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## Perceptions of Second-Level Managers' Performance in Student affairs

Jennifer Kingsley  
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PERCEPTIONS OF SECOND-LEVEL MANAGERS' PERFORMANCE  
IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

by

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ABSTRACT  
PERCEPTIONS OF SECOND-LEVEL MANAGERS' PERFORMANCE  
IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

Jennifer Kingsley  
Old Dominion University, 2008  
Chair: Dr. Dennis Gregory

This study explored first- (subordinates) and second-level (managers) student affairs professionals' perceptions of managers' skills and abilities (N = 193). Participants in this study were members of the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators, National Association for Campus Activities, Association of College and University Housing Officers – International, and the Association on Higher Education and Disability in Virginia. Two instruments were used for the study: 1) Demographics, collecting demographic information and qualitative data, 2) *Survey of Management Practices*, which assesses managers' skills and abilities.

The respondents were predominantly Caucasian (82%), female (62%), between 26 – 40 years old (72%), and held a master's degree (78%). Sixty-one percent of respondents were managers, of which 85% supervised three or fewer full-time employees and 55% had attended 1 – 5 training sessions on management.

Managers' perceived their performance as higher than average in the following areas: making goals clear and important, planning and problem solving, facilitating the work of others, feedback, reinforcing good performance, interpersonal relations attribute, and group motivation

and morale attribute, time emphasis and delegation. Additionally, perceptions of their skills did not differ significantly based on gender, ethnicity or the number of training sessions attended on supervision. Performance management, differences in staff, and time were the three most challenging aspects of supervision identified; while providing feedback/evaluations and communication were the two areas needing improvement.

First-level professionals perceived managers' performance in all skill areas as average, and was found to be significantly lower than managers' self-perceptions in all skill areas. This difference in perception of managers' skills and abilities suggests training programs on skills associated with effective management are needed to improve second-level professionals' performance. First-level professionals perceived workload and a lack of resources as the most challenging aspects of supervision; the skill areas identified as needing improvement were communication and professionalism.

The results of this study indicate a need for further research on the perceptions of second-level professionals' skills and abilities. Furthermore, the results can be used as a foundation for enhancing training and development programs for student affairs supervisors.

Members of Committee:	Dr. Linda Bol
	Dr. Alice McAdory

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### *Background and Setting*

As student affairs professionals pursue career advancements through the administrative hierarchy they assume increased managerial roles. As these new roles are assumed, there is a need for an increased knowledge base regarding the management and supervision of personnel which supplants the prior knowledge needed in student development theory and other areas of expertise (Komives & Woodward, 1996). Birnbaum (2000) agrees with this when he indicates that “good management is essential for institutional success, and to be a good manager is a goal worthy of the time and effort of administrators and faculty who are committed to the enduring purposes of higher education” (p. 240).

The concept of good management being instrumental to the success of an organization has been extensively researched. Research, theories and best practices of management and supervision are abundant in the business and leadership literature. This abundance is due mainly to the quality of management which is viewed as critical to employee retention and productivity (Curtis & Wright, 2001; McConnell, 1999; Taylor, 1993). Despite the need for good management articulated by Birnbaum (2000) and Komives and Woodward (1996), research and theories on management are not as prevalent in higher education (Janosik et al., 2003; Winston & Creamer, 1997).

Clark & Clark (1990) concluded that leadership and management “theories and concepts...provide a meaningful framework for interpretations of findings in all settings” (p. 81). Therefore, the business and leadership literature available on management and

supervision is an excellent foundation for extrapolating theories and best practices to higher education. This application creates the ability to examine the current state of management practices of student affairs professionals in higher education. By using the research tools available in business and leadership to assess management, a base of knowledge is created that identifies the current quality of management. The present study identifies any gaps that exist between actual and perceived performance of managers in the student affairs profession.

The importance of identifying the gaps that exist between actual and perceived performance of managers is high due to the impact managers have on employee job satisfaction, activities, and employee turnover (Curtis & Wright, 2001; McConnell, 1999; Mobley, 1997; Taylor, 1993). Linking the quality of management to subordinate actions recognizes that specific management practices are more effective than others at creating a work environment that fosters productivity, satisfaction, and low turnover rates. This link creates a need to identify a theory that outlines the necessary skills and abilities managers must possess to ensure high employee job satisfaction, positive subordinate behaviors, and decrease subordinate turnover rates. For this study, managers' skills and abilities were assessed using the *Survey of Management Practices (SMP)* because of the instrument's foundation in theory. The *SMP* is used in many areas to assess manager and their skills and abilities. Data supports the reliability and validity of this tool (Shipper, 1995); however the *SMP* has never been used in an university setting. The knowledge resulting from the assessment of management in student affairs revealed areas of strengths and weaknesses of managers, which can be used to develop management training. Therefore, management training programs based on this knowledge will better

meet the training needs with the intention of enhancing the quality of management, and the success of institutions of higher education.

### *Employee Satisfaction and Turnover*

The extent to which literature focuses on the impact supervision has on employee satisfaction, behaviors, and turnover is examined within the field of student affairs is limited (Lorden, 1998; Rosser & Javinar, 2003). The primary focuses of this literature is on the rates of employee turnover and identifying that the turnover is problematic in student affairs (Lorden, 1998; Rosser & Javinar, 2003). A recent study examined the relationship between supervision, employee satisfaction and turnover intentions of new professionals in student affairs (Tull, 2004). Tull found a positive correlation between the type of supervision received and a new professional's job satisfaction. This indicated that new employees had higher levels of job satisfaction the more a supervisor engaged in on-going activities which were systematic, goal based and focused on two-way communication. Furthermore, Tull also found that new professional's turnover intentions were negatively correlated with the supervision received. In other words, when the supervisors engaged in the activities described above, a new professional's intention to leave the position was found to be lower.

Despite the Tull's (2004) finding that supervision is correlated with turnover in student affairs the lack of additional research in student affairs demonstrates a need to review other research to support or refute this finding. In contrast to student affairs, research on the impact of supervision on employees as well as the causes of turnover is prevalent within the business and health care literature. Therefore, the research in other

industries regarding employee satisfaction and turnover as it relates to supervision can be used as a foundation for understanding turnover in higher education.

Employee job satisfaction and its relationship to employee turnover are widely studied outside of higher education. Bluedorn (1996) and Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, and Meglino (1994) found that employee job satisfaction contributes to employee turnover. The quality of supervision is one of the dimensions identified as a measurement of employee satisfaction (Bluedorn; Browder, 1993; Mobley, 1997; Mobley et al.). Mobley found that both the technical and personal aspects of supervision contribute to employee dissatisfaction. Shipper and Wilson (1992) found that managerial behaviors impact tension, commitment, and performance of employees. In addition, the study demonstrated that improvement of managerial behaviors associated with the Management Task•Cycle Theory will likely result in decreased tension and increased employee commitment and performance.

Browder's (1993) research on employee satisfaction included supervisor/employee interpersonal relations, the technical competence of supervision, the adequacy of communication, and the education levels of supervisors. Browder found that people with higher education levels have higher expectations of supervisors. This is especially important in higher education, since the majority of first and second-level professional positions require master's degrees, while some second level and most senior-level positions require doctoral degrees. Therefore, these higher expectations, along with the research conducted on employee job satisfaction (Bluedorn 1996; Browder; Mobley, 1997; Mobley et al., 1994), demonstrates the need to identify management skills and theories associated with good management.

### *Student Affairs Literature on Management Theory*

There is little existing information which focuses on supervision or management of human resources in higher education (Janosik et al. 2003; Winston & Creamer, 1997). This is of particular concern since the implications of poor supervisory practices include unmotivated, unproductive, ineffective, inefficient, uncommitted staff, and increased turnover (Curtis & Wright, 2001; McConnell, 1999; Shipper & Wilson, 1992; Taylor, 1993). The literature available on supervision or management in student affairs focuses on general theory, broad concepts of knowledge and skills, as well as leadership styles. The literature in higher education related to management skills and competencies focuses on mid-level managers and senior-level administrators (Kane, 1982).

Early research by Domeier (1977) on competencies associated with different career levels in student affairs (including executive, mid-management, and entry level) provides the foundation for future research on mid-level management. Kane (1982) was able to build on these findings, developing an instrument to assess mid-level managers' perceived skill attainment as well as the need for further development. Kane's instrument has been used in other studies conducted on mid-level managers' skills and competency, including Fey (1991) and Foley (1989). The seven areas identified in these studies to assess mid-level managers' skills are 1) leadership, 2) fiscal management, 3) professional development, 4) communication, 5) personnel management, 6) research and evaluation, and 7) student contact (Fey; Foley; Kane). Personnel management was one of the key areas identified by managers as an important skill (Domeier; Fey; Foley; Kane).

The personnel management scale used in Fey (1991), Foley (1989), and Kane's (1982) research included only two questions, as opposed to all other categories, which



contained at least four questions. The limited scope of the personnel management scale raises doubt regarding the instrument's ability to assess the multitude of managers' skills and abilities related to personnel management. However, the fact that mid-level managers recognized personnel management as an important skill indicates the need to conduct in-depth studies on managers' perceptions of their personnel management skills and abilities.

Furthermore, these studies did not consider the subordinates' perceptions of the supervisor's level of competency in any of the seven categories. The inclusion of subordinates' perceptions of a supervisor's competence is identified as an integral component of assessing managers abilities (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Bernardin, 1986; Harris and Schaubroeck 1988; Hogan, Curphy, and Hogan, 1994; Shipper & Davy, 2002; Wilson et al., 1990). Finally, these studies (Domeier, 1977; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Kane, 1982) did not incorporate a management model or theory, citing only previous research that identified broad skills associated with management. Since personnel management has been identified as an important skill of managers in student affairs (Domeier; Fey; Foley; Kane), a need exists to investigate the current skills and abilities of personnel managers in student affairs that also addresses the limitations of previous studies cited above.

Winston and Creamer (1997) were among the first to develop a model of staffing practices in student affairs. Their model is comprised of five components: 1) recruitment and selection, 2) orientation to new position, 3) supervision, 4) staff development, and 5) performance appraisal. The model emphasizes supervision as the integral component that ties each of these areas together. Winston and Creamer's model provides the first

conceptual framework that new managers in student affairs can utilize to prepare themselves for the role of manager and supervisor of full-time staff. However, it is missing detailed information on the specific skill set as well as the application of the model.

Janosik et al. (2003) expand upon Winston and Creamer's (1997) model, by adding a sixth focal area, employee separation. The emphasis of Janosik et.al.'s work is the practical application of the Winston and Creamer model. However, this work is limited to the supervision of new professionals, and does not provide information on supervising seasoned professionals. Nevertheless, Janosik et al. does provide limited information on coaching employees on their performance, which is an aspect of the supervision component of the model. Thus, managers within student affairs are left little choice but to seek information on supervision of employees and management from business literature.

### *General Management Theory*

A review of literature in either business or leadership reveals a number of books, articles, and research on management models and supervisory practices, including both theory and step-by-step processes for implementing these concepts and skills. The emphasis on training managers stems from the fact that corporate America understands the negative effects of an un-trained leader on the company's success (Broaded, 1947). Most of the literature on good management examines traits and personality, rather than the actions of managers that result in the success of their employees (Shipper & White, 1999). Two theories of management, Yukl's taxonomy of managerial practices (Yukl et al., 1990) and Wilson, O'Hare and Shipper's Task-Cycle theory (Wilson et al., 1990) do,

however, move beyond the identification of traits, personalities, and interpersonal styles to identify specific behaviors associated with managerial effectiveness.

### *Yukl's Taxonomy of Managerial Practices*

Yukl et al. (1990) used literature that examined both management and leadership as a foundation for the development of a comprehensive taxonomy of behaviors important for managerial effectiveness. The basis of the taxonomy is the integration of several earlier taxonomies featuring leadership and management. According to Yukl et al. these include Morse & Wagner's taxonomies of managerial behavior, Stogdill's taxonomies of leader behavior, Mintzberg and Luthans & Lockwood's taxonomies of observed managerial activities, as well as Page and Tornow & Pinto's taxonomies of behavioral position responsibilities. The eleven categories that comprise Yukl et al.'s taxonomy are "general enough to be applicable to most leaders but specific enough to be relevant for assessing how well a leader copes with situational role requirements" (Yukl et al., p. 224). These eleven categories include informing, consulting and delegating, planning and organizing, problem solving, clarifying roles and objectives, monitoring operations and environment, motivating, recognizing and rewarding, supporting and mentoring, managing conflict and team building, and networking (Yukl et al.). A complete description of each category is available in Table 1.

Table 1

## Yukl's Taxonomy of Managerial Practices

Taxonomy	Description
Informing	Providing information regarding decisions and plans needed for individuals to complete their work, as well as communicating information about the respective unit to others.
Consulting and Delegating	Consulting with staff to receive and incorporate feedback regarding changes and decisions, as well as delegating authority to others for completing work and making decisions.
Planning and Organizing	Strategic planning and organizing of staff and resources ensuring efficient and effective operations as well as collaborating with other departments of the organization.
Problem Solving	Identify, analyze and solve problems in a systematic manner, quickly and efficiently to resolve problems and crises.
Clarifying Roles and Objectives	Communicating directions and a complete understanding of responsibilities, tasks assigned, deadlines and expectations.
Monitoring Operations and Environment	Assessing the environment for threats and opportunities, overseeing work progress and quality, as well as performance evaluations.

Table 1 Continued

Taxonomy	Description
Motivating	Provide support and resources for staff, employing strategies designed to create staff's excitement for work, as well as being a role model.
Recognizing and Rewarding	Recognizing and rewarding quality performance, achievements, and contributions
Supporting and Mentoring	Demonstrating empathy and support, as well encouraging professional development and advancement
Managing Conflict and Team Building	Promote constructive conflict resolution, cooperation, and teamwork among staff.
Networking	Develop relationship and contacts with staff within other departments and external agencies that can provide useful information and resources that will benefit the department.

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(Yukl et al., 1990)

Using the taxonomy of management behaviors, Yukl developed the *Management Practices Survey (MPS)*, which has been used to identify the training needs of managers as well as develop leadership skills. Managers who have used the *MPS* have responded favorably to the instrument, and have reported the questions are relevant and the feedback received from the results is useful (Yukl et al., 1990). This feedback suggests that the *MPS* is an effective tool for assessing a manager's behaviors and abilities.

### *Task·Cycle Theory*

The Task·Cycle Theory is based on the notion that “organization behavior is made up of a series of tasks” (Wilson et al., 1990, p. 185). As with Yukl’s taxonomies, the Task·Cycle Theory is broad enough to be applicable in a wide variety of settings. Furthermore, the Task·Cycle Theory is based on tasks, which make it functional at several levels of management including “executives, leaders, managers, and supervisors at any level” (Wilson et al., p. 187). In developing this theory, Wilson et al. moved beyond the traditional inquiries of leader-like behavior such as personality traits or broad behavior patterns, similar to Yukl’s analysis. The Task·Cycle theory was developed to define skills and attributes on an operational level, focusing on “what participants actually do...and speak in terms to which operating personnel can more readily relate” (Wilson et al., p. 189).

The philosophy driving the Task·Cycle Theory is that “the skills that comprise effective management behavior can be learned” (Performance Programs Inc, p. 4). Furthermore, individuals progress through the six phases that comprise the theory, in sequential order. The six phases are: “(1) making goals clear and important, (2) planning and problem solving, (3) facilitating the work of others, (4) providing feedback (5) exercising positive control, and (6) reinforcing good performance” (Performance Programs & Inc, p. 4). Based on these six phases the *Survey of Management Practices (SMP)* was developed to assess the “extent to which an individual [possesses] the skills that are essential in good management” (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003, p. 4). The *SMP* has been used widely in studies of management with several different applications. A brief description of each phase is available in Table 2.

Table 2

## Task•Cycle Theory Phases

Phase	Description
Phase I: Making Goals Clear and Important	(A) Clarification of Goals and Objectives: Conveying to others what you are trying to accomplish
Phase II: Planning and Problem Solving	(B) Upward Communication: Making the best use of your co-workers' ideas and suggestions.  (C) Orderly Work Planning: Increasing effectiveness by keeping yourself organized and systematic.  (D) Expertise: Knowing your organization, its policies, and how to get things done.
Phase III: Facilitating the Work of Others	(E) Work Facilitation: Being sure that others know how to do what they are supposed to do; coaching and counseling co-workers.
Phase IV: Feedback	(F) Feedback: Letting others know how you evaluate their work.

