

The Art of Supervising Trainees – Basic Training

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# BUILDING A CLIMATE OF TRUST



**FORMATION  
CONTINUE  
EN SANTÉ**



**CONSORTIUM NATIONAL  
DE FORMATION EN SANTÉ**  
Volet Université d'Ottawa

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## Targeted competency

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Develop strategies to establish a climate of trust with the trainee.

## Description

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At the end of this workshop, you will know how to focus on the key factors to establish a climate of trust with your trainee. You will also be able to develop strategies to create an open and welcoming placement environment.

You will recognize the qualities that characterize a good supervisor and their impact on the supervisory process. You will be able to identify the communication skills needed to initiate and maintain a positive relationship between supervisor and trainee, taking into account key differences (cultural, generational, etc.)

## Units

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### Unit 1: A relationship of trust

- What is a relationship trust?
- The importance of a first impressions
- What about orientation?

### Unit 2: Strategies for developing a relationship of trust

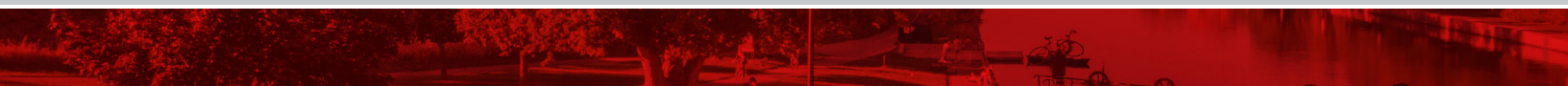
- Building a healthy relationship: Is it up to the supervisor or the trainee?
- Relational boundaries: a slippery slope!
- What are the risks of overstepping professional boundaries?
- Being a good supervisor: Nature or nurture?
- Traits of the trainee and their impact on the relationship of trust

### Unit 3: Communication: A pillar of the relationship of trust

- Communication: A pillar of the relationship trust
- First, let's define communication
- When noise gets in the way of understanding?

### Unit 4: Establishing relationships that accept differences

- Age differences: The generation gap
- Personality: A key element of the relationship
- Culture and cultural sensitivity



## The importance of a trusting relationship

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It is essential to address the trusting relationship established between a trainee and his supervisor, because the quality of such a relationship is the most significant factor in a trainee's learnings, satisfaction and successful placement.

This relationship:

- Takes place in a safe environment, where the trainee can openly discuss his concerns
- Is based on trust demonstrated toward each other
- Is a pillar of supervision
- Requires clear boundaries, expressed from the start of the placement

Supervision is effective when the supervisor succeeds in creating a positive environment by means of a respectful relationship based on trust

(Beddoe, 2017; Beddoe & Davys, 2016; Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; Scaife 2019)

## How to welcome your trainee?

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"Laughter is the shortest distance between two people". - (Victor Borge, 1997)

This quote illustrates the importance of first impressions in establishing a trusting relationship.

The trainee's first day of placement sets the tone and influences subsequent experiences. Welcoming the trainee is a crucial step because it impacts the establishment of a climate that is conducive to learning.

This step also serves to identify the trainee's particular needs and to familiarize him to his clinical setting. It is better to start on the right foot!

Following are a few strategies that will help you welcome your trainee:

- Change your schedule and take the time to know your trainee from the first day.
- Have a discussion to learn to know each other. Talk about what he likes, outside of work, his values, his hobbies, his passions.
- Welcome the trainee with a special event! The more a trainee feels welcomed, the more he will be self-confident and able to overcome new challenges. For example, you could organize a surprise to highlight his arrival.
- Clearly define your expectations. In doing so, the trainee will know what to expect and will feel more comfortable. A trainee that does not quite know what is expected of him may feel anxious, disappointed, which will create a climate that hinders learning or the relationship.
- In addition, explain how you will organize feedback and performance assessments. To avoid startling the trainee or making him anxious, take time to inform him of your methods to note his achievements and challenges throughout the placement.

