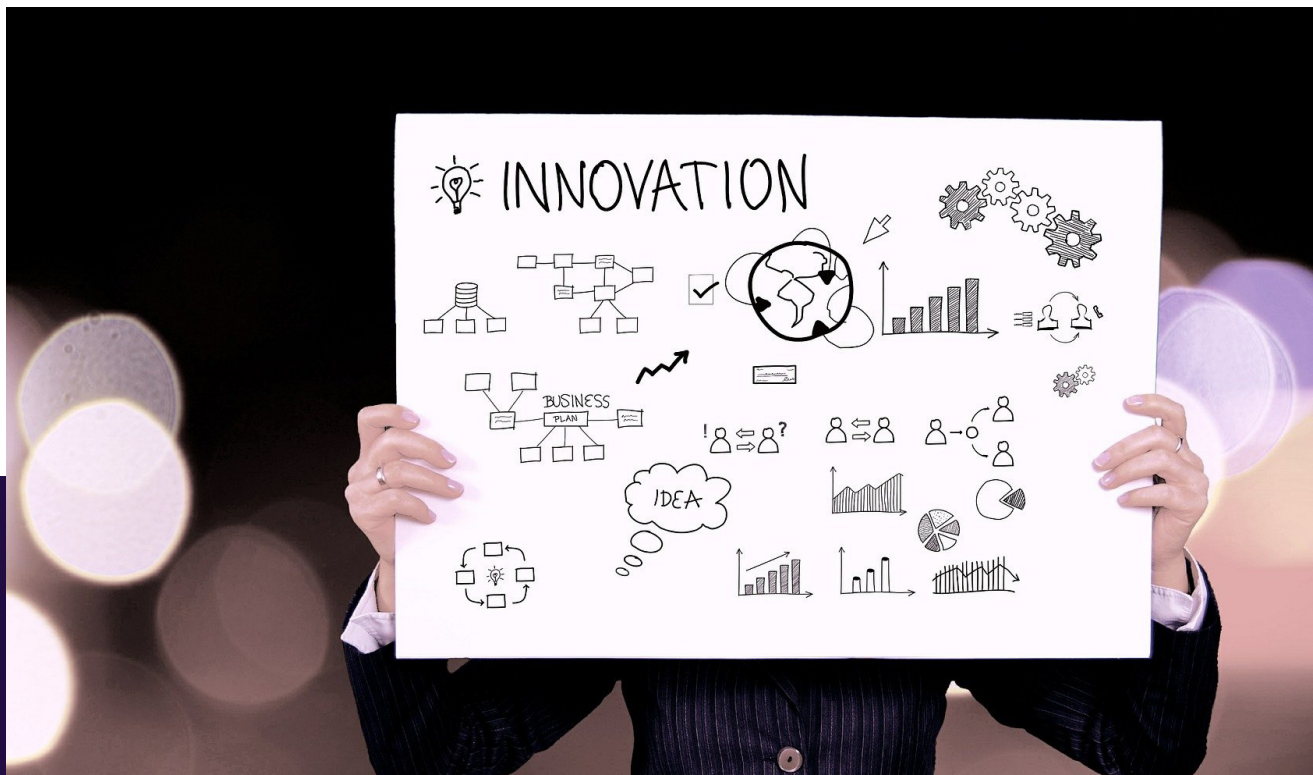
Be very clear. Try not to leave much up for interpretation. Example: If you were to say "Be here by 8AM", does that mean in the parking lot by 8AM, in the office by 8AM, or in their seat and ready to work by 8AM?



Who are these expectations for? You may want to consider writing separate expectations for your supervisors, individual members, and the unit as a whole.



Update as needed. We suggest to review and update your expectations list at least annually. Your expectations will change overtime and so should your list!



Expectations List

Understand what your own expectations are **as well as** the agency's expectations, beliefs, and values. Take the time to make a list now so you can better communicate these ideas to your team. Then print out it, have your staff sign the document, and retain it in their personnel file!