Table 2 Continued

Phase	Description
Phase V: Exercising Positive Control	<p>(G) Time Emphasis: Getting thing done on time and meeting deadlines.</p> <p>(H) Control of Details: Staying on top of details.</p> <p>(I) Goal Pressure: Expressing dissatisfaction with progress; may, on occasion, punish people for mistakes.</p> <p>(J) Delegation/Permissiveness: Achieving a balance between being too loose and permissive and being too tight and restrictive.</p>
Phase VI: Reinforcing Good Performance	<p>(K) Recognition for Good Performance: Acknowledging and recognizing optimum effort.</p>

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(Leslie & Fleenor, 1998)

In a study on the interaction between a manager's mastery of, and frequency of use of managerial behaviors using the *SMP*, Shipper and White (1990) found that "increasing frequency without increasing mastery of managerial behaviors will have less impact relative to effectiveness" (p. 60). Accordingly, it is more important to assess a supervisor's mastery of managerial behaviors to determine a supervisor's effectiveness in managing his/her subordinates, than to assess the frequency of use of the respective



skills. Shipper and Dillard (2000) used the *SMP* to focus on managerial skills and examined a manager's ability to recover from derailment as a supervisor. The results of this study indicated that managers can recover or avoid derailment by becoming aware of their skills and developing skills associated with the first three phases of the Task-Cycle Theory, followed by skills associated with the final three phases (providing feedback, exercising positive control, and reinforcing good performance). In addition, the results of this study indicated it is important for managers to understand the inconsistency between an assessment of their own skills and that of a subordinate's assessment of the manager's skills. This finding underscores the need to explore the use of subordinate feedback as a component of accurately assessing a manager's behaviors and abilities.

#### *Assessment of Manager's Skills and Abilities*

Little empirical research exists on the quality of supervisor performance (Carlyle, 1992). One study examined the quality of first-line supervisors' performance using United States federal government employees. In general, the first-line supervisors' performance was rated moderately high; however, differences existed based on rater type. Ninety-seven percent of first-line supervisors rated their own effectiveness as "effective" or "very effective", while only 64% of subordinates rated the first-line supervisors' performance as highly (Carlyle).

Another study utilized the Management Capability Index (MCI) to assess the capabilities of managers in New Zealand (Matheson, 2007). In 2006, the overall index was below 70, on a base of 100, which according to Matheson, indicates mediocre performance of managers. Recently the MCI was used in India and Malaysia, and those

managers tended to perform slightly better than New Zealand managers, with both having an MCI index slightly above 70 (Matheson).

Other than Carlyle's (1992) study and research on skills and abilities associated with good management within the United States, the literature primarily focuses on the accuracy of using multiple sources of feedback to assess performance, rather than describing the actual quality of skills. According to Harris and Schaubroeck (1988) there has been increased acceptance for using multiple sources of feedback (self, subordinates, peers and supervisors) to assess managerial performance. Support for the various feedback sources has been inconsistent, with a focus being on self-ratings (Harris & Schaubroeck). Based on the scope of this study, only the literature on self and subordinate ratings was examined.

The accuracy of self-assessments of management performance has been widely questioned and tested (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Bernardin, 1986; Hogan et al., 1994; Shipper & Wilson, 1992; Shipper & Davy, 2002). Self-ratings are less accurate and do not correspond to ratings by others such as supervisors and subordinates. However, using the ratings of supervisors and subordinates in addition to self-ratings tends to eliminate bias (Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988). According to Kruger and Dunning (1999), incompetent people over-inflate their self-assessments because "the skills that engender competence in a particular domain are often the very same skills necessary to evaluate competence in that domain" (p. 1121). Therefore, it can be argued that improving the skills of an incompetent individual will result in a more accurate self-assessment as supported in Kruger and Dunning's study. In contrast, more competent individuals underestimated their abilities compared to their actual performance levels. Kruger &

Dunning argue that this is a result of failing to recognize accurate levels of competence in their peers. Upon learning the performance level of their peers, more competent individuals achieved more accuracy in their self-assessments (Kruger & Dunning).

Research on self-assessment of management abilities reflects similar findings. Managers who rate themselves highly tend to demonstrate a lack of awareness and arrogance, and are less likely to be successful as compared to those managers who underestimate their abilities (Shipper & Dillard, 2000). Furthermore, research indicates those managers who are considered accurate raters or under estimators tend to be more effective, perform better and achieve greater success (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Shipper and Dillard). Considering the research findings regarding over-inflated self-assessments (Atwater & Yammarino; Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988; Kruger & Dunning, 1999; Shipper & Dillard), it is important to examine subordinate feedback on management performance. Ideally, subordinate ratings will assist in the accurate identification of managers' strengths and weaknesses in supervising employees.

Support for the use of subordinate feedback regarding a manager's behaviors as an accurate assessment of a managers' performance is mixed. Rush, Thomas, and Lord (1977) examined the effect of performance cues on ratings of leader behavior. The finding indicates that an observer's knowledge of the quality of a workgroup's performance affects the mean rating of a leader's behaviors. When observers were given performance levels of groups along with training on specific leadership behaviors, these results were replicated (Lord, Binning, & Rush, 1978). Despite observers having enough knowledge to accurately rate leader's behaviors, Lord et al. determined that performance cues given to observers had a significant impact on the ratings.

In both studies (Lord et al., Rush et al.), observers rated leaders of groups labeled as high performing groups higher on leadership behavior than leaders of average and low performing groups. Therefore, subordinate ratings of supervisors could be skewed based on perceived performance of the workgroup. Extending this line of research, Gioia and Sims (1985) investigated the effect of performance cues on ratings of a leader's behavior in a formal managerial setting. The outcome confirmed the earlier results; performance cues significantly impact observer's ratings (Lord et al.; Rush et al.). The findings also indicated that behavior-oriented measures were not significantly influenced by performance cues, and thus were "relatively good 'mirrors' of the objective leader behaviors" (Gioia & Sims, p. 225).

Other researchers have found support for including subordinate feedback, along with a managers' self-ratings, to accurately assess managers' performance (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Hegarty, 1974; Roush, 1992; Shipper & Davy, 2002; Wilson et al., 1990). Shipper and Davy (2002) suggested that the inclusion of subordinate appraisal is a method for "providing a better understanding of why some managers succeed while others fail" (p. 100). Subordinate appraisal is considered "one of the most practical and efficient methods for enhancing the quality of...management...which has an excellent...track record" (Bernardin, 1986, p. 421). Subordinates are in a unique position to observe a manager's behaviors and skills as well as provide a valid source of information and critical perspective on the supervisor's performance (Bernardin). Thus, the subordinate's relationship and perspective of the supervisor reduces bias in the assessment process (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Hogan et al., 1994; Roush, 1992; Wilson et al., 1990).

Hegarty (1974) found that supervisors who receive subordinate feedback show positive changes in supervision. Feedback from subordinates, peers, and supervisors clarify gaps between a manager's perception of self, and other's perceptions of the manager's performance. Boyatzis (1994) argued that a manager's knowledge of the gap in perception of performance is an integral component of the learning process that facilitates change in performance. These studies demonstrate the usefulness of subordinate feedback in assessing and improving managerial behaviors.

Research supports the use of subordinate feedback in the assessment of a manager's abilities. On a practical level, this process is used extensively, with tremendous success in business. "The frequent use of subordinate evaluation in management development programs" (Bernardin, 1986, p. 425) is further support for the inclusion of subordinate appraisal in assessment plans for manager's performance. Three companies, IBM, RCA, and Ford Motor Company have incorporated subordinate appraisals into their annual performance evaluation systems for several years. The inclusion of subordinate appraisal is designed to assist with personnel decisions, including promotions and bonuses, as well as to provide feedback and development programs for managers (Bernardin). Therefore, the inclusion of both self-assessment and subordinate assessment of a manager's performance is a critical component of studies that seek to identify the effectiveness of management performance.

#### *Purpose of the Study*

Studies indicate that 1) supervision impacts job satisfaction (Bluedorn, 1996; Browder, 1993; Mobley, 1997; Mobley et al., 1994), 2) job dissatisfaction is correlated with employee turnover (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Curtis & Wright, 2001; Eisenberger et

al., 1986; Stinglhamber & Vandenberghe, 2003), and 3) that mid-level managers have identified personnel management as an important skill (Domeier, 1977; Kane, 1982; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989). Birnbaum (2000) claims, “Higher education does not need more good management techniques, it needs more good managers” (p. 239). In an effort to improve management skills, which may promote retention of employees, it is critical to examine the current perception of the abilities and performances of managers in student affairs. This study examined perceptions of the performance of second-level professionals’ in student affairs. In order to provide a valid appraisal of a manager’s abilities and performance in student affairs, this research included both self and subordinate appraisals of a manager’s abilities and behaviors (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Bernardin, 1986; Hegarty, 1974; Hogan et al., 1994; Roush, 1992; Wilson et al., 1990). As a result of determining the degree to which managers have the skills and abilities deemed essential for good management, this study illustrates the specific training needs of managers in higher education.

As stated earlier, when student affairs professionals move into management positions, increased knowledge regarding management and supervision of personnel is required (Komives & Woodward Jr, 1996). Additionally, Kay and Palmer (1961) identified supervisory skills as the key transition for new supervisors. Therefore, research on the current perception of management in student affairs needs to focus on professionals who have recently advanced to managerial positions.

The most applicable management theory to guide this line of research is the Task•Cycle Theory because of its mission as well as the reliability and validity of a corresponding questionnaire (Shipper and Dillard, 2000). The mission of the Task•Cycle

Theory is to describe effective supervisors' abilities and behaviors at an operational level. The *Survey of Management Practices (SMP)*, which is based on the Task•Cycle Theory, "provides managers feedback on behaviors they need to change in order to improve effectiveness and quality of working life" (Leslie & Fleenor, 1998). Furthermore, the *SMP* is used widely in studies of managers' abilities and behaviors, and includes subordinate feedback as an integral component. Studies using the *SMP* indicate it is useful in assisting managers with improving their skills, and becoming more successful managers (Shipper & Dillard, 2000; Shipper and White, 1999; Wilson et al., 1990). Additionally, analysis of the psychometric properties of the *SMP* "demonstrate[s] adequate levels of internal consistency, inter-rater agreement, construct validity, divergent discriminate validity, and both internal and external criterion validity" (Shipper, 1995, p. 478). As such, the Management Task•Cycle Theory and the *SMP* are the management theory and assessment tool most closely aligned with the purposes of this investigation. As noted earlier in this chapter, the *SMP* is the most appropriate research tool to collect the necessary data to identify the perceptions of second-level student affairs managers' performance.

#### *Definition of Terms and Variables*

To provide a foundation of understanding in this study it is important to define terms associated with the hierarchy of an employee's position that are not commonly used in the field of higher education. These definitions provide a common understanding of the terms that are fundamental to this research.

Employee level: Refers to the broad category of an employee's position type, as either a first or second-level professional.

First-Level Professional: Full-time (including ten, eleven, and twelve month appointments) student affairs employees who have never been responsible for supervising full-time employees within student affairs units in two-year or four-year, private or public institutions of higher education.

Institution Type: Public four-year colleges and universities, private four-year colleges and universities, and two-year community and junior colleges.

Second-Level Professional: Full-time (including ten, eleven, and twelve month appointments) student affairs employees who have been responsible for supervising full-time employees, within student affairs units in four-year or two-year, private or public institutions of higher education, for ten years or less.

Subordinates: A first-level professional, as defined above.

Supervisor or manager: A second-level professional, as defined above.

Skills and abilities: An individual's specific behaviors and actions which are measurable.

### *Research Questions*

The research questions below were developed to identify the perceptions of second-level student affairs professionals' management performance. Additionally, this study examined supervisors' and subordinates' perceptions about the weaknesses and most challenging aspects of being a supervisor. The research questions examined in this study were:

1. To what extent do managers perceive that they possess the skills and abilities essential to good management as defined by the Task•Cycle theory?



2. Do managers' perceptions of their supervisory skills and abilities differ based on gender, ethnicity and number of supervisory training sessions attended?
3. To what extent do subordinates perceive managers possess the skills and abilities essential to good management as defined by the Task•Cycle theory?
4. Are there differences between the perception of managers' skills and abilities based on employee level?
5. What do managers and subordinates perceive are the most challenging aspects of being supervisors and is there a difference depending on employee level?
6. In which supervisory skill area(s) do managers and subordinates perceive supervisors need improvement and is there a difference depending on employee?

### *Overview of Methodology*

Two online instruments were used to collect data to answer the research questions. The first instrument consisted of demographic questions as well as two opened ended questions about the perception of a supervisor's weaknesses and challenges. This survey automatically directed respondents to the primary instrument, the *SMP*, which assessed the participant's perceptions of a supervisor's managerial performance. The target populations were both first-level and second-level professionals in student affairs at both two-year and four-year institutions. The population for this study was defined as members of the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), National Association for Campus Activities (NACA), Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) and the Association on Higher Education and Disability in Virginia (AHEAD-V). None of the organization's members

designate their professional level therefore an individuals title was used as a basis for narrowing the population. Individuals with the title Director, Dean, Associate and Assistant Dean, and Manager were considered second-level professionals, while titles of Associate and Assistant Director, Coordinator were considered first-level professionals. Obtaining a random sample of members from the four organizations ensured the sample represented a variety of professions that comprise Student Affairs professionals. The largest random sample of 500 members was selected from NASPA because members represent a wide range of professions, whereas smaller random samples were selected from the other three organizations as they represent specific professions, 200 from NACA, 200 from ACUHO-I and 80 from AHEAD - V. Individuals with other titles were excluded from the population. As an incentive for the sample to participate, respondents were able to enter a drawing to win one of two conference or institute registrations for a professional develop experience of their choice.

The data from the *SMP* and the demographic survey were analyzed to describe the sample and answer each research question. The quantitative data analysis procedures included descriptive statistics including means, frequencies, and standard deviations as well as inferential statistics including Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). The qualitative data was analyzed using an inductive approach to identify categories emerging from responses of the participants.

#### *Significance of the Study*

As noted earlier, there is a need for good managers in student affairs (Birnbaum, 2000; Janosik et al. 2003; Winston & Creamer, 1997). There is a lack of research specifically related to the current skill level of management and supervision of second-

level professionals (Winston & Creamer, 1997; Janosik et al. 2003). The research that does exist indicates that mid-level managers need training on personnel management (Domeier, 1977; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Kane, 1982). This demonstrates a need to increase the knowledge base related to the degree that second-level student affairs professionals' possess the skills and abilities deemed essential to good management. The results of this study provides original research on the management skill levels of supervisors in student affairs, as identified in the Task•Cycle Theory. The inclusion of subordinates and managers observations of management performance revealed the differences that existed between the perceptions of these groups regarding managers' skills and abilities. Including subordinate perceptions with manager perceptions of management performance was important in accurately assessing managers' performance (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Boyatzis, 1994; Hogan et al., 1994; Roush, 1992; Shipper & Davy, 2002; Wilson et al., 1990). Differences in perception, as well as self-identified limitations, may signal areas in which managers need additional training in order to improve management performance. In an effort to improve management in higher education, these findings can be utilized to develop specific managerial training that adequately reflects the needs of the profession.

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

The literature related to management and supervision lays a foundation for examining the current state of management in student affairs in higher education institutions. The premise behind this study was the theory that the quality of management is critical to the success of employee retention and productivity (Curtis & Wright, 2001; McConnell, 1999; Taylor, 1993), as well as the overall success of an organization (Brightman, 2004; Birnbaum 2000). The literature on management in student affairs is limited in scope (Janosik et al. 2003; Winston & Creamer, 1997). Therefore, this review focuses on the literature of management primarily in business and leadership industries.

Six categories of material emerged in the review of literature on management and supervision including: 1) the background of managers and supervisors, 2) the impact of management on employees, 3) the qualities and skills associated with good supervision, 4) the literature on managers in student affairs and management theories, 5) the general management theory literature, and 6) the literature on assessment of managers' abilities. Describing supervisors and managers and demonstrating the impact managers can have on employees sets the stage for identifying skills, characteristics and management theories associated with effective management in student affairs, business and leadership literature. Following the exploration of management theories, it is necessary to identify the various methods for assessing a manager's abilities. The review of these literary categories provides the basis for the methodology used in this study examining the current state of management in student affairs.

### *Background of Managers and Supervisors*

For the purpose of this study there are two types of supervisors considered to be second-level professionals: Those who supervise employees, known as first-line supervisors, and those who supervise managers, referred to as mid-managers. First-line supervisors are responsible for producing results and interacting with their employees daily (Steinmetz & Todd, 1986; Broadwell, 1984; Reeves, 1971; Kay & Palmer, 1961). In contrast, mid-managers are responsible for personnel administration as well as the institution's overall operations. Mid-managers focus primarily on project assignments and goal setting, leaving the detailed operations to the first-line supervisor who handles the details through their employees (Steinmetz & Todd). Although many of the skills necessary for being an effective supervisor are consistent regardless of supervisors' level, "the distinction between the responsibilities of the manager [mid-level managers] and the supervisor [first-line supervisors] is a matter of degree and emphasis" (Hotek, 2001, p. 18)

The skills required by a supervisor are similar to the skills required to be an effective employee. A supervisor, however, must also possess additional skills that are vastly different, and are often not learned as an employee (Belker, 1978; Broadwell, 1986; Hooper, 1991; Miller, 1985; Reeves, 1971; Steinmetz and Todd, 1986). Employees often become supervisors because they are able to perform their assigned tasks well, or the perception is that they may be capable of being a good supervisor (Belker ; Broadwell). "The theory is that successful past performance is the best indicator of future success" (Belker, p. 5). This can become an obstacle to ensuring good supervision because "the best performer doesn't always make the best manager" (Belker, p. 5). Cascio (1982) reiterated the notion that success in entry-level positions is not predictive of success as a first-line supervisor. Being a supervisor includes differences "in perspective, in basic concepts, in emphasis, in the sources of job

satisfaction, in status, and in relationships with other people in the organization” (Reeves, p. 1).