## Communication, central to the relationship

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Communication refers to all of the processes used in transmitting information or a particular message through words, motions or signs.

Potter & Perry (2010), state that communication is a means to establish a trusting relationship between the clinical supervisor and the trainee. According to these authors, the quality and skills associated with communication are essential to teach successfully and foster learning.

Moreover, the supervisor should discuss his trainee's expectations regarding communication. Notions related to confidentiality, non-judgement, goodwill and respect during communicational exchanges between the supervisor and the trainee should be addressed. This initiative taken by the supervisor sets the tone for the relationship that will follow and creates a climate that is conducive to learning.

Several elements will influence communication, including communication parameters, external and internal noises, values, social norms, etc.

(Abrie, 2019; Brunstein & Cazemajou, 2016; De Villers, 2007; Potter & Perry, 2010)

## How to effectively supervise a trainee from another generation?

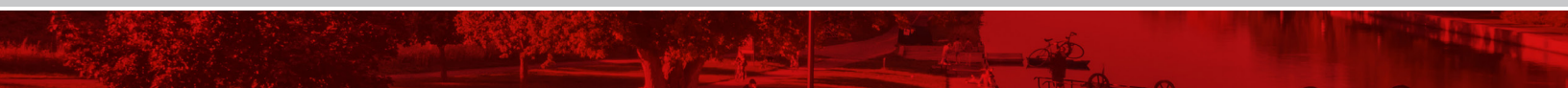
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A placement setting is a space where people of various generations coexist and work together. Supervisors are often called on to supervise trainees from different generations. Thus, it is important to understand how these aspects may influence a trusting relationship.

Young people who come from each generation have specific characteristics and more importantly, ways of learning that are different from those of their supervisor. These differences may become relational challenges and can lead to misunderstandings, tensions and even intergenerational conflicts.

Four generations are currently working in our professional environments (baby-boomers, generations X, Y and Z). Supervisors are mainly called on to support students from generations Y and Z.

(Danan et al., 2018; Géraud-Latour, as quoted by Danan et al., 2018; Roberts et al., as quoted by Danan et al., 2018)





## What are their characteristics?

### GENERATION Y



- Constant need for new experiences
- Work-family balance is essential
- Take part in decision-making
- Like argumentation and critique
- Difficulty in accepting negative feedback
- High expectations of the supervisor

### GENERATION Z



- Flexible work schedule
- Give priority to information found online and on social networks
- Respect is earned through competence and courtesy
- Take part in decision-making

These characteristics must not be used to place people in particular boxes. Rather, this information should encourage a fair appreciation of differences, develop awareness of the commonalities to focus on, in order to improve communication and further reflection regarding different values associated with various age groups, with a view to building a solid and trusting relationship.

(Aubut, 2011; Desrochers Hogue, 2011; Perrin-Joly, 2017; Saba, 2017)

To support motivation and efforts among trainees from the Y and Z generations, supervision must have a flexible structure. The supervisor may:

- **Structure the placement**, e.g. define roles, set clear objectives and explain to the trainee the usefulness of tasks that he is asked to take on
- **Adjust communication**, e.g. discuss the preferred mode of communication and choose interactive group activities
- **Foster the trainee's commitment**, e.g. let him choose his learning activities or clients, invite him to actively participate in decisions and share new ideas, provide him with challenges that he will be passionate about
- **Integrate technology**, e.g. stimulate creativity through technology, use software instead of books, and ask trainees to seek valid and reliable information on the web

(Danan et al., 2018; Hills et al., 2017; Stewart et al., 2017; Wiedmer, 2015)

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For the opportunity to access training about creating a climate of trust, register for the workshop at:  
<https://www.cnfs.ca/professionnels-de-la-sante/workshops>.

You will find more useful information on welcoming and orienting a trainee, the attributes of a supervisor, the characteristics of a trainee, the development of communication skills, types of personalities, cultural differences, etc.