TOPICS	EXPECTATIONS
☐ Individual Behaviors In what ways should they show respect and professionalism toward others? How should they lead with honesty and integrity?	
☐ Team Behaviors How should they function as a team? Is there an expectation of self-initiative? Are there standards of cleanliness for desks/workspaces/vehicles?	
☐ Casework What are the standards for quality and accuracy of casework? How efficient should they be? Are they working toward a goal or sense of purpose?	
☐ Attitude How should they act in the office? Toward their coworkers, you, and other members of the agency? What is tolerated and what is unacceptable?	
☐ Progressiveness In what ways should they be willing to change as your unit progresses forward? How should they show humility and willingness to learn from others?	



The BIGGER Picture

Now that you've stepped into this role, you probably have *all kinds* of ideas for what you can change, improve and implement. But first you'll need to get buy-in from your units and employees!

Supporting a decision does not require agreement.

Be able to answer these questions, explain why these changes are necessary, and how your implementation plan will work:

What are your goals for the unit?

*What direction do **you** want the unit to go?*

*What direction does **your agency** want the unit to go?*



PHASE 2

Focus On Your People

*THIS IS WHAT
SUPERVISION IS
ABOUT - BE A
SERVANT LEADER*

HOW TO CRUSH
YOUR FIRST
30 DAYS AS
FORENSIC
SUPERVISOR



Meet with Your Staff

You've done your homework, now you're ready for the next step. Set up your meetings **in this order** to achieve a more successful outcome.

1. SUPERVISORS

Do you supervise other supervisors?
Meet with them first!

Make sure everyone is on board with a clear vision and clear expectations before pushing the information to your units.

Work together to create a priority list.

- What are the most important projects to address first, and who will be assigned?
- What is the biggest impact on unit productivity and how can we fix it?

2. WHOLE UNIT(S)

After you have hashed things out with your supervisors, then you can move on to meeting with the entire unit(s).

This is a great opportunity to start creating some buy-in for future goals, but now is not the time to start implementing them. Consider this your first "meet and greet".

Are you seeking more engagement from your staff? Try this:

- Play music as everyone is starting to arrive.
- Provide snacks!

3. INDIVIDUAL TEAM MEMBERS

Now you can meet with each team member one-on-one. If you have supervisors, have them set up these meetings so they can meet with their team members as well.

If I met with everyone during the unit meeting, why do I need to meet with everyone individually? The purpose of individual meetings is to get to know your people on a more personal level.

Won't this eat up a lot of my time? Yup, it sure will! This step will take you the longest - but we promise you it will be worth it! Your staff will appreciate and respect you more for making the time to meet with them.

Why do I need to ask the same questions from the unit meeting in the individual meetings? Not everyone is comfortable having discussions in a group setting or they may not want to bring up sensitive issues in front of their coworkers. This will give everyone the opportunity to feel heard and communicate their concerns.

Helpful Hints

BEFORE THE MEETING

No one likes impromptu meetings. And no one likes attending meetings with no agenda. Be respectful of your staff's time!

- Schedule the meeting and inform your staff well in advance.
- Send them a list of topics you want to discuss and ask them to prepare information on those topics.



DURING THE MEETING

Allow everyone time to share information they have prepared and discuss it in detail. Create a list of their ideas, goals, and struggles. Also:

- Introduce yourself
- Share your vision
- Share your expectations
- Clarify roles within the unit

SQUASH THE GOSSIP:

It's common for gossip and drama to spread when someone new steps into the supervisory role.

If you were chosen from outside of the agency, there is no doubt people inside of the unit may be bitter for not being selected or considered. Nip the gossip in the bud by being up front regarding your qualifications for the position and why you were selected.

Topics

Here are topics we recommend to discuss at your meetings as it applies. Make sure you create open-ended discussion topics! Questions that lend themselves toward one or two word answers aren't going to help you.



What questions do they have for you?



What do they believe they do well in their positions? What do they struggle with the most?



What do they need clarification on?



What is their knowledge base and training background for their position?



What expectations do they have for you? What do they need from you?