Kay and Palmer (1961) contended that in order to be successful, new supervisors must possess a specific skill set and accept their role as a supervisor. The skill set identified is based on Robert Katz’s theory of human, technical and conceptual skills. These skills are discussed in detail in a subsequent section of this chapter focusing on the qualities and skills of good managers. Acceptance of the supervisory role refers to psychological distance (or the need for these persons to view themselves as managers), rather than employees. The notion of viewing oneself as a manager is supported by Boyd’s (1984) examination of 225 plant managers from several companies.

Specifically, Boyd (1984) used two open-ended questions on a survey of 250 first-line supervisors to explore the transition of new supervisors as well as common weaknesses of supervisors. Poor management skills and poor attitude were identified as the top two transitional needs which must be addressed. Based on these results, Boyd concluded that a significant transitional need for managers is a positive attitude towards the role, which he labels management-mindedness. Management-mindedness refers to how supervisors perceive their role and how it relates to others (Boyd). Additionally, human relations, communication, and discipline were also identified as key weaknesses and transitional needs. Boyd did not include details about the data analysis procedures used to identify these findings, which is somewhat problematic in determining the reliability of the analysis and results. However other studies have found similar transitional needs of new supervisors which strengthen these findings.

In another qualitative study on the transition from employee to supervisor, Hooper (1991) interviewed twenty-four supervisors from sixteen companies with less than two years of experience. Hooper’s (1991) analysis of results identified transitional needs similar to the

results in the studies by Kay and Palmer (1961) and Boyd (1984). Acquisition of people skills was identified as one of the key challenges associated with the transition to a supervisory role. Further questioning to clarify the manager's definition of people skills found the skills lacked most by managers were those of disciplining employees and handling conflict (Hooper). In addition, managers indicated they lacked preparation to cope with transitioning from doing the work to supervising the work. Furthermore, "[m]ost of the supervisors recognized that they needed more training...there was something lacking in their knowledge and skills" (Hooper, p. 97). The concept of people skills as well as team building, resurfaced as a specific training need. Even though Hopper's analysis has limited generalizability due to the size of the small homogenous sample, the results are consistent with other literature on an employee's transition to managerial roles. It also indicates management training should address the transitional needs of new supervisors.

Business and industry recognize the importance of addressing the transition from employee to supervisor demonstrated by the estimate "that over \$40 billion per year is expended by industry on management training and education" (Heisler & Benham, 1992, p. 27). Management training programs are deemed important by business and industry because good management is a complex combination of attitudes, skills and knowledge (Brightman, 2004). Furthermore, the impact of poor management on employees and the organization is significant (Curtis & Wright, 2001; McConnell, 1999; Taylor, 1993).

#### *Impact of Organizations and Supervisors on Employees and Turnover Rates*

The limited research on turnover rates within higher education indicates that attrition is a problem (Lorden, 1998; Rosser & Javinar, 2003). Lorden's review of research on turnover in higher education institutions found that turnover rates ranged from 32% within the first five years of employment, to 61% within six years. In a study

of mid-level managers' intentions to leave, Rosser and Javinar found that participants believed staff turnover within their departments was a problem. Rosser and Javinar did not examine the reasons for the turnover. However, it is necessary to understand the factors relating to employee turnover in order to reduce attrition.

One recent study examined the correlation between new student affairs professionals job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and the type of supervision received (Tull, 2004). Tull found a correlation between the type of supervision received and a new professional's job satisfaction. A positive correlation was found between the type of supervision received and new professionals' job satisfaction. This indicated that new professionals were more satisfied with supervisors that exhibited behaviors associated with positive supervision, and were conversely less satisfied with supervisors who did not exhibit behaviors associated with positive supervision. Furthermore, Tull found a negative correlation between turnover intentions and the type of supervision received. This indicated that when the supervisor exhibited behaviors associated with positive supervision the new professionals' had a lower intention to leave the job. Although these results support that supervisors are a factor in an employee's job satisfaction level and turnover intention, additional research must be reviewed to confirm this conclusion. Due to the limited information and data on employee turnover in higher education, literature in business and industry is used in the current research.

According to Rhoades, Eisenberrger, and Armeli (2001) employee turnover is related to both organizational support theory and employee satisfaction. Organizational support theory provides a foundation for exploring how the perception of an organization's support impacts an employee's level of affective commitment to the



organization (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001; Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-Lamastro, 1990; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Rhoades et al.; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006; Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002 ). In a meta-analysis of the research on organizational support theory, Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnytsky (2002) revealed a strong correlation existing between overall job satisfaction and affective commitment. Thus, Meyer et al. contended that job satisfaction and commitment are important in understanding employee behavior as it relates to turnover.

Research on employee satisfaction has examined how supervisors contribute to a subordinate's level of satisfaction and consequently employee turnover rates (Bluedorn, 1996; Mobley, 1997; Mobley et al., 1994). Despite evidence of other factors that contribute to employee turnover, Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) argued that satisfaction is an important factor in an employee's decision to leave. Therefore, behaviors of supervisors as well as the satisfaction and commitment of employees must be used to understand the significance of the impact of managers on subordinates and their turnover intentions.

#### *Supervisors as a Factor in Employee Satisfaction*

Several studies using the Science Research Associates Inventory identified immediate supervision (Ash, 1954; Baehr, 1954; Wherry, 1954) and management effectiveness (Ash; Wherry) as factors in employee satisfaction. Immediate supervision includes both human relations and technical aspects of the supervisor's job, whereas management effectiveness refers to employee's confidence in management and

perception of administrative effectiveness. Baehr and Renck's (1958) examination of factors related to employee morale confirmed that "attitude toward immediate supervision is of central importance in the structure of employee morale" (p. 175). Similarly, Twery, Schmid, and Wrigley (1958), using the 21 item Job Satisfaction Inventory found satisfaction with supervisors, as a factor of employee satisfaction relating to both the technical and social roles.

Kahn's (1963) results echoed the findings of Twery et al. (1958) in an examination of factors relating to employee satisfaction, which used a 70-item satisfaction inventory. Communication and how effectively complaints were handled were additional key components of a supervisor's performance used in Kahn's study. Kahn concluded that satisfaction with supervision is distinguishable from satisfaction with an organization, and employees differentiate "between the human relations skills and the technical competence of supervisors" (p. 89).

More recently, Tallarigo and Rosebush's (1992) exploration of subordinate reactions to leader behaviors found that leaders may have a direct and strong impact on an employee's satisfaction with supervisors. According to Lawler (1994) supervision is one of the most common factors identified in employee satisfaction. Specifically, Mobley (1997) found that both the technical and personal aspects of supervision contribute to the level of satisfaction among employees. Therefore, research has demonstrated a link between a supervisor's skills and employee satisfaction, indicating a need to explore the reasons for turnover, specifically the relationship of employee satisfaction with employee turnover.

### *Employees Reasons for Turnover*

McConnell (1999) stipulated that two types of turnover exist, voluntary and involuntary. Despite the fact that involuntary turnover stems from an organization's dismissal of an employee, McConnell suggests that some cases of involuntary turnover may not be an employee's fault, rather the failure may occur because of inattentive or inept supervision, or a lack of orientation and training. Furthermore, voluntary turnover is often considered controllable turnover when an employee chooses to leave an organization. Three notable reasons "for the loss of employees who their organizations would probably wish to retain" (McConnell, p. 9) include low job satisfaction, dissatisfaction with leadership, and the work lacks challenge or significance. Additionally, Curtis and Wright (2001) asserted that, "a common reason for resignations is the feeling that managers are not providing appropriate leadership, or treating people unfairly or bullying their staff" (p. 56).

Taylor (1993) argued that poor supervision is a considerable factor in turnover, although this research is not extensive enough to support his conclusion. This line of reasoning is supported by informal interviews with three property management personnel search firms who cite supervisor-employee relations as the main reason people leave their jobs (Taylor). The reasons cited above for voluntary termination are supported by Melcher (1955) in a study on reasons for employee turnover.

Melcher (1955) explored employees' reasons for voluntary turnover in exit interviews with 125 employees who resigned. Overall, 54.4% of those interviewed indicated some to a great deal of dissatisfaction with general working conditions and the supervisor's behaviors. Employees cited the most important reasons for dissatisfaction with the supervisor's behaviors were; 1) under utilization of the employee's abilities (55.8%), 2) low level of

assistance received (44.2%) and 3) lack of supervisor's interest in the employee's progress (41.9%).

Furthermore, significantly more professional personnel were dissatisfied with their job and the supervisor's behavior than non-professional employees, and "a higher percentage [of the professional employees indicated they] would not return to the same work unit" (Melcher, 1955, p. 513). Based on this finding, Melcher concluded that the primary cause of the professional employee's higher levels of dissatisfaction with the job is related to inadequate supervision. This inference may be speculative since the exit interview did not specifically ask the participants to provide the main reason for their dissatisfaction. Despite the limitations of this study, which include the size of the sample, the lack of information regarding the validity and reliability of the instrument used, and the fact that the research was conducted more than 50 years ago, this finding is consistent with other studies which demonstrate supervisors contribute to employee satisfaction, commitment, and ultimately turnover (Bluedorn, 1996; Browder, 1993; Eisenberger et al., 2001; Mobley, 1997; Mobley et al., 1994).

Findings from five initial exploratory studies on organizational structure and group performance suggested that employee satisfaction is a function of a supervisor's behaviors (Katz, 1963). The first study was one of qualitative design in which employees, supervisors and managers in an insurance company were interviewed about morale and its relationship to supervisor as well as other work factors. An experimental program designed for managers based on the results of the first study was administered at the same insurance company evaluating productivity as well as the employee's and supervisor's attitudes and perceptions. A second, confidential study was conducted at the Pensacola Naval Air Station to examine "the effective utilization of its personnel resources" (p. 71).

A mixed methods study at a public utility company included 8,075 non-supervisory employees completing a questionnaire assessing the employee's morale. The study included interviews with 750 employees of the 8,075, as well as supervisors at all levels to develop a "hypothesis about the relationships between levels of management and about the entire management process" (p. 72). In an effort to validate the findings of the first study, a productivity study with railroad workers was conducted using interviews of both employees and supervisors. The fifth study involved employees in the automobile industry addressing the limitation of previous studies involved non-union managed industries.

Across all studies (Katz, 1963), it was found that supervisors with more productive units spent more time motivating employees, compared to supervisors of less productive units. These supervisors spent more time on routine tasks that could be performed by subordinates. Furthermore, employees who were more involved and had more autonomy in decision-making had greater levels of productivity, which is associated with the supervisor's ability to effectively motivate the staff. More specifically, employees in the insurance industry reported greater levels of satisfaction and pride with employee-oriented supervisors, and "supervisors [who] reported better interpersonal relations" (Katz, p. 77). Similarly in the automotive study, supervisors encouraging participation among subordinates resulted in higher levels of employee satisfaction. However, this finding was not consistent in the public utility study. Blue collar workers did not relate positively to employee-orientated supervisors who encouraged employee participation, compared to favorable responses from their white-collar counterparts in the

public utility company. Katz suggested this difference was a result of white-collar employees possessing a stronger ability to identify with the supervisor.

*Supervisors Relationship with Employees Commitment, Performance and Turnover*

Organizational Support Theory, a more recent theory prevalent in the business literature developed by Eisenberger, Hungtington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986), focuses on an employee's perceptions of organizational and supervisory support. This theory looks at how an employee's resulting level of commitment to the organization relates to employee retention. Organizational Support Theory incorporates the social exchange approach, based on "employee's inferences concerning the organization's commitment to them, and the contributions of such perceived organizational support [(POS)] to employees commitment to the organization" (Eisenberger et al., p. 500). POS theory relates employee perceptions to employee commitment.

Commitment to an organization centers on an employee's emotional bonds or attachment to an organization, and is termed "affective commitment" (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Eisenberger et al., 1986). The more an employee believes an organization values their contribution and well-being, the higher the employee's affective commitment to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore & Tetrick, 1991). Studies on POS confirm the existence of correlations between POS, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003; Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger et al., 1990; Shore & Barksdale, 1998; Wayne, Shore, & Linden, 1997). In a study of bank tellers, Whitener and Walz (1993) determined that affective commitment is a significant predictor of employee turnover intentions as well as actual voluntary turnover.

Furthermore, Guzzo, Noonan, and Elron (1994) found POS is a relatively strong predictor of organizational commitment and employee turnover intentions.

Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, and Rhoades (2001) determined that POS elicits a felt obligation to care about an organization as well as strengthens an employee's affective commitment (AC). The conclusion of Rhoades et al. (2001) that POS contributed to AC, and that POS and AC are related to turnover, supports the results of the study by Eisenberger et al. Therefore, "employees' [who believe] that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being increase [employee's] AC which, in turn, reduces turnover" (Rhoades et al., p. 834).

Stinglhamber & Vandenberghe (2003) expanded the research of Eisenberger et al.(2001) and Rhoades et al.(2001) to specifically include the perception of support from supervisors and its link to an employee's affective commitment and actual turnover rates. The results indicated that organizations and supervisors were independent elements of an employee's perception of support and commitment. Additionally, "affective commitment to the supervisor was significantly related to turnover...[whereas] organizational affective commitment did not impact turnover" (Stinglhamber & Vandenberghe, p. 542). This finding supports earlier research (Eisenberger et al., 2002) demonstrating that an employee's perceptions of supervisor support results in higher levels of POS, and subsequently lower levels of voluntary turnover. As such, Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe asserted that supervisors who focus on enhancing intrinsic job conditions that challenge employees, as well as assist in their personal development, will enhance employee satisfaction decreasing the likelihood of employee turnover.

Additionally, a recent examination of the impact that a supervisor's POS has on subordinates found that support for subordinates may stem partially from the organizational support of the supervisor (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Thus, POS is a critical component of organizational success and employee retention at all levels of an organization. Organizational politics and support are other factors that are linked to employee turnover intentions (Cropanzano et al., 1997). Ultimately, a more supportive work environment creates a more pleasant atmosphere, is less stressful, more satisfying for an employee, and reduces employee withdrawal behavior (Cropanzano et al.). This finding is supported in Fleishman and Harris's (1955) examination of the effect of a leader's behaviors on employee grievance and turnover.

Fleishman and Harris (1955) used the Consideration and Structure patterns identified in the Ohio State University Leadership Studies to examine the relationship between a manager's behaviors and subordinate turnover. The Consideration dimension focused on human relations, specifically the "extent to which the leader was considerate of his workers' feelings" (Fleishman, 1953, p. 2). The Structure dimension emphasized the leader's behaviors related to accomplishing goals through employee interactions. Both Consideration and Structure were found to be correlated with turnover in a curvilinear relationship, indicating "below a certain critical level of Consideration and above a certain level of Structure [behavior exhibited by a supervisor], turnover goes up" (Fleishman & Harris, p. 50). However, when Structure is increased and Consideration decreases, an employee's initial response is to complain, while drastic changes in both Structure and Consideration patterns result in voluntary turnover. Consequently, a limit exists in which turnover is not affected by increasing Consideration and decreasing



Structure behaviors (Fleishman & Harris). Furthermore, it was demonstrated that higher levels of Consideration can compensate for increased Structure behaviors, yet the reverse is not true. Therefore, Fleishman and Harris concluded that Consideration is more crucial in a supervisor's behaviors as it relates to decreasing turnover. These findings suggested an optimal level of a supervisor's behaviors exist, resulting in lower, voluntary turnover rates. Shipper and Wilson's (1992) more recent examination of the impact of managerial behaviors on performance, employee tension, and commitment support this finding.

Shipper and Wilson (1992) focused on the impact of managers on employees, specifically related to environment, commitment and performance. The results indicated that a manager's behaviors impacted the tension among employees as well as an employee's level of commitment and performance. Shipper and Wilson also found that when managerial behaviors improved through training based on the Management Task•Cycle Theory, employees actually experienced lower levels of tension and higher levels of commitment and performance (Shipper & Wilson, 1992).

#### *Impact of Employee Turnover on Organizations*

Turnover is expensive for business due to the high cost of recruitment, indirect costs associated with low productivity, and increased training needs (Sunoo, 1998; Taylor, 1993). According to Mowday et al. (1982), consequences of turnover include more than cost, referring to the increased workload on other employees, which may result in lower employee satisfaction levels. The loss of a group member and the subsequent replacement with a new staff member requires socialization efforts that supersede accomplishing tasks (Mowday et al.). Thus, it is important to minimize the causes of turnover whenever possible.

Turnover in higher education is an even more critical issue because personnel costs make up a majority of the budget (Webb, Greer, Montello, & Norton, 1987). The turnover problem is compounded in higher education because people with higher levels of education have higher expectations of supervisors (Browder, 1993). Considering that the majority of first-level professional positions require master's degrees, and some second-level professional and senior level positions often require doctoral degrees, expectations of each level of supervision are higher because of the degree required for the position. Good supervision is imperative for the effective operation of any organization, especially higher education.

The impact that supervision can have on employee satisfaction and turnover is a component that can be addressed through training and education (Rhoades, Eisenberrger, & Armeli, 2001), which is “the single most effective method of reducing turnover” (Taylor, 1993, p. 23). Therefore, the literature on employee job satisfaction and Organizational Support Theory (e.g. Eisenberger et al., 2001; Shipper & Wilson, 1992) demonstrates the need to identify management skills associated with good management.

### *Qualities and Skills Associated with Good Supervision*

Researchers have assessed supervisors, superiors, and subordinates perceptions of the qualities and skills associated with good supervision. In these studies as well as studies on the qualities of effective managers; (e.g. Analoui & Hosseini, 2001; Fleishman, 1953; Grau-Gumbau et al., 2001; Katz & Rosen, 1987; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992) respondents, supervisors, superiors, and subordinates have identified similar sets of knowledge and skills commonly associated with effective supervisors. One of the

most referenced works still considered relevant today on this subject, is that of Katz (1955), which identified a framework for management.

Katz (1955) defined managers as individuals responsible for directing the activities of people to achieve outcomes. Based on this definition, Katz identified three skill areas; technical, human, and conceptual. Technical skills refer to “specialized knowledge, analytical ability within the specialty, and facility in the use of the tools and techniques of the specific discipline” (Katz, 1955, p. 91). Katz argued that technical skills are most important for lower level administrators, yet are necessary at higher levels in smaller organizations in order to evaluate subordinates responses to questions. The second skill area, human, refers to “the way the individual perceives (and recognizes the perceptions of) his superiors, equals, and subordinates, and in the way he behaves subsequently” (p. 91). The human skills area, according to Katz, is necessary at all levels of administration. Conceptual skills, which are critical at the executive level, refer to an individual’s ability to view the relationships within an organization, how the differing functions are interdependent on each other and external constituencies, and how making a change in one area impacts other units within the organization. Despite Katz’s initial philosophy that an individual’s conceptual skills can be developed, he also indicated this skill is much more difficult to develop, and therefore may be an innate ability.

Katz’s (1955) “approach is based not on what good [managers] are (their innate traits and characteristics), but rather on what they do (the kinds of skills which they exhibit in carrying out their jobs effectively” (p. 91). The emphasis on skills is based on the idea that abilities can be developed and recognized in an individual’s performance, whereas innate traits and characteristics cannot be developed or improved upon (Katz).

Although this framework is based on a definition of management and suggests the skills can be developed, it is not supported directly by research.

Following the publication of Katz' theory, several studies were conducted to identify the skills associated with good management. These provided the foundational literature on quality management. Therefore, it is necessary to review some of these foundational studies as well as studies conducted on the training needs of managers which have been a more recent focus of management literature.

Pfiffner (1955) studied the practices of good supervisors and found "better supervisors are good team workers; they practice the modern art of personnel counseling; they communicate to others and listen to workers" (p. 530). Face-to-face relationships with subordinates, employee contact and communication are imperative functions of supervisors according to Prien's (1963) analysis of first-line supervisors behaviors. Dowell and Wexley (1978) agreed with this finding in their study of first-line plant supervisors. Fleishman (1953) investigated the behaviors of leaders in management positions identifying communication and facets of teamwork as dimensions of leadership.

Eisenberg (1948) discovered that forging relationships and developing teamwork among subordinates are essential qualities of first-line supervisors. Expanding the concept of teamwork to include high levels of subordinate participation, Pace, Hartley, and Daveport (1992) examined subordinates evaluations of leader effectiveness. The results indicated that "the correct use of participation was instrumental in leading to projections of both highly effective organizational performance and high subordinate commitment" (Pace et al., 1992), p. 396). Although each of the above studies (Dowell and Wexley, 1978; Eisenberg, 1948; Fleishman, 1953; Pace et al., 1992; Pfiffner, 1955;

Prien, 1963) examined only a few organizations or industries, the consistency of the results supports the conclusion that communication, relationships with subordinates, and teamwork are important qualities of effective supervisors. These qualities are consistent with the human skills area defined by Katz (1955).

Employee discipline is a specific skill area that has been found to be a critical component of supervision in several studies on effective management (Argyris, 1953; Dowell & Wexley, 1978; Eisenberg, 1948; Flanagan, 1951; Kay, 1959; Komaki, 1986; Komaki, Zlotnick, & Jensen, 1986; Prien, 1963; Williams, 1956). Bittel (1968) contended that good supervisors do not ignore violations or poor work from staff; rather they discipline employees when necessary while being fair and seeking to understand the reason an employee is unproductive. The purpose of discipline, which is often synonymous with personnel counseling, is “to encourage employees to behave sensibly at work” (Bittel, p.212). Solem, Onachilla, and Heller’s (1961) exploration of training needs found that first-line supervisors identified the need for training on skills associated with disciplining employees; reinforcing the notion that employee discipline is a significant aspect of supervision.

Mandell (1957) explored specific behaviors of supervisors using a list of 80 characteristics identified as important from the management literature. The study included 695 non-supervisors, from the trade, including the clerical, engineering and accounting industries. These participants identified the characteristics exhibited by their manager, and the nature of the characteristic, either positive or negative. Some positive behaviors exhibited by managers included providing clear instructions, acting as a good role model, and good decision-making. In a follow-up study, 150 skilled and semi-skilled

labor employees rated their supervisors on the 80 characteristics and found that supervisors were deficient in eight favorable characteristics including knowledge, planning, judging, training, providing feedback to employees, and verbal communication (Mandell).

Based on the results of these studies Mandell (1957) identified four desirable categories of characteristics for supervisors; administrative, leadership, human relations, and technical. Administrative characteristics included good decision making, providing clear instructions and planning work. Role modeling, dependability, feedback on job performance and accurately judging employees were characteristics associated with leadership. An individual's ability to motivate employees to perform effectively and efficiently, perform as an advocate for employees, be friendly with employees, and being liked in general were all aspects of the human relations characteristics. The technical category focused on the supervisor's extensive knowledge of his domain. Each of the four categories identified by Mandell contain elements of effective communication and incorporate behaviors and skills found in other studies to be associated with qualities and skills of effective supervisors (e.g. Argyris, 1953; Dowell & Wexley, 1978; Fleishman, 1953; Katz, 1955; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992)

McCall, Lombardo and Morrison (1988) conducted a qualitative exploration of successful executives from six major corporations. The study focused on lessons the executives learned from their experiences. The lessons were summarized into five themes that reflect "fundamental executive skills and ways of thinking" (McCall et al., p. 6). The first theme, setting and implementing agendas, encompassed technical skills, knowledge, strategic thinking, structure and problem solving. The second theme included handling

relationships such as personal relationships, political situations, addressing conflict, motivating subordinates, addressing performance concerns, and working with higher level and lateral level employees. The third theme of basic values referred to the empathetic side of management and basic managerial values. Executive temperament was identified as the fourth theme and involved personal confidence, dealing with stressful situations, power, and authority. Personal awareness was the final theme and included an executive's ability to balance work and personal life, understanding one's own motivations, and being responsible for one's career. (McCall et al) The nature of this study limited the generalizability of the findings; however the themes identified by McCall et al. are consistent with findings from other studies on the characteristics of successful supervisors (e.g. Argyris, 1953; Dowell & Wexley, 1978; Fleishman, 1953; Katz, 1955; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992).

In a more recent, in-depth examination of managers, Boyd (1994) focused on managers' perceptions of common weaknesses displayed by supervisors as well as the most difficult problems new supervisors encounter. The four weaknesses most commonly identified were poor attitude (56%), poor management of their job (50%), poor disciplining (22%), and poor communication (21%). The four challenges new supervisors were most likely to encounter included management (planning, organizing, etc.) (43%), adopting a management attitude (42%), human relations (25%), and discipline (22%) (Boyd). These findings are consistent with the research on the qualities and skills related to good supervision (Bailey, 1957; Bittel, 1968; Katz, 1955; Mandell & Duckworth, 1957; Pfiffner, 1955). Boyd's results suggested a need to consider research focusing on the training needs of managers.

### *Manager Training Needs*

Assessment of management training needs is another area of literature that provides information about the skills and abilities managers view as important to their development and success as a supervisor. Oppenheimer (1982) conducted an assessment of managers training needs in “large, multi-plant, urban-based company” (p. 72), in order to guide the development of training programs for the organization. A questionnaire was designed by Oppenheimer to allow managers to identify and prioritize the helpfulness of training in specific management skill and knowledge areas. The managers identified four training areas; 1) communication, 2) team-work, 3) planning, and 4) goal setting. A similar investigation conducted by Katz and Rosen (1987) on management training needs for a technical population indicated the top priorities for training are leadership, managing people, and team effectiveness. The results for new managers were similar; however their priorities did not include team effectiveness (Katz & Rosen). This finding is important because it demonstrates that regardless of the management experience or level, leadership and managing people are critical areas of development for supervisors.

An exploration of managerial training needs within Spanish tourism organizations found the most frequently cited training needs were knowledge, skills and attitude (Grau-Gumbau, Agut-Nieto, Llorens-Gumbau, & Martinez-Martinez, 2001). Furthermore, respondents in this study indicated specific training needs in the areas of technical knowledge, leadership, decisions, communication, and change. Similarly, an examination of management education in Iran indicated that task related skills were most important to respondents, followed by self-related skills, and people-related skills (Analoui & Hosseini, 2001). Despite the study being conducted among a different culture, the



findings are consistent with the research on training needs (Katz & Rosen, 1987; Oppenheimer, 1982) as well as the skills associated with quality supervision (e.g. Argyris, 1953; Dowell & Wexley, 1978; Fleishman, 1953; Katz, 1955; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992) that were conducted in American business and industry.

Many of the above studies on training needs were limited by a small sample size and/or a specialized population. However, the results were consistent with the foundational research on the qualities of good supervision (e.g. Fleishman, 1953; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992) demonstrating the legitimacy of the findings. Furthermore, the results of research on the training needs of supervisors as well as the qualities of effective managers (e.g. Analoui & Hosseini, 2001; Fleishman, 1953; Graugumbau et al., 2001; Katz & Rosen, 1987; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992) suggested that planning, administrative tasks, knowledge, relationships with employees, training, discipline, developing teamwork, and communication are important factors in effective supervision. These qualities can be summarized into three categories, administrative responsibilities, personnel management, and leadership. Administrative responsibilities refer to delegation, planning, and goal setting. Personnel management is comprised of the supervisor's relationship with the employees, effective communication, providing feedback on performance, discipline and equitable treatment of staff. Leadership focuses on role modeling exemplary behaviors; having a vision and sharing it with staff.

The context of higher education is conspicuously missing in studies reviewed above relating to the training needs of managers and the qualities of effective managers. Research is available, however, on the training needs of mid-level managers in the student affairs component of higher education. Therefore, it is necessary to review this

research and compare it to the results of studies conducted in business and industry.

Consistency of findings between the two bodies of literature provides additional support for applying research results from the business and leadership literature to the higher education setting.

### *Mid-Level Managers in Higher Education*

According to Bennis (1976), universities are the worst managed institutions in the country. Bennis believes that universities fail to study their own administration in terms of leadership. The lack of leadership studies in higher education is evidenced by the fact that the topic was omitted from the 1982 Encyclopedia of Educational Research (Tucker, Bass, & Daniel, 1992). More recently, Watson (2000) stipulated “few scholars of management have researched into the relevance of established management theory to the management of higher education” (p. 3). Most of the literature Watson examined focused more on the managing and running of an institution rather than on the skills and abilities of the management staff within the institution.

The primary focus of the research in higher education has been on middle-management and senior-level administrators as it relates to the management of staff, including skills needed and competencies (Kane, 1982). In 1977, Steege explored the perceived in-service training needs of administrators within higher education using basic management concepts defined in business and industry. Forty-two percent (42%) of the respondents in Steege’s study were mid and senior-level student affairs administrators, specifically 37% directors, 26% deans and 14% vice presidents.

The top priorities student affairs administrators identified as in-service educational training needs were “leadership behavior, forecasting, analyzing problems,

communication, team building, coordinating, time management, establishing reporting systems, programming, and motivating” (Steege, (1977, p. 56). These findings were consistent with Jordan’s (Jordan, as cited in Kane, 1982) examination of the abilities essential to the success of mid-level managers in higher education. The student affairs respondents in Jordan’s study indicated the skills most essential to their success were leadership, decision-making, interpersonal skills and communication. Interpersonal relationship skills were another training area identified by respondents at all administrative levels in Steege’s study specifically leadership behavior, motivation and communication. Although Steege’s sample size was low with only 93 respondents and was geographically limited; the results indicated that management practices identified in business and industry are applicable to management practices within higher education, and specifically student affairs.

In another general examination of the professional development needs of student affairs administrators, Stokes (1981) studied female administrators at institutions in Florida. The top professional development needs identified were “contract and grant procurement, the budget process, legal issues, and staff motivation” (Stokes, p. iii). Despite the limited generalizability of Stokes’ study, some of the areas identified by respondents as requiring further development are consistent with the findings from other research focusing on middle-managers training needs (Domeier, 1977; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Kane, 1982; Steege, 1977). One significant difference from other research on the training needs of managers (Domeier, 1977; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Kane, 1982; Steege, 1977) is Stokes’ finding that female administrators perceived little need for professional development concerning interpersonal communication skills. However, this finding is

consistent with Ivy's (1981) investigation of the staff development needs of student affairs professional in Mississippi's public institutions of higher education, in which the respondents perceived minimal need to develop their communication skills.

Two researchers Disque and Benke (Disque & Benke, 1989b as cited in Benke & Disque, 1990) and Wade (1993) examined other professionals' perceptions of the skills essential for competent performance of mid-level managers. Disque and Benke found that chief student affairs officers (CSAO) identified management and supervision skills as essential for competency as a mid-manager. These skills included the ability to establish priorities, teamwork, evaluate staff performance, leadership, supervision of staff, decision making, managing budgets, and clear and concise written communications. Similarly, Wade found no statistically significant differences in the skill competencies essential for advancement in student affairs. However, all professionals identified communication skills as important competencies for advancement in student affairs. Additionally, older and younger professionals also identified supervisory skills as essential competencies for advancement. Wade (1993) also compared the competencies perceived as necessary for advancement by gender finding statistically significant differences between males and females. Women rated decision-making, organizing, planning and professional self-development competencies higher than males. Additionally, both male and females identified "communication skills as an important competency for advancement" (Wade, p. 122).

The earliest research focusing specifically on middle-managers within student affairs was conducted by Domeier (1977). The purposes of Domeier's study was three-fold: 1) to identify necessary competency areas of student affairs administrators, 2) to

determine how these administrators are trained for these competencies, and 3) to pinpoint the competency areas in which administrators need additional training. Domeier's sample of 75 student affairs administrators from eight colleges in one state, was based on the assumption that this sample is representative of the typical "American university in relation to the number of personnel and the designation of positions held within Student Affairs Administration" (p. 7).

In order to develop an instrument for his study, Domeier (1977) completed an extensive review of literature and identified a list of competencies based on "statements, challenges, issues, inferences, problems, definitions, functions, descriptions, predictions, and anything else that seemed important to Student Affairs practitioners" (p. 52). After identifying a comprehensive list of statements, each task was grouped into similar functional areas in order to identify eight administrative competency sets. These sets included: budget management, cooperative relationships, communication, leadership, personnel management, professional development, research and evaluations, and student contact.

The results of Domeier's (1977) investigation indicated that competencies can be identified for administrators at differing career levels including executive, mid-management, and entry. Among mid-managers, one hundred percent (100%) of the respondents indicated the use of the following competencies: cooperative relationships, communication, leadership, and professional development. The entry level respondents indicated frequent use of the following competencies: budget management, cooperative relationships, communication, leadership, personnel management, professional development, research and evaluation, and student conduct (Domeier). Even though the

sample was small and limited in scope, the findings indicated that management is a competency associated with entry and mid-level managers. Therefore, this provides a foundation for conducting additional research on the specific managerial competencies and training needs of supervisors in higher education.

Building on Domeier's (1977) research, Kane (1982) focused on mid-level managers' perceived skills attainment and the need for further development of these skills. Kane used an instrument adapted from Domeier's survey that focused on seven skill areas including leadership, fiscal management, personnel management, communication, professional development, research and evaluation, and student contact. Kane used Katz's (1955) theory on effective management as a conceptual foundation for the study in order to establish the relevancy of the theory to student affairs management. As identified in Katz's theory by experts in the student affairs profession, each statement in the survey was placed into one of the three categories: technical, human, or conceptual. This allowed Kane to determine "[t]he applicability of [Katz's] model... from the respondents' data regarding perceived importance of skills" (p. 112).

Kane (1982) sampled 811 mid-level managers at public and private institutions granting bachelor or higher degrees, with 2,000 or more students and located in the southeast region of the United States. Of the 613 instruments returned, 571 were usable responses. The majority of respondents were from public institutions, between 27 and 42 years of age, with 59% identified as males. Despite the targeted geographic region, the sample size was large, and incorporated a wider geographic region than any prior study on management skills and/or training needs of student affairs practitioners (Domeier, 1977; Steege, 1977).