How current is their knowledge base and training? What are they lacking?



What goals and/or ideas do they have for their unit(s)? For their staff?



What are their personal goals (doesn't have to be work-related)?



What issues are they currently dealing with (i.e. conflict, broken equipment, bottlenecks, etc.)?



What is their direct contact information and preferred method of contact?

Maximize your meetings

Utilizing DiSC behavior styles! ([Take your free DiSC test HERE](#)).

The DiSC assessment groups the most common behaviors into four categories: **D**ominance, **I**nfluence, **C**onscientiousness, and **S**teadiness.

”
THE ART OF
COMMUNICATION
IS THE LANGUAGE
OF LEADERSHIP

Becoming familiar with DiSC allows you to understand more about yourself and our own tendencies, as well as people in your workplace.

As you are able to identify different DiSC styles, it will become easier to build relationships and communicate more effectively.

Give it a shot! Think of any co-worker.

Start with their body language and speech patterns:

Active = Animated, strong eye contact, loud voice

Reserved = Calm and quiet, hesitant eye contact

Then determine their motivation:

People-oriented = Asks about people, shows emotions

Task-oriented = Asks about things, no display of emotions

Active + Task-oriented = D

Active + People-oriented = I

Reserved + People-oriented = S

Reserved + Task-oriented = C



Cheat Sheet for DiSC Styles

We go more in-depth on this topic in our webinar "*Communication & Critical Conversations*".

D = DOMINANCE

YOUR SUPERVISOR

- Keep conversations (and emails!) short and concise
- Just give them the facts
- Handle your unit without much oversight from them

YOUR TEAM MEMBERS:

- Approach them with confidence and competence
- They work at a faster pace and prefer to make quick decisions (or even rush through casework)

I = INFLUENCE

YOUR SUPERVISOR

- Prepare to have long conversations regarding work and beyond
- Let them finish their whole thought - don't cut them off or finish their sentences

YOUR TEAM MEMBERS:

- As your social butterflies, they love connecting with people
- Enjoy working as a team
- Embrace changes with enthusiasm

S = STEADINESS

YOUR SUPERVISOR

- May be more reserved - you might need to initiate conversations
- When making decisions, they like to know how it will impact the team

YOUR TEAM MEMBERS:

- May have a difficult time prioritizing tasks and need more oversight
- They prefer a more relaxed environment and tend to be resistant to change

C = CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

YOUR SUPERVISOR

- Get down to business - no fluff
- Prepare well and give them *all* the details
- They will play devil's advocate (don't take it personally)

YOUR TEAM MEMBERS:

- More reserved and may be resistant to working in groups
- They make very calculated decisions and will likely take more time than others to complete tasks



PHASE 3

Grow into Your New Role

*GROWTH &
COMFORT DO
NOT COEXIST*

HOW TO CRUSH
YOUR FIRST
30 DAYS AS
FORENSIC
SUPERVISOR

Get Organized



- Clear out any pending casework.

- Clean up your desk and office space

- Set up your office so that it's appropriate for your new role

- Organize your space to maximize productivity

- Order any necessary office supplies - we especially love [this calendar!](#)

- Add some comfort to your new "home" - new chair, lighting, plants.



... and get going!

REMINDER: Your role has changed!

It is easy to stay wrapped up in the role you used to have. Maybe you don't want to give up those duties because you enjoy them. BUT your team is counting on you to take care of your supervisory functions so that they can keep performing their jobs to the best of their ability. So make the switch!

Your supervisory responsibilities are your top priority, now. Let the other stuff go! Your team will appreciate you for it.

Build Connections

Your unit doesn't function in a vacuum. Having the right people you need on speed dial will help you be a more successful supervisor! Start forming these relationships now, seek out those you can rely on, and begin thinking who may serve as a mentor for you.

01

Direct Supervisor

You'll likely be funneling a lot of questions and decisions through your direct supervisor. *Really* get to know them and how they can help you.

02

Chain of Command

Your chain of command may have a more clear understanding of how the agency is intended to function be informed of any long-term goals.