Kane (1982) concluded that different skills levels are required of employees based on the level of job responsibility and the employing department. However, leadership and personnel management skills were identified as the top two skill areas among respondents from several different departments and job levels. Specifically, leadership was identified as the most important skill area essential to the success of mid-level managers. A review of the individual skill items revealed two skills “seen as essential by respondents in 90% of the functional areas: (1) accept authority and responsibility and delegate as appropriate; (2) develop and maintain a work environment based on mutual understanding, trust and competence ” (Kane,p. 110). These two skills are also identified in the research on the qualities of an effective supervisor (Boyd, 1984; Dowell & Wexley, 1978; Eisenberg, 1948; Fleishman, 1953; Mandell, 1957; Mandell & Duckworth, 1957; Pace et al., 1992; Pfiffner, 1955; Prien, 1963).

Comparing the respondents’ perceived skill level attainment and need for further development by gender, Kane (1982) found both men and women identified leadership, fiscal management, personnel management, communication, and student contact as very important skill areas. However, men and women did differ in their perceived importance of some skills. Women perceived professional development as more important, while men placed greater importance on fiscal management skills. Despite the “statistically significant differences between men and women respondents in... two categories...men and women are more alike than different in perceived importance of skills” (p. 86).

In general, the findings of Kane’s (1982) research supported Katz’s theoretical model based on respondents and their interest in developing their management skills. Analyzing each skill factor based on Katz’s model, Kane found the human factor had the

highest ratings of essential or very important (41%), and the technical and conceptual factors were rated equally important at 30%. Kane stipulated that this finding supported Katz's model at the mid-management level because professionals place more emphasis on the use of human skills; and equal, but less emphasis on the technical and conceptual skills. Although the instrument used in this study was not designed using Katz's theory as a foundation; these results nonetheless suggest business management theories can be applied to the student affairs profession.

In 1991 Fey conducted a study among the Texas Association of College and University Student Personnel Administrators (TACUSPA), using Kane's (1982) instrument. The purpose of Fey's research was to ascertain mid-level administrators' perceptions of the importance of skills associated with their positions as well as the need to further develop these skills. Even though Fey's sample was drawn from administrators in one state, limiting the generalizability of the results, one finding is consistent with Kane's results. The respondents "viewed Personnel Management as the most important of the seven skill categories, followed in importance by Leadership, Communication, Student Contact, Fiscal Management, Professional Development, and Research and Evaluation" (Fey, p. iv). Two of the top three categories, leadership and personnel management were identified as important by respondents in both Fey's and Kane's research.

Fey reported that women "perceived all skill categories to be more important (except Student Contact skills) than their male counterparts" (p. 113), which differed from Kane's conclusions that females and males are more similar in their perceptions of the importance of skills. Another disparity in findings between Kane and Fey appeared in



reference to the individual skills identified as most important to mid-level administrators. Eighty percent (80%) of respondents in Fey's study rated all individual personnel management skill items as essential. Whereas the top two individual skill items identified in Kane's research were within the cooperative relationships and leadership skill areas. Regardless of the different findings, the individual skill areas from both studies were compatible with the qualities determined as essential to effective supervision in other studies (e.g. Analoui & Hosseini, 2001; Fleishman, 1953; Grau-Gumbau et al., 2001; Katz, 1955; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992).

In contrast to Kane's (1982) findings that mid-level managers perceived a need for further development in most skill categories, Fey (1991) discovered that fiscal management was the only factor in which mid-level managers perceived themselves as needing further development. Fey recommended that future research examine mid-level administrators' attainment of skills rather than the importance of the skills to the position. Fey also suggested that due to the inherent limitation of self reported data it is important to include the perceptions other employees' (i.e. subordinates, superiors, and peers) in these studies. The limitation of self-reported data will be examined in more detail in the section on assessment of a manager's skills and abilities.

Tillotson (1995) also conducted a study among student affairs administrators who were members of TACUSPA. The premise of this study was to test Katz's (1955) theory by examining the importance of three skill categories to student affairs administrators. In contrast to Kane, Tillotson used Katz's skill categories to develop the instrument used in her research. However, the results were similar to Kane's in that the most important skills "were in the human skill category and involved interpersonal relationship skills,

organizational skills, communication skills and directive skills necessary for working with others” (Tillotson, 1995, p. iv). These findings were consistent across all position levels and gender.

Foley (1989) used a different approach than Fey (1991), Kane (1982) and Tillotson (1995) to examine the skills and knowledge areas required for satisfactory performance at the different levels of administration in student affairs. Foley surveyed a random sample of all members of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), which included student affairs staff members from all regions in the United States. Of the 782 usable responses, 55% were female, 91% were white, 63% were at public institutions and 85% were at 4-year institutions. Foley compared the demographics of the sample to the population of all ACPA members and determined there was no significant difference between the sample and population. Therefore, the sample might be considered representative, enhancing generalizability of the results to ACPA members.

In order to identify the respondents perceived skill level as well as perceived need for skill development, Foley (1989) developed two sections of the overall instrument. The ACPA Membership Survey, which consisted of the respondent’s level of proficiency and the skill level perceived as necessary for adequate performance. The other two sections of the instrument included the ACPA Areas of Involvement and Membership Satisfaction, and Demographic Data.

Seven skill and knowledge areas were identified based on a factor analysis of the responses to the 64 items on the survey: “(a) Counseling and Consultation, (b) Management, (c) Academic Support, (d) Research, (e) Societal Issues, (f) Program Development, and (g) Higher Education” (Foley, 1989, p. 154). Foley found that mid-

managers rated their level of proficiency with leadership, organizational development, and interpersonal skills as good. In contrast, mid-managers indicated an average proficiency level with skills related to the supervision of employees, organizational analysis, and staff evaluation.

Additionally, Foley (1989) compared respondents perceived level of proficiency with their perceived need for development and found that “the higher the career stage, the less the discrepancy between proficiency possessed and proficiency needed” Foley (p. 106). This was particularly evident in management skills, which included supervision, staff evaluation and recruitment, leadership, and group and organizational development. All of these areas were perceived as more important for director level employees compared to entry-level practitioners. However, no differences in management skills existed between directors and chief student affairs officers. These findings are consistent with the nature of the positions, considering entry level practitioners typically do not manage full-time employees, and chief student affairs officers have gained experience in supervising employees in a previous management position such as a director or mid-level manager.

Sermersheim (2002) conducted more recent research on the perceived skill importance and the need for further skill development of mid-level managers in student affairs at four-year colleges and universities. She sampled 450 randomly selected members of the Association of College Personnel Administration members receiving a 76% return rate. The sample was representative of a variety of position and institution types, length of experience, and gender. The results indicated leadership and fiscal management as significantly important skills. Only forty-one percent (41%) of

respondents indicated a need for further development of their personnel management skills, thus it was not identified as a skill needing further development, differing from earlier findings (Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Kane, 1982). However, mid-level managers seeking advancement in their current functional area reported a higher need for personnel management training than mid-managers seeking no employment change or seeking a chief student affairs officer position or other position. Additionally, the importance of developing personnel management as a skill decreased as a respondent's length in a position increased. Women indicated communication skills were more important than men, while both men and women rated the need for further development of their leadership skills equally (Sermersheim).

The most recent research investigating a student affairs professional's perceived mastery of skills was conducted by Roberts (2003) in an effort to determine if a professional's skill level differs based on position. The sample consisted of all members of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators in Region III, with 534 members responding to the survey resulting in a response rate of 61%. Based on the respondents' demographic characteristics, the sample was representative of Region III members (Roberts).

Roberts modified Kane's instrument to include three additional areas; legal issues, technology, and diversity. Furthermore, the personnel management section was enhanced to include the components of Winston and Creamer's (1997) Staffing Practices Model, which will be discussed in more detail in the next section. This study is the first to use a model as a basis for constructing the personnel management questions used on the survey instrument. The instrument asks respondents to rate their "level of mastery of 72 skills"

according to the following scale: “1 = I have not begun working on this yet; 2 = I have begun working on this; 3 = I am actively working on and concerned with this, 4 = I am still working on this, but I am less concerned with it than I once was; 5 = I feel that I have essentially mastered or accomplished this.” (Roberts, p. 111).

Entry level professionals indicated the three least mastered skills were fiscal management, research, evaluation and assessment, and personnel management; whereas middle-managers identified research, evaluation and assessment, fiscal management, and legal issues as the three skills with the least amount of mastery. Roberts also found that entry-level professionals and mid-managers identified the largest difference in perceived skills attainment of the personnel management factor. This finding is reasonable based on the entry-level employee’s responsibilities, which rarely include supervising full-time employees, compared to the responsibilities of mid-managers typically including supervision as a primary duty.

Mid-managers rated personnel management in the top three skills mastered. The three items rated the lowest within the personnel management factor for mid-managers were “terminating professional staff after following due process” (mean = 3.21), “mediating conflict among staff” (mean = 3.52), and “evaluating professional staff” (mean = 3.61) (Roberts, 2003, p. 121). The two personnel management skills that mid-managers rated highest were “recognizing accomplishments of others” (mean = 4.02) and “using appropriate staff selection techniques” (mean = 3.87) (Roberts, p. 121). Based on the early description of the ratings, this indicates mid-managers have not mastered the personnel management skills and still believe there is a need for further development of these skills.

According to Roberts, the two primary limitations of his study were the limited generalizability based on the sample encompassing only one region, and the use of self-reported perceptions. One limitation not identified by the author is the scale on the instrument itself. Despite the reliability of the instrument ranging from .72 - .88 (Roberts), and being reviewed by experts in the field of student affairs and management, the response scale only loosely refers to an individual's mastery of the skill. Rather the scale refers to the respondent's work and concern of the skill rather than identifying a specific level of skill mastery. The only item that specifically refers to mastery is the highest response level, described above.

Throughout, the research components of supervision have been identified as important skills for mid-managers in student affairs. The need to further develop supervision skills has also been identified (Benke and Disque, 1990; Domeier, 1977; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Ivy, 1981; Kane, 1982; Sermersheim, 2002; Steege, 1977; Stokes, 1981; Tillotson, 1995; Wade, 1993). The most commonly cited skills include personnel management, leadership, and communication. While this provides a good foundation for identifying personnel management as an important training need for second-level professionals, only three studies (Foley, 1989; Kane, 1982; Roberts, 2003) specifically focused on the mid-managers perceived level of skill attainment. The findings from these studies indicated that mid-managers rated their personnel management competency level low to moderate (Foley, 1989; Kane, 1982; Roberts, 2003). A key component missing from the studies (Foley, 1989; Kane, 1982; Roberts, 2003) of a manager's perceived level of skill attainment was the inclusion of other employee's, including subordinates, rating supervisors on their perceived levels of competence. Self-reported data was a limitation

that Fey and Roberts cited in their studies, and both recommended the need for future studies to include subordinates and supervisors in the sample.

In 2001, Winton (as cited in Janosik et al. 2003) conducted informal interviews to examine new employees' perceptions of a supervisor's abilities independently of the supervisor's perceptions of their own abilities. New employees were asked to identify the supervisor's actions and behaviors that subordinates viewed as either helpful and/or necessary to their success as new professionals (Janosik et al., 2003). The themes that Janosik et al. identified were "(a) structure, (b) autonomy, (c) frequent feedback, (d) recognition of limitations, (e) support, (f) effective communication, (g) consistency, (h) role modeling, and (i) sponsorship" (p. 48). Examples of some of the themes are: 1) Structure encompassed the supervisor's ability to plan, organize, and set goals and guidelines, 2) The new professional's interest in autonomy related to the issue of micromanagement and how micromanagement implied a lack of trust in the employee's performance demonstrating a lack of confidence in the employee's work, and 3) Effective communication including the sharing of information from administration and other areas on campus, being honest and listening to new ideas and concerns (Janosik et al.). The results of this study closely corresponded to the results reported in prior research on the qualities of good supervisors: structure, autonomy, effective communication and consistency (e.g. Analoui & Hosseini, 2001; Fleishman, 1953; Grau-Gumbau et al., 2001; Katz & Rosen, 1987; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992).

Research findings identified components of supervision as one of the essential training needs of mid-level managers in student affairs. In addition, mid-managers rated their perceived attainment of these skills low to moderate (Benke and Disque, 1990;

Domeier, 1977; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Ivy, 1981; Kane, 1982; Roberts, 2003; Sermersheim, 2002; Steege, 1977; Stokes, 1981; Tillotson, 1995) supporting the need to explore, in depth, these skills and abilities of student affairs supervisors. It is necessary to determine if the findings from Winston's informal survey of a new employee's perceptions and expectations of a supervisor's behaviors deemed important to the employees' success (Janosik et al. 2003) are consistent with the current skills and abilities of student affairs supervisors. The integration of a comparison of first and second-level professionals' perception of managerial behavior needs, which is recommended by Fey and Roberts, will significantly increase the knowledge on this subject.

Additionally, it is essential to use a theoretical model as a framework for assessing the current supervisory skills and abilities of second-level professionals in student affairs. This will ensure the legitimacy of the research specifically on supervision within student affairs. Failure to use a theoretical framework, and inclusion of both first and second-level professional's perceptions would limit the usefulness of the results in the study. Therefore, theoretical models of management in student affairs as well as business literature must be explored to identify a model that incorporates the findings associated with qualities of an effective supervisor and training needs of mid-managers. It is also important to consider the validity and effectiveness of incorporating a subordinate's ratings of supervisors to accurately assess a manager's skills and abilities.

### Managerial Theories and Models

#### *Staffing Practices Model in Student Affairs*

Winston and Creamer (1997) developed a model for staffing practices due to the perceived importance of staffing practices in higher education. This model was adapted from a review of numerous management theories in an effort to address the unique



environment within institutions of higher education. The model includes “five interlinked and overlapping constellations of activities: recruitment and selection, orientation to position, supervision, staff development, and performance appraisal” (Winston & Creamer, p. 39). Winston and Creamer conducted a qualitative research project using case studies from eight colleges and universities recognized as having exceptional divisions of student affairs. The study examined the staffing practices within the institutions as it related to the staffing practices models. In addition to the qualitative study, Winston and Creamer conducted a quantitative study, to “collect comprehensive staffing data from...[a] range of institutions of various type[s], size[s], and purpose” (Winston & Creamer, 1997, p. 94). One hundred and twenty-one institutions from three regional areas responded. Sixty-one percent (61%) were public institutions and 33% were two-year colleges. Among the four-year institutions 11% were from research institution, 36% were from comprehensive colleges, and 20% were from liberal arts colleges (Winston and Creamer). The relevant findings from both of these studies will be incorporated into the description of the five constellations of the Staff Practices model.

According to Winston and Creamer (1997), recruitment and selection activity is critical to the success of an employee’s job performance. Hiring the wrong person can cause extensive and long-term impacts on the organization including employee dissatisfaction, minimal effectiveness, and turnover. All of these impacts result in significant costs to the institution, both monetarily and in terms of resources. The quantitative study found nothing atypical in the recruitment and selection practices. However, the institutions in the case studies demonstrated that they have an extremely high “commitment to hiring the right person” (Winston & Creamer, 1997, p. 93).

Orientation of new staff, the second component of the model, ensures new employees are equipped with pertinent knowledge of the institution and staff in order to be successful in their jobs. Orientation of new staff was found to be one of the most ignored staffing practices in the quantitative research despite its significance to an employee's smooth transition into a new position and institution. In fact, "only 23 percent of the respondents who had taken a new job in the past three years had a formal orientation to their new position" (Winston & Creamer, p. 107). The study also found that those who received training, either formal or informal, missed several key components of an effective orientation program. The primary areas excluded or receiving minimal attention in orientation programs related to expectations, policies, and various cultures within the institution (Winston & Creamer). Winston and Creamer indicated that methods used to train new staff vary based upon the unique traits of the institution and its hiring practices. However, the fundamental components of orientation programs include: acclimation to the institution's philosophies, policies and procedures at various levels, institutional culture, introductions to key staff and students, and detailed expectations for performance.

Although Winston and Creamer (1997) identify supervision as the most vital component of the model, only about half of the respondents surveyed indicated receiving formal training on supervision. This finding is alarming considering the significant research findings on the consequences of poor supervision (e.g. Analoui & Hosseini, 2001; Fleishman, 1953; Grau-Gumbau et al., 2001; Katz & Rosen, 1987; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992). Furthermore, the case studies revealed inconsistent patterns of supervision across institutions and within institutions. Reactions to the effectiveness of

supervision at the eight institutions in the Winston and Creamer study were mixed, and “[a] common attitude on campuses [was] “I was educated to develop students. I know how to do that and am pretty good at it. I do not know how to supervise colleagues. I have no training or little training in supervision, I am not good at it, and I do not like it” (Winston & Creamer, p. 94). These findings are similar to the research within business and industry as related to an employee’s transition into a supervisory role (Broadwell, 1984; Boyd, 1984; Hooper, 1991).

Winston and Creamer (1997) developed a survey that examined the respondent’s satisfaction with supervision, including frequency, skills and helpfulness of the supervisor. The survey revealed that supervisor’s and subordinate’s responses did not match; “[subordinate] respondents on average reported receiving supervision about half as often as supervisors reported providing it” (Winston & Creamer, p. 185). However, over 70% of respondents were generally satisfied with the supervision they were receiving, while deans were the least satisfied with their supervisor in all three areas; frequency, skills, and helpfulness. Other respondents reported substantially lower levels of satisfaction with supervision skills and helpfulness of the supervision received than with the frequency of supervision received (Winston & Creamer).

The fourth component of the model, staff development, focused on the continuous professional development of staff beyond their current academic degree. Over 60% of the survey respondents reported that various staff development activities such as social events, bringing speakers to campus, and attending conferences or workshops were available. It is important to note, however, if surveyed again, these results may change dramatically due to the current economy and financial constraints that institutions are

facing. Due to the high cost of outside speakers, conferences, and workshops it is important to determine if the institutions have identified other, more cost effective staff development opportunities (Winston & Creamer). The case studies revealed absolute commitment to the development of staff through internal and external opportunities, regardless of the financial resources available for these activities. In most instances staff determined which development activities they participated in independently of the supervisor, “which may result, from an administrative perspective, in lost opportunities to help staff improve in areas the institution or supervisors believe need improvement” (Winston & Creamer, p. 94).

The final constellation of the model, performance appraisal, is a “deliberate process for determining staff accomplishments for the purpose of improving their effectiveness” (Winston & Creamer, 1997, p. 43). Student affairs administrators often perceive performance appraisals as insignificant or negative in nature. However, conducted appropriately, performance appraisals provide an avenue for identifying personnel achievements and areas for improving effectiveness (Winston and Creamer, 1997). According to the staffing practices survey, up to 35% of respondents received no formal performance appraisal, with almost 55% receiving one appraisal during the year. The outcome that 45% of the respondents indicated they received informal appraisals is especially problematic considering new professionals identified feedback from supervisors as important and helpful to their success in a job (Janosik et al., 2003). These results are consistent with the case study findings that all eight institutions expressed concerns about the effectiveness of their performance evaluation systems (Winston & Creamer).

This model provides a comprehensive approach to staffing practices. However, it does not provide detailed information on the extent to which managers utilize skills essential to supervision and required to effectively implement this model. Therefore, it is difficult to develop a research instrument to evaluate effective supervision using this model. It is imperative to use a theory that addresses the various research findings on the essential skills related to good management. Thus, management models within business and leadership literature should be utilized. According to Immegart (1988), only few minor differences exist between education and other organizations. Additionally, the studies involving leaders within educational environment “tend to mirror other work and to lag behind the empirical, conceptual, and methodological advances realized elsewhere” (Immegart, p. 267), and are related to the results found in research on management in business an industry.

### *General Management Theory*

Literature on management and supervision in business is widely available. However, many of the articles and books focus on practical skills and concepts which are not based on research. Conversely, literature on leadership, as it relates to managing an organization, has been developed and informed by research. The primary focus of the studies on leadership examine traits and personalities rather than the actions of leaders (Shipper & White, 1999). Studies focusing on management and supervision primarily investigate a manager’s skills and qualities (e.g. Argyris, 1953; Fleishman, 1953; Katz, 1955; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992). However, there is a “lack of agreement about which behaviors are relevant and meaningful for leaders” (Yukl, Gordon, & Taber, 2002, p. 15). Two theories, Yukl’s taxonomy of managerial practices (Yukl et al., 1990) and

Wilson, O'Hare and Shipper's Task•Cycle Theory (Wilson et al., 1990), move beyond personality traits and qualities to identify categories of behaviors associated with effective supervision that can be learned and measured.

*Yukl's Taxonomy of Managerial Practices*

In an effort to develop a comprehensive taxonomy of leadership behaviors associated with managerial effectiveness, Yukl et al. (1990) reviewed existing research on management and leadership. The earlier studies that informed the development of Yukl's taxonomy were Morse & Wagner's taxonomies of managerial behavior, Stogdill's taxonomies of leader behavior, and Mintzberg and Luthans and Lockwood's taxonomies of behavioral position responsibilities (Yukl et. al.). According to Yukl et al., "the taxonomy is broad in nature so it can be applied to a wide range of leaders, and include behaviors necessary to successfully interact with peers, superiors, and outsiders in addition to subordinates" (Yukl et al., p. 224). Additionally, the behaviors are written in specific and measurable terms in order to assess the manager's effectiveness.

Specifically, the taxonomy is comprised of eleven behavior categories: informing; consulting and delegating; planning and organizing; problem solving; clarifying roles and objectives; monitoring operations and environment; motivating; recognizing and rewarding; supporting and mentoring; managing conflict and team building; and networking (Yukl et. al.) A complete description of each category is available as noted in Table 1, Chapter 1.

The *Management Practices Survey (MPS)*, developed to measure the managerial behaviors identified with the eleven categories (Yukl et al., 1990), included 110 items grouped into the eleven behavior categories, and three supplementary scales which can be

rated by the manager, as well as the manager's peers and subordinates. One of the earliest studies on the validity of the *MPS* included a panel of students who were asked to classify each item on the survey into the appropriate behavior category. This study, with minor procedural changes, was repeated over the course of four years, and each year the "coding accuracy was relatively high for all scales" (Yukl et al., p. 227), validating the items as good illustrations of the behavior categories.

The *MPS* was also tested for item relevancy with managers and subordinates rating the importance of each behavior item. Managers rated the items slightly more important than subordinates, indicating that the items are relevant to a manager's responsibilities (Yukl et al., 1990). A subsequent study focused on rating the importance of the behavior categories rather than the individual response items. A majority of managers rated the categories "as very important or essential for effective performance of their managerial jobs" (Yukl et al., p. 228). Results of research on the internal consistency of the scales, and the stability of the measurement, revealed that the *MPS* has high internal consistency, with the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient ranging between .84-.91 for all scales, and satisfactory stability for all scales (Yukl et al.). Due to the use of subordinate ratings of a manager's behaviors, the inter-rater reliability was also tested, indicating that "managers differed in their behavior, and there was enough agreement among subordinates to detect this difference" (Yukl et al., p. 231). Therefore, research demonstrates the *MPS* can be used, with a high level of accuracy, to measure both a subordinate's and manager's perception of a manager's behaviors and abilities.

### *Task•Cycle Theory*

The Task•Cycle Theory is based on the philosophy that “the skills that comprise effective management behavior can be learned” (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003, p. 4). Similar to Yukl’s taxonomy of managerial behaviors, the Task•Cycle Theory focuses on operationally defining skills and abilities related to effective managerial behaviors; instead of relying on personality characteristics of successful managers or broadly defined behavior patterns (Wilson et al., 1990). The underlying concept that informed the development of the Managerial Task•Cycle Theory is that “[o]rganization behavior is made up of a series of tasks” (Wilson et al., p. 185) directed towards achieving a desired outcome. The first phase of a task series is developing a purpose or goal followed by developing a plan to achieve the goal. The next phase involves acquiring the resources necessary to implement the plan. As the plan is executed, progress towards the goal is monitored through feedback, the third phase in a task series. The plan is then adjusted based on the feedback received until the goal is reached. Upon reaching the goal, the final task is to provide appropriate forms of reinforcement to individuals. (Wilson et al.)

The Task•Cycle Theory labels the six phases described above as: “(1) making goals clear and important, (2) planning and problem solving, (3) facilitating the work of others, (4) providing feedback, (5) exercising positive control, and (6) reinforcing good performance” (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003, p. 4). According to the theory, manager’s progress through these six phases with each task supervised. This allows the manager to learn about subordinates, and subordinates to learn about the manager’s expectations for future tasks. Ideally, this repetition allows managers to become more



effective at each task within the phases, leading to enhanced individual and organizational performance (Wilson et al., 1990).

The *Survey of Management Practices (SMP)* is an instrument based on the six phases of Task•Cycle Theory, and is designed to provide managers with feedback on their strengths as well as areas needing development (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003). This instrument is designed to have managers and subordinates rate the manager's performance on items in each of the six phases, which allows a comparison of a manager's self-assessments of their managerial behaviors to the subordinate's perceptions of the manager's behaviors. This comparison is critical in improving self-awareness in the areas where managers need to continue developing (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003; Shipper & Dillard, 2000). The importance of using self assessment as well as other employees' assessments of a manager's abilities will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

In order to validate the Task•Cycle Theory and *SMP* instrument, Wilson et al. (1990) translated the theory into measurable variables. They tested the validity of the variables, evaluated the manager's ability to change the measured behaviors after participating in training sessions, and assessed the impact of changes in the manager's behavior on individual and organizational performance. According to Wilson et al., more than 20 studies were conducted over a period of 15 years, which "demonstrated the instrument could differentiate skills from which to draw inferences of validity" (p. 195). Four subsequent studies were conducted to determine if managers modified their skills and behaviors after receiving training on the specific managerial behavior items that comprise the Task•Cycle Theory.

The four studies included participants from a national bank, two healthcare organizations, and a nuclear power plant (Wilson et al., 1990). In each study, managers received feedback from the *SMP*, training sessions on the Task•Cycle Theory, and targeted training on the manager's area(s) of weakness. The results of the research suggested that the intended change in a manager's behavior can be attributed to training on the Task•Cycle Theory, and that the change is sustainable for at least one year (Wilson et al.). Finally, using one of the two healthcare organizations above, an evaluation on the impact of the changes in managerial behavior related to organizational performance was conducted. Compared to the managers who did not participate in training, the outcomes indicated that the productivity of the work unit increased significantly for managers who participated and received feedback from the *SMP* (Wilson et al.). Wilson et al. concluded that differences between a manager's performance levels could be measured and managerial behaviors can change as a result of training, thus validating the Task•Cycle Theory.

Shipper (1995) conducted a comprehensive analysis of the psychometric properties of the current version of the *SMP* with 620 employees of a southwestern hospital who rated their managers' behaviors. All participants had worked with their current manager for a minimum of six months, and were given information about the purpose of the study and the anonymity of their participation. Based on the results, the *SMP* demonstrated "adequate levels of internal consistency, inter-rater agreement, construct validity, divergent discriminate validity, and both internal and external criterion validity" (Shipper, p. 478). This is further described in the instrumentation section of Chapter 3. Shipper recommends further analysis of the instrument using employees from

different organizations, as well as increasing the number of managers whose behaviors are rated by subordinates. Despite the limitations of this analysis, Shipper's results supported the reliability and validity of the instrument for measuring managers' behaviors. Other studies (Shipper, 1995; Shipper & Wilson 1992; Shipper & White, 1999; Wilson et al., 1990) have also shown the *SMP* to be an effective tool for assessing managerial performance allowing supervisors to use the feedback to improve their performance.

An important distinction between the *SMP* and other surveys assessing managerial behavior is the type of scale utilized. The skill scales used in the *SMP* assess skill competence versus frequency of use. The importance of this difference was demonstrated in a study of several large hospitals in the southwest region of the United States in which Shipper and White (1999) administered a two-part survey to 1,222 employees. The first portion consisted of all items on the *SMP* using the competence rating scale, and the second portion included all items on the *SMP* with a frequency of use rating scale. Performance of the work unit was measured using the amount of workers used and time spent on a task.

Based on 635 respondents, the findings of Shipper and White's (1999) investigation, confirmed the need to distinguish "between the frequency of a behavior and the mastery of that same behavior to understand its impact" (p. 58) on the work unit's performance. A second finding revealed both frequency and mastery of managerial behaviors to be significant in terms of work performance. Finally, the outcomes showed that increasing the mastery of a skill has a stronger, more positive impact on performance compared to a similar increase in frequency of the same behavior. Therefore, Shipper and

White concluded the *SMP*'s use of a competence scale to assess managerial behavior is a more effective measure of a supervisor's effectiveness than frequency scale.

More recently, Shipper and Dillard (2000) examined a manager's ability to recover from derailment as a supervisor using the *SMP*. The sample consisted of 1,035 mid-managers, from a large firm characterized as non-traditional and high-tech, who rated their behaviors using the *SMP*. In addition, all of the subordinates in the manager's work unit also rated the manager's behaviors. These ratings were averaged in order to reduce "random error and perception differences attributable to differences in respondents" (Shipper & Dillard, p. 334).

The findings support the sequential progress through the six Phases identified in Managerial Task•Cycle Theory. Additionally, mastery of the skills within the first three phases "play a stronger role in managerial success, derailment, and recovery" (Shipper & Dillard, 2000, p. 338) as opposed to mastery of skills associated with the final three phases of the Task•Cycle Theory. The research on the Managerial Task•Cycle Theory, using the *SMP*, demonstrates its usefulness in providing a solid understanding of the perceptions of a manager's skills and abilities. The knowledge of this perception along with training also allows managers to improve their skills. Based on Immegarts (1988) supposition that education is modestly different from other organizations, the Managerial Task•Cycle Theory can be applied to the student affairs field to further examine the current state of management. This examination will provide more in-depth information about supervision in student affairs, where mid-managers have identified training is needed (Benke and Disque, 1990; Domeier, 1977; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Ivy, 1981;

Kane, 1982; Sermersheim, 2002; Steege, 1977; Stokes, 1981; Tillotson, 1995; Wade, 1993).

Shipper and Dillard's (2000) investigation also suggests that managers whose perceptions of their own behaviors are consistent with other's perceptions tend to be more successful and are better able to recover from derailment. This finding demonstrated a need to examine the value of including the subordinate's ratings of a manager in order to accurately assess the manager's behaviors. This literature is considered crucial support for the inclusion of subordinates in the methodology of this study.

#### *Assessment of Managers' Abilities and Behaviors*

Empirical research on the quality of supervisor performance is extremely limited (Carlyle, 1992). In a study of governmental employees, first-line supervisors performance of tasks were rated somewhat high, with three-fourths of the first-line supervisors rating their own performance above average or higher on 13 of 14 tasks (Carlyle). However, only two-thirds of superiors and half of subordinates rated the first-line supervisors' performance as high. Twenty-five percent (25%) of subordinates rated supervisors low on the following tasks: supervisors not using standards to assess performance, not giving feedback effectively, and lack of consistency and fairness when working with employees. A similar pattern was found in the ratings of overall quality/effectiveness, with 97% of first-line supervisors rating their own performance as effective or very effective, compared to 64% of subordinates rating the supervisor's performance as high (Carlyle).

The New Zealand Institute of Management has been tracking management capability in New Zealand since 2003 using the Management Capability Index (MCI)

(Matheson, 2007). The index assesses nine factors on a base of 100: 1) visionary and strategic leadership, 2) performance leadership, 3) people leadership, 4) financial management, 5) organization capability, 6) application of technology and knowledge, 7) external relationships, 8) innovation – products and services, 9) results and comparative performance. The overall index fell below 70 in 2006, which “can best be described as a level of management mediocrity” (p. 26). Two other countries began using the MCI as well. In 2005, the All India Management Association found an index of 76.4, and in 2006 the Malaysia Management Association found an index of 71.2 (Matheson).

Outside of the studies cited above, and the research on the skills and abilities associate with good management, the literature on managers and their performance primarily focuses on the usefulness and accuracy of self-assessment as well as other’s (i.e. peers, supervisors, and subordinates) assessments rather than describing the actual quality of skills. Both Harris and Schaubroeck (1988) and Kruger and Dunning (1999) found that individuals tend to be more generous when assessing their own performance. Additionally, Harris and Schaubroeck found that self-ratings are less consistent with others’ ratings of the manager; whereas the ratings of a manager tended to be more consistent among others. Kruger and Dunning theorized that individuals whose self-assessment is over-inflated is a result of the individual’s lack of knowledge about the skills, and in order to accurately assess competence an individual must possess knowledge of the skills. Kruger and Dunning’s finding supports this view that an individual’s self-assessment is more consistent with actual performance following training on the skill areas which are assessed. Furthermore, research has confirmed that managers and leaders who rate their abilities more accurately tend to be more successful.

In an examination of the ability to predict a leader's success based on the accuracy of the leader's self-assessment, Atwater and Yammarino (1992) concluded that a leader's success is positively related to the accuracy of the leader's self-assessment of performance. Similarly, Shipper and Dillard (2000) found that more successful managers underestimated their performance, whereas managers who rate their performance higher tended to be less successful exhibiting arrogance and a lack of awareness of their behavior. Bass and Yammarino (1991) also determined that managers whose ratings differed significantly from other's ratings performed more poorly than managers whose ratings were more consistent with other's ratings. These studies suggest self-assessment is an integral component of assessing a manager's abilities and behaviors when other sources of feedback are also included. However, it is necessary to explore the accuracy of subordinate assessments of a manager's abilities and skills based on the scope of this study.

Cummings and Schwab (as cited in Bernardin, 1986) argue that subordinate feedback is invalid because it does not focus on the manager's organizational accomplishments, but rather on the subordinate's needs in terms of the supervisor's support. Other problems identified with a subordinate's appraisal of a manager's performance include lack of ability, aptitude, and training which invalidates the ratings. Subordinates may also inflate ratings out of fear that the manager can identify the subordinates who rated the manager poorly, and some argue that subordinates do not possess enough information about all aspects of a supervisor's role to accurately rate the manager (Bernardin, 1986). In terms of the manager's perspective, Bernardin asserts that supervisors rated by subordinates are more likely to emphasize behaviors that please

subordinates as opposed to focusing on other duties; thereby undermining the authority of the manager. While these arguments appear convincing, they are not validated by research. However, three studies have demonstrated subordinate appraisals can be flawed.