03

Other Supervisors

Find other supervisors within the agency of your same rank. Any lateral communications will be handled between you and the other supervisors.

04

Other Related Units

Identify those units that are directly connected to yours, i.e. other forensic units, property and evidence units, etc.

05

Other Supporting Units

There will come a time you'll need to call upon units such as Fleet, K-9, Dive Team, Ag Marine, etc.

06

Service Agencies

Identify state labs, private labs, or other agencies that provide a service for your unit's casework.

07

Agencies w/ Resources

Other agencies may be able to provide tools and resources you don't have, i.e. Fire Department, Animal Control, etc.

08

Local Agencies

Agencies in your same county and state are great resources, especially for sharing SOPs or training opportunities.

09

Professional Groups

Particularly local or state divisions of professional groups, such as IAI and AAFS, can connect you with reliable knowledge.

Final Advice

We get it - you want to do well in your new role and pour everything you've got into your work. But as your new friends, we want to give you some final thoughts on maintaining a work-life balance and keeping everything in perspective (things we even have to remind ourselves from time to time).

01

It's okay to take a day off when you need it. You don't owe anyone an explanation. Have some personal stuff going on? Need a mental break? It's just a day - take it.

02

It's okay to NOT check your email outside of office hours. Set healthy boundaries from the very beginning. If you don't respect your own boundaries, no one else will.

03

It's okay to leave at the end of your shift. If a task doesn't absolutely need to be done by the end of the day, set it down and go home. It will still be there in the morning.

04

It's okay to leave your office to take a break. In fact we encourage it. Stepping away 10-15 minutes a few times each day will help productivity and minimize burnout.

05

It's okay to eat your lunch. Don't have time? Sure you do! Leave the office, maybe take a fellow supervisor or go with your team. It's important - put it in your schedule!

06

And finally - celebrate your achievements! I mean holy cow, you got promoted! Take a moment to pause and pat yourself on the back for your accomplishments.



We know your time is limited and we are so grateful that you have entrusted us to be a valuable resource to you. Please - don't be a stranger! Stay connected with us via email or your favorite social media platform.

Talk soon, Erin & Ashley

info@gapscience.com



We hope this isn't goodbye!

WE KNOW...YOUR BRAIN IS OVERLOADED RIGHT NOW. BUT WE'LL BE HERE WHEN YOU'RE READY FOR THE NEXT STEP!

WEBINARS
\$200 AND UNDER



Our webinars would be a great fit for a busy, newly promoted supervisor. We offer several different series - Forensic Supervision, Forensic Accreditation, Latent Print, Evidence Unit and more!

[Click here for the webinar schedule](#)



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Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
January 2021 | Clearwater, Florida

40-hr Forensic Supervision Course

IF WE HAD TO PICK, THE IN-PERSON FORENSIC SUPERVISION
COURSE WOULD HAVE TO BE OUR FAVORITE!

This 40-hour Forensic Supervision course is where it all began!
We'll cover communication skills, stats and logs, job descriptions
and much, much more!

[Click here for the
course schedule](#)



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Still unsure?

We know this course would be the perfect fit for you. But don't take our word for it! Check out what some of our students had to say.

TESTIMONIALS:

"One of the best courses I have taken in my 25+ year career!"

BRIAN A.

LATENT PRINT EXAMINER, FLORIDA

"Thoroughly enjoyed the class and can't wait to share with my staff what I have learned!"

MEGAN R.

CRIME LAB SUPERVISOR, MARYLAND

"They made it fun and could relate the material to their own experiences and mistakes."

LAWRENCE M.

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATOR, FLORIDA

SO, ARE
YOU READY?



A photograph of two women sitting on a brick ledge in front of a house. A large, flowering vine with red flowers hangs over the scene. The image is overlaid with a dark purple tint.

”

Attract

WHAT YOU EXPECT.

Reflect

WHAT YOU DESIRE.

Become

WHAT YOU RESPECT.

Mirror

WHAT YOU ADMIRE.