In an investigation of the impact that performance cues have on ratings of leader behavior, Rush et al. (1977) found that knowledge of the workgroup's quality of performance did affect the observer's rating of the leader's performance. In a subsequent study, Lord et al. (1978) replicated Rush et al.'s methodology, and incorporated a training session on the specific leadership behaviors being assessed for the observers. Despite having the necessary knowledge to correctly rate the leader's performance the observer's ratings were significantly influenced by the cues given about the workgroups performance. Both Lord et al. and Rush et al. found that observers rated leaders of workgroups, labeled as high performing, significantly higher than leader's of workgroups labeled as average and low performing. These findings imply a subordinate's perception of a workgroup's performance can influence subordinates assessments of a supervisors' performance.

Gioia and Sims (1985) conducted a similar analysis of the impact of performance cues on the ratings on leader's behaviors in a formal managerial setting. The results validated Lord et al. and Rush et al.'s findings that performance cues significantly influence observers' ratings. However, Gioia and Sims conclude that an observer's ratings on behavior-oriented measures are objective because the ratings were not significantly impacted by performance cues. This finding suggests that using behavior-



oriented measures to assess a subordinate's perception of a manager's performance may be an effective method for assessing a manager's skills and abilities.

According to Antonioni and Park (2001) another aspect of subordinate feedback that may impact the quality of ratings is interpersonal affect (or liking a person), either positive, negative or neutral. In a study of subordinate ratings of managers in an insurance company, one instrument measured the subordinate's interpersonal affect, and the second instrument measured managerial performance. The results indicated that subordinates who reported positive interpersonal affect towards the manager compared to those with negative interpersonal affect were more lenient in their ratings of performance. Despite the findings, Antonioni and Park stipulate the use of subordinate ratings as an important component of an evaluation system used for development purposes. One possible method for limiting the interpersonal affect is training the subordinate raters (Antonioni and Park), and another method is anonymity of the rater (Ghorpade, 2000).

Conceptually, Bernardin (1986) contends that subordinates are in a unique position to observe a manager's performance and provide a critique of the manager's skills and behaviors. Several advantages of using subordinate appraisal as an effective assessment tool include the usefulness of the feedback to managers, reinforcement of positive managerial behaviors not typically recognized by superiors, providing supervisors key information about a subordinate's needs, and it is more practical and efficient than other assessment methods (Bernardin). Another possible benefit is increased employee satisfaction based on Pace et al.'s (1992) finding that increasing an employee's level of participation is related to higher levels of employee satisfaction. Additionally, the inclusions of subordinate assessment in numerous management

development programs, and in some companies annual performance evaluation systems, demonstrates practical support for subordinate appraisal (Bernardin).

Similarly, Boyatzis posits knowledge of a gap in a subordinate's and a manager's perceptions of performance is an essential element that fosters change in a manager's behavior. This is supported by research that demonstrates positive changes in a supervisor's behavior as a result of receiving subordinate feedback (Hegarty, 1974).

Shipper and Dillard (2000) also found that managers who received subordinate feedback using the *SMP* were able to improve their management performance and become successful managers. Seifert, Yukl, and McDonald (2003) examined the impact of managerial training on a manager's performance based on the feedback received from subordinates, peers and supervisors. The results indicated that managers receiving training significantly increased their use of the skills in comparison to those managers who received no training.

Ultimately self and subordinate evaluations are critical components to any research focused on the assessment of the effectiveness of a manager's performance. This conclusion is based on the empirical evidence that indicates managers, whose self-evaluations are consistent with subordinate evaluations of managerial behavior, are more successful (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Bass & Yammarino, 1991; Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988; Shipper & Dillard, 2000). In addition, managers who receive subordinate feedback on managerial performance are able to improve their performance (Hegarty, 1974; Seifert et al., 2003; Shipper & Dillard, 2000). Thus, research supports the inclusion of subordinate feedback in this study. None of the studies (Benke and Disque, 1990; Domeier, 1977; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Ivy, 1981; Kane, 1982; Sermersheim,

2002; Steege, 1977; Stokes, 1981; Tillotson, 1995; Wade, 1993) in student affairs included subordinates perceptions of the mid-managers skills or training needs. Furthermore, Fey's (1991) and Roberts' (2003) identified self-reported data as a limitation of their respective studies of the skill attainment of student affairs mid-managers, which also supports the inclusion of subordinates in this study.

### *Summary*

As discussed earlier, the literature contends that effective management is a critical component to the success of student affairs as seen from the perspective of supervisors and subordinates (Birnbaum, 2000; Komives & Woodward, 1996). Furthermore, research has identified personnel management as a professional development need of second-level professionals (Domeier, 1977; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Janosik et al. 2003; Kane, 1982; Roberts, 2003; Winston & Creamer, 1997). However, little research exists on the current skill level of supervisors of second-level professionals. Therefore, further investigation is needed to determine if the supervision skills and abilities of second-level professionals are consistent with the skills identified by research as essential to good management (e.g. Analoui & Hosseini, 2001; Fleishman, 1953; Grau-Gumbau et al., 2001; Katz, 1955; Komaki, 1986; Pace et al., 1992; Wilson et al., 1990; Yukl et al., 1990).

The literature that does exist on perceptions of managers' performance focuses primarily on the accuracy of self-assessments and other's assessments of the supervisor's skills and the differences between the ratings. Self-assessment literature leads us to believe that managers will inflate their self-ratings of performance as compared to a subordinate's ratings of a manager's performance. In the instances that a manager's self-assessment was more closely aligned with the subordinate's assessment, the managers

tended to be more successful (e.g. Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Kruger & Dunning, 1999). Therefore, it is important to include a subordinate's ratings of a supervisor's performance to better understand the perceptions of second-level professionals. In addition, it is also important to identify differences in perceptions that may exist between the subordinate's and a manager's self-assessment.

The self-assessment literature and studies on the Task•Cycle Theory also indicated that managers who receive training on management skills and abilities are able to improve their management performance. This leads one to believe that supervisors who have been trained on management skills and theories will rate their skills differently than supervisors who have not participated in management training.

Some of the literature on student affairs managers' perceptions of the importance of skills also suggests differences exist between a supervisor's ratings of management performance based on gender. Fey (1991), Kane (1982), and Sermersheim's (2002) found that women placed a higher importance on some skill areas as compared to men. Based on the different emphasis that females place on skill areas one is lead to believe women would rate their skill level differently than males.

Although the student affairs literature did not specifically examine differences the in perceptions of a manager's skills and abilities based on ethnicity, there is support that differences may exist. Despite the studies being conducted independently, the index of management capability of managers in New Zealand, India, and Malaysia did reveal differences. Therefore, a comparison of a manager's perceptions is necessary to provide empirical data to determine if any differences exist based on ethnicity.

This study provides original data on the perceptions of second-level professionals' management performance, and also addresses an area currently omitted in higher education literature. Specifically, this research examines differences between a supervisors' perceptions of performance based on gender, ethnicity, the amount of supervisor trainings attended, and subordinates' ratings of supervisors' performance. The following hypotheses pertaining to these differences are based on the literature reviewed in this chapter.

### *Hypotheses*

1. Managers' perceptions of their supervisory skills and abilities will differ based on gender, ethnicity and number of supervisory training sessions attended.
2. Managers' perceptions will be higher than subordinates' perceptions of managers' skills and abilities.
3. Managers' and subordinates' perceptions of the most challenging aspects of being a supervisor will differ.
4. Managers' and subordinates' perceptions of the supervisor skill area(s) that need improvement will differ.

## CHAPTER III

### Methodology

The purpose of this non-experimental study was to examine the perceptions of the supervisory skills and abilities of second level managers in student affairs, as well as the most challenging aspects facing supervisors and the supervisory skill area(s) in need of improvement. The theoretical framework guiding this study was the Management Task•Cycle theory, which was chosen because of its foundation in empirical research related to the skills associated with effective supervision (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003; Shipper, 1995; Shipper & Clark, 1992; Shipper & Dillard, 2000; Shipper & Wilson 1992; Shipper & White, 1999; Wilson et al., 1990). The instrument, the *Survey of Management Practices (SMP)*, was selected for this study since research has demonstrated it is an effective measure of a manager's competence related to the six skills identified in the six phases and two attributes of the Management Task•Cycle Theory, as well as the ability to include manager and subordinate ratings of a manager's skills (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003; Shipper, 1995; Shipper & Clark, 1992; Shipper & Dillard, 2000; Shipper & Wilson 1992; Shipper & White, 1999; Wilson et al., 1990). This section describes the methodology of the study including selection of the participants, a description of the instruments, procedure for data collection, the data analysis, and limitations of the study.

#### *Research Questions*

The research questions examined in this study were:

1. To what extent do managers perceive that they possess the skills and abilities essential to good management as defined by the Task•Cycle theory?

2. Do managers' perceptions of their supervisory skills and abilities differ based on gender, ethnicity and number of supervisory training sessions attended?
3. To what extent do subordinates perceive managers possess the skills and abilities essential to good management as defined by the Task•Cycle theory?
4. Are there differences between the perception of managers' skills and abilities based on employee level?
5. What do managers and subordinates perceive are the most challenging aspects of being supervisors and is there a difference depending on employee level?
6. In which supervisory skill area(s) do managers and subordinates perceive supervisors need improvement and is there a difference depending on employee?

### *Participants*

The sample consisted of 1,858 members the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), National Association for Campus Activities (NACA), Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) and the Association on Higher Education and Disability in Virginia (AHEAD-V). A description of the sample size and demographic characteristics is reported in Chapter 4 in the section entitled *Profile of Study Respondents*. The random sample was selected with the intention of including participants from both two- and four-year, public and private institutions and a variety of professions within Student Affairs, thus the use of four different professional organizations that target the different professions within Student Affairs. As an incentive for the sample to participate,

respondents were able to enter a drawing to win one of two conference or institute registrations for a professional development experience of their choice.

Each participant was identified as either a first- or second- level professional based on the criteria of title as none of the organizations designate a professional level on their membership information. Individuals with the title Director, Dean, Associate and Assistant Dean, and Manager were considered second level professionals, while titles of Associate and Assistant Director, Coordinator, Counselor were considered first-level professionals. Using the title as a criterion may have unintentionally excluded or included participants that did not match the definition of a first- or second-level professional; however this was a necessary limitation in order to collect data in a timely manner. In order to address this limitation, the first question on the instrument required the respondent to indicate if they consider themselves a first- or second- level professional based on the researchers definition of these terms. Additionally, a larger sample of second-level professionals was selected to increase the likelihood of having enough respondents that met the definition of second-level professionals in the sample.

The largest sample was selected randomly from members listed in the NASPA directory, 150 members were randomly selected from the population of second - level professionals and 250 members were randomly selected from the population of second-level professions. Two-hundred members were randomly selected from both NACA and ACUHO-I, consisting of 100 first-level professionals and 100 second-level professionals each. The final sample was randomly selected from AHEAD-V, consisting of 25 first-level professionals and 25 second-level professionals. The randomly selected samples from each organization were compared and revealed 8 individuals were members in two



of the organizations. As a result another random sample of 8 individuals was selected from NASPA, and the comparison to the samples from the other organizations revealed no duplication.

### *Instrument*

Two instruments (Appendix C) were used to collect data to answer the research questions. The *Survey of Management Practices (SMP)* was selected as the primary instrument for this study based on the direct relationship with the Task•Cycle Theory as well as the instrument's effectiveness in assessing subordinates' and supervisors' perceptions of managers' skills and abilities. The Task•Cycle Theory purports that good management behaviors are based on six phases, which build upon each other. These Phases include (I) Making Goals Clear and Important, (II) Planning and Problem Solving, (III) Facilitating the Work of Others, (IV) Providing Feedback, (V) Exercising Positive Control, and (VI) Reinforcing Good Performance (Wilson et al., 1990). Additionally, the *SMP* includes two Attributes, Interpersonal Relations and Group Motivation and Morale (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003).

According to Shipper and Dillard (2000), the *SMP* has been scrutinized for test-retest reliability, internal consistency, interrater reliability, construct validity and criterion validity. These were discussed in detail in Chapter 2. The results indicated the internal consistency exceeds Nunnally's criteria and the Interrater Agreement Index resulted in indexes ranging from .93 - .96 (Shipper & Dillard). Furthermore, several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the *SMP* in measuring manager's performance, using ratings from both managers and subordinates (Shipper, 1995; Shipper & Wilson 1992; Shipper & White, 1999; Wilson et al., 1990). Additionally, the Cronbach's Alpha

analysis of the *SMP* conducted for this study indicated the instrument is very reliable, .991. Thus, the instrument is an excellent tool for identifying the perceptions of second-level managers' abilities in student affairs.

The *SMP* is used by Performance Programs, Inc. (2003) to evaluate managers' performance on skills associated with good management. Performance Programs, Inc. was contacted in April 2006 (Appendix A) and granted permission (Appendix B) for the researcher to utilize the *SMP*. The instrument consists of 145 questions, which assess managerial skills for the respective phases and attributes (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003; Shipper & Dillard 2000). Table 3 provides scale information and sample questions. The seven-point, Likert-type scale used to rate each behavior item ranges from never or to a very small extent to always or to a very great extent.

Table 3

*Task•Cycle Theory Phases & SMP Sample Questions*

Phase/Attribute	Skill	Number of Items in the Scale	Sample Questions
Phase I: Making Goals Clear and Important	(A) Clarification of Goals and Objectives	7	a. Clearly communicates the importance of the group's goals b. Discusses goals with the group to be sure they are clear.
Phase II: Planning and Problem Solving	(B) Upward Communication	8	a. Welcomes ideas from group members even if they differ b. Asks advice from the group on the best way to do things
	(C) Orderly Work Planning	7	a. Is well organized and a good planner b. Is systematic about planning and organizing the work

Table 3 Continued

Phase/Attribute	Skill	Number of Items in the Scale	Sample Questions
Phase III: Facilitating the Work of Others	(D) Expertise	7	a. Is thoroughly familiar with our services, operations, products, etc.  b. Is knowledgeable about organization policies and plans in general
	(E) Work Facilitation	6	a. Makes sure people have the resources and training to do their work  b. Looks for ways to help people do a better job
Phase IV: Feedback	(F) Feedback	8	a. Gives individuals frequent and honest criticism of their work  b. Lets people know how he/she thinks about the group's performance

Table 3 Continued

Phase/Attribute	Skill	Number of Items in the Scale	Sample Questions
Phase V: Exercising Positive Control	(G) Time Emphasis	6	a. Thinks it is important to meet due dates b. Is sure to remind people about work deadlines
	(H) Control of Details	5	a. Keeps track of performance on each job b. Supervises the work very closely
	(I) Goal Pressure	6	a. Punishes or yells at people when they make mistakes b. Insists that everything be done his/her way
	(J) Delegation/Permissiveness	6	a. Allows individuals to direct their own activities b. Trusts group members to take responsibilities into their own hands

Table 3 Continued

Phase/Attribute	Skill	Number of Items in the Scale	Sample Questions
Phase VI: Reinforcing	(K) Recognition for good	7	a. Gives credit and praise for good work
Good Performance	performance		b. Gives individuals recognition when they do good work
Phase VI: Reinforcing	(K) Recognition for good	7	a. Gives credit and praise for good work
Good Performance	performance		b. Gives individuals recognition when they do good work
Phase VI: Reinforcing	(Q) Co-worker Competence	6	a. Most of the group members know their jobs well
Good Performance (cont.)			b. The people are highly competent
	(R) Team Atmosphere	6	a. People in the group work well together
			b. We (They) support each other well in the unit

Table 3 Continued

Phase/Attribute	Skill	Number of Items in the Scale	Sample Questions
(S) Opportunity for Growth		6	a. Opportunities for advancement are good
			b. I am (They are) learning and advancing in my (their) career
(T) Tension Level		6	a. Things seem to be in a constant state of crisis
			b. There is conflict between the group and management
(U) Organization Climate		5	a. We (They) feel the organization is better to work for than most
			b. We (They) are treated well

Table 3 Continued

(V) General Morale	5	a. My (Their) morale is good b. I am (They are) satisfied here
(W) Commitment	6	a. We (They) are dedicated to the organization b. We (They) put out a lot of effort to meet commitments



The *SMP* does not collect demographic information about the manager or subordinates. Thus, the second instrument included questions to obtain the following demographic information about participants; employee's type of institution and enrollment, years in the profession, number of full-time employees the respondent supervises (only for second-level professionals), number of years in current position, gender, age, highest degree attained, and the number of trainings attended on supervision and management practices throughout the respondents career. Additionally, the participants were asked two open-ended questions to ascertain more detailed information regarding the participants' perceptions of the most challenging aspects of being a supervisor and supervisory skill area(s) needing improvement. The open ended questions were:

1. Manager: What are the most challenging aspects of being a supervisor?; Subordinate: What do you perceive are the most challenging aspects facing your supervisor?
2. Manager: In what supervisory skill area(s) do you need improvement?; Subordinate: In what supervisory skill area(s) does your direct supervisor need improvement?

The instruments were administered on two internet-based platforms. The first platform used was Inquisite, an on-line survey tool used extensively at Old Dominion University. The Inquisite platform collected basic demographic information and participant's responses to the open-ended questions. In order to ensure the respondents were either first- or second- level participants, a definition of employee level was provided and the first question on the survey asked respondents to indicate their position

type, i.e. first-, second- level professional, or other position type, based on the researcher's definitions. Individuals indicating they were not a first- or second- level professional were thanked for their time and the survey concluded. Individuals indicating they were a first- or second- level professional proceeded to the demographic questions. Following the collection of the demographic information and the open-ended questions, the respondents were linked to the second platform, hosted by Performance Programs, Inc., to complete the *SMP*.

### *Collection of Data*

The sample was randomly selected from the population of members of the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), National Association for Campus Activities (NACA), Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) and the Association on Higher Education and Disability in Virginia (AHEAD-V). As an incentive for the organizations members' participation in this research, each organization will receive a copy of the results of the study that can be used in the design of professional development opportunities on supervision and management.

Following the approval from the Human Subjects Committee of the Old Dominion University College of Education (Appendix C), the instrument was distributed to the sample participants via a direct e-mail. The e-mail included a brief description of the scope of the research, a request for their participation and a link to the instrument. Participants were notified of the Human Subjects Committee of the Darden College of Education's approval of the study and the confidential nature of their participation, and assured that results were being reported in aggregate form only. Within a month of

sending the initial invitation, a follow-up e-mail was sent to those individuals who had not responded to the initial invitation reminding them about the opportunity to participate in the research. The Inquisite software provides an automatic method for sending the reminder e-mail to only those individuals who did not respond to the survey, while maintaining the confidentiality of the participants' responses. Additional samples were selected and sent invitations using the same procedures for the first sample until an adequate number of responses was collected.

As an incentive to participate, respondents were able to enter a drawing to win a free conference registration for a professional development opportunity of the winners' choice, provided by the researcher. Respondents were able to enter the drawing by completing a short entry form, hosted by Inquisite upon completion of the *SMP*. A link to this form was included in the initial invitation to participate in the study, was completely independent of the participants' responses to the demographic questions and the *SMP*, and completely optional. This entry form requested the respondents name, e-mail address, and phone number. Upon completion of the data collection, two winners were randomly selected from those who entered the drawing. Following the selection, both winners were notified via e-mail, and arrangements were made with the winners to ensure the recipient's received the complimentary registration for the professional development opportunity of their choice.

### *Data Analyses*

The dependent variables for this study were the six Phases and two Attribute sections of the Management Task•Cycle Theory. The independent variables were employee level (first or second professional), gender, institution type, number of full-time

employees supervised, number of years in the current position, and the number of trainings attended on supervision or management throughout the individual's career. The quantitative data analysis procedures included descriptive statistics including means, frequencies, and standard deviations as well as inferential statistics including Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The qualitative data was analyzed using an inductive approach to identify categories emerging from the participants responses.

### Analysis of Research Questions

#### Research Question One

To what extent do managers perceive that they possess the skills and abilities essential to good management as defined by the Task•Cycle theory?

This question was addressed using descriptive statistics. The mean and standard deviations were calculated for each of the six Phases and two Attribute sections of the Management Task•Cycle Theory. Frequency tabulations were also calculated for each skill scale on the *SMP* instrument.

#### Research Question Two

Do managers' perceptions of their supervisory skills and abilities differ based on gender, ethnicity and number of supervisory training sessions attended throughout their career?

A MANOVA was conducted to compare the group differences across the dependent variables, the six Phases and two Attribute sections of Management Task•Cycle theory, based on the independent variables, gender, ethnicity and number of supervisory training sessions attended throughout their career. The

following initial diagnostic tests were performed to ensure the assumptions of a MANOVA were met. 1) the data was normally distributed, based on skewness, 2) the population variances among the dependent variables were the same across all variables, which is tested by Box's Test of Equality, 3) Levene's test of the equality of error variances.

When significant differences were found between the dependent variables based on the independent variables, follow-up ANOVA's were conducted to determine which independent variable(s) had significantly impacted the dependent variable. Scheffe's post-hoc test was completed if the independent variables found to be significant had three or more levels.

#### Research Question Three

To what extent do subordinates' perceive manager's possess the skills and abilities essential to good management as defined by the Task•Cycle theory?

This question was addressed using the same procedures as question one, calculating the mean and standard deviations standard deviations for each of the six Phases and two Attribute sections of the Management Task•Cycle Theory, and frequencies for each skill scale item on the *SMP* instrument.

#### Research Question Four

Are there differences between the perception of managers' skills and abilities based on employee level?

A MANOVA was conducted, using the procedures described under research question two, to compare the group differences across the dependent variables,

the six Phases and two Attribute sections of Management Task•Cycle theory, based on the independent variable employee level.

#### Research Questions Five and Six

What do managers' and subordinates perceive are the most challenging aspects of being supervisors and is there a difference depending on employee level?

In which supervisory skill area(s) do managers' and subordinates perceive supervisors need improvement and is there a difference depending on employee?

The qualitative data for these two questions was analyzed using an inductive approach to identify emerging categories. The first step was a review of all responses based on employee level. Following the initial review, the statements were reviewed a second time to generate a list of topics that emerge. Third, categories were identified based on the topics, and similar topics were grouped together within the appropriate categories. The researcher and a colleague completed each of the above steps individually to improve the validity of the data coding, which was followed by a discussion, between the researcher and colleague, of their findings. Based on the discussion, a final set of categories was developed. The researcher and colleague then randomly selected ten percent of the responses for both questions and coded them separately to check for interrater reliability, with the goal being 80 percent. When the 80 percent interrater reliability was not achieved the researcher and colleague discussed the categories and made necessary refinements. They repeated the above process of coding the

data and checking for interrater reliability until 80 percent was achieved. Once interrater reliability was established, all of the data was coded.

A detailed, systematic description of the qualitative analytic procedures was provided to enhance the credibility of the findings. Participant language was used in the appropriate results and discussion sections that demonstrate support for each category. Additionally, the data was reviewed using the Managerial Task•Cycle Theory and the results of the quantitative survey to identify consistency of responses. Finally, the data was analyzed for discrepant data to identify any rival conclusions and to determine if the data apply to other studies.

## CHAPTER IV

### Results

The objective of this study was to assess the self and subordinate perceptions of Student Affairs' second-level professionals' managerial abilities. The results provide knowledge about whether second-level professionals in Student Affairs exhibit the skills and abilities essential for good management. This knowledge provides a foundation for identifying the training needs for these managers. This chapter presents the results of this study, including a profile of study respondents and their responses to each of the six research questions.

#### *Profile of Study Respondents*

A total of 1,858 members of NASPA, NACA, ACUHO-I and AHEAD were sent e-mail invitations to participate. The initial sample consisted of 850 individuals, 275 first-level professionals and 375 second-level professionals. After sending a reminder to the first sample, the response rate was still very low, with fewer first-level professionals than second-level professionals responding. Therefore the researcher increased the sample by 500 members from NASPA, with an equal number of first- and second-level professionals, 279. Following a reminder e-mail to the second sample, over 100 second-level professionals had responded, however only 47 first-level professionals had responded. Therefore a third-sample of 150 first-level professionals from NASPA was obtained, and reminders were sent. The response continued to be low, therefore a fourth sample of 500 first-level professionals were obtained from NASPA, and reminders were sent. Eight-four (4.5%) of the invitations were not delivered due to e-mail errors and/or individuals not receiving the invitation as they no longer worked at the institution.



Additionally, 43 replies to the invitation were received, indicating the individual was out of the office, which may have impacted the overall response rate. A total of 334 individuals completed the demographic and open-ended questions on the Inquisite platform, for an overall response rate of 18.8%, with 42 individuals indicating they were not a first- or second-level professional. This resulted in a total of 292 eligible responses on Inquisite, 109 first-level and 183 second-level professionals for a response rate of 15.7%. Of the 206 individuals who completed the *SMP* only 190 responses could be matched to the Inquisite respondents, resulting in a usable response rate of 10.2%.

Basic demographic data were collected and were used to provide a description of the respondents. Seventy-two respondents were first-level professionals and 118 were second-level professionals. Age ranges are displayed in Table 4. The majority of respondents ranged from 26 – 40 years old (72%), with the highest percent being 26-30 years old (35.8%).

Table 4

*Age Distribution of Respondents*

	Total Responses	Percentage
20-25	6	3.1%
26-30	69	35.8%
31-35	31	16.1%
36-40	39	20.2%
41-45	16	8.3%
46-50	11	5.7%
50 +	21	10.9%

More females (62%) responded than males (38%), and the majority of respondents were Caucasian (82%). Complete gender and ethnicity information is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

*Distribution of Respondents Gender and Ethnicity*

	Total Responses	Percentage
Gender		
Female	119	61.7%
Male	74	38.3%

Table 5 Continued

	Total Responses	Percentage
Ethnicity		
African American	17	8.8%
Asian American	2	1.0%
Bi/Multiracial	4	2.1%
Caucasian	158	81.9%
Hispanic/Latino	8	4.1%
Other	4	2.1%

Seventy-eight percent of the respondents' highest degree attained was a masters' degree, with 16% having attained a doctorate. Detailed information about the highest degree attained by respondents is displayed in Table 6.

Table 6

*Highest Degree Attained by Respondents*

	Total Responses	Percentage
Bachelor	11	5.7%
Master	151	78.2%
Education Specialist Certification	1	.5%
Doctorate	30	15.5%

Institution type and enrollment size are displayed in Table 7. Almost two-thirds of respondents worked at 4-year public institutions (61%), while 33% worked at 4-year Private institutions. Institution enrollment ranged from 1,500 and fewer, to more than 21,000+, with the highest percentage working at institutions with enrollments ranging from 10,001 – 20,000 (28%). This percentage was followed closely by institutions with enrollment of 20,001+ (27.5%). The lowest percentage of respondents, 7.3% came from institutions with enrollments of 1,500 or fewer (7.3%). Other respondents were from institutions with 1,501-10,000 (21.8%), and 10,001-20,000 students (15.5%).

Table 7

*Type and Enrollment of the Respondents Employing Institution*

	Total Responses	Percentage
Institution Type		
2-year Public	10	5.2%
2-year Private	2	1.0%
4-year Public	118	61.1%
4-year Private	63	32.6%

Table 7 Continued

	Total Responses	Percentage
Institution Enrollment		
1,500 and fewer	14	7.3%
1,501 – 5,000	42	21.8%
5,001 – 10,000	30	15.5%
10,001 – 20,000	54	28.0%
20,001 +	53	27.5%

The number of years of full-time experience ranged from less than 1 to 34 years, with 42% having 1 – 5 years of experience, followed by 25% having 5 – 10 years of experience and 17% having 11 – 15 years of experience. The majority of respondents worked in either Residence Life/Housing (31%) or Student Activities/Unions (27%). Thirteen percent of respondents worked in areas not identified on the survey, and 6% worked in the Dean's Office. Three percent or less of the individuals worked in all other areas identified on the survey combined. The major unit within the organizational structure revealing the largest percentage of respondents was Student Affairs (78%). A complete listing of functional areas and reporting units is found in Table 8 and Table 9.

Table 8

*Respondents' Functional Area of Responsibility*

Functional Area	Total Responses	Percentage
Admissions	2	1.0%
Academic Advising	6	3.1%
Academic Affairs	4	2.1%
Assessment	1	.5%
Career Planning	3	1.6%
Counseling	5	2.6%
Dean's Office	12	6.2%
Health Services	5	2.6%
Information Technology	1	.5%
Judicial	3	1.6%
Multicultural/Special Populations	5	2.6%
Orientation	4	2.1%
Recreation/Athletics	5	2.6%
Residence Life/Housing	59	30.6%
Student Activities/Unions	52	26.9%
Other	26	13.5%

Table 9

*The Reporting Unit of the Respondents' Office*

	Total Responses	Percentage
Reporting Unit		
Academic Affairs	18	9.3%
Business Affairs	7	3.6%
Enrollment Management	5	2.6%
Institutional Advancement	2	1.0%
Student Affairs	151	78.2%
Other	10	5.2%

Respondents indicating that they were second-level professionals were asked two additional questions regarding the number of individuals that they supervised as well as the number of training sessions attended on supervision and management practices. Most second-level professionals supervised three or fewer full-time employees (86%), with 3% reporting zero full-time employees. One individual reported supervising 30 full-time employees, which appears unusually high compared with other respondents. Attendance at training sessions on supervision and management practices ranged from 0 to 100, with the majority of second-level professionals attending 1 – 5 sessions (55%). Twelve percent of second-level professionals reported not attending any training sessions on supervision and management practices, while the highest percentage reported attending 2 sessions (15%).

### Research Questions

The first research question addresses the extent that managers perceive that they possess the skills and abilities essential to good management as defined by the Task•Cycle theory. This question was addressed using descriptive statistics. The mean and standard deviations were calculated for each of the six phases and two attribute sections of the Management Task•Cycle Theory. Percent tabulations were also calculated for each skill area on the *SMP* instrument.

As described earlier, the *SMP* ratings focus on the extent to which an individual practices the skills and abilities associated with the six phases and attributes. The ratings range from 1 (never or to a very small extent) to 7 (always or to a very great extent). The ratings were grouped for analysis, with 0-2.49 representing a low extent, 2.50 – 3.99 lower than average extent, 4 – 4.99 average extent, 5 – 5.99 higher than average extent, and 6.0 – 7.0 very large extent.

Second-level professionals reported that the extent that they practiced the skills and abilities associated with five of the six Phases and the two Attributes as higher than average, and Phase V as average. These responses indicate managers perceive their skill level is higher than average in making goals clear and important, planning and problem solving, facilitating the work of others, providing feedback, reinforcing good performance, and interpersonal relations and group motivation and morale, and average in exercising positive control. Interpersonal relations and reinforcing positive behavior had the highest mean rating, while exercising positive control as well as group motivation and morale had the lowest mean rating.



According to the Management Task Cycle Theory, making goals clear and important is critical for a strong foundation in management skills (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003). Supervisors reported having a higher than average ability to convey what they are trying to accomplish. However, it was one of the lower rated skills, with a mean of 5.40, and a moderate standard deviation (.95). The second step managers need to master in the Task Cycle Theory, planning and problem solving, was rated the third highest by managers, with a mean of 5.58 and a standard deviation of .61. Considering the three skill areas that comprise Phase II (upward communication, orderly work planning, and expertise) managers reported differing degrees of skill level. Upward communication was rated as the highest skill level (5.82), followed by expertise (5.50) and orderly work planning (5.38). Second-level professionals' mean ratings for all Phases, Attributes and skill areas are found in Table 10.

Table 10

*Second-Level Professionals Rating of Phases and Skill Areas*

Phases and Skill Areas	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Phase I: Making Goals Clear and Important	116	5.40	.951
Clarification of Goals	116	5.40	.951
Phase II: Planning and Problem Solving	118	5.58	.608
Upward Communication	118	5.82	.638
Orderly Work Planning	118	5.38	.886
Expertise	118	5.50	.765
Phase III: Facilitating the Work of Others	118	5.54	.726
Work Facilitation	118	5.54	.726
Phase IV: Providing Feedback	118	5.22	.931
Feedback	118	5.22	.931
Phase V: Exercising Positive Control	116	4.30	.490
Time Emphasis	116	5.58	.786
Control of details	116	3.68	.911
Goal Pressure	116	2.57	.726
Delegation	116	5.28	.661
Phase VI: Reinforcing Good Performance	116	5.76	.964
Recognition for good performance	116	5.76	.964
Attribute: Interpersonal Relations	118	5.86	.642

Table 10 Continued

Phases and Skill Areas	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Approachability	116	5.86	.773
Teambuilding	116	5.67	.785
Interest in Subordinate Growth	116	5.85	.732
Building Trust	118	6.04	.606
Attribute: Group Motivation & Morale	116	5.16	.620
Work Involvement	116	5.52	.915
Co-Worker Competence	116	5.62	.801
Team Atmosphere	116	5.77	.911
Opportunity for Growth	116	4.90	.990
Tension Level	116	3.19	.980
Organization Climate	116	5.36	.802
General Morale	116	5.42	.923
Commitment	116	5.68	.820

A review of the percents by skill area (See Table 11) revealed that more than 80% of second-level respondents rated their skills higher than average in the facilitation of other's work, planning and problem solving, providing feedback, reinforcing positive behavior, interpersonal relations, and group motivation, while only 73% rated their skills in clarifying goals higher than average. Ninety-five percent of second-level professionals rated their skills in exercising positive control as average or below average. However,



Table 11 Continued  
Phases and Skill Areas

	Low	Lower than Average	Average	Higher than Average	High
Phase IV: Providing Feedback					
Feedback	0.8	11.0	23.7	38.1	26.3
	0.8	11.0	23.7	38.1	26.3
Phase V: Exercising Positive Control (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	26.7	69.0	3.4	0.9
Time Emphasis (2 missing, 1.7)	0	1.7	14.7	49.1	34.5
Control of details (2 missing 1.7%)	3.4	61.2	28.4	6.0	0.9
Goal Pressure (2 missing, 1.7%)	24.1	71.6	4.3	0	0
Delegation (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	3.4	27.6	54.3	14.7
Phase VI: Reinforcing Good Performance (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	3.4	15.5	30.2	50.9
Recognition for good performance (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	3.4	15.5	30.2	50.9
Attribute: Interpersonal Relations	0	0.8	8.5	41.5	49.2
Approachability (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	0.9	12.1	32.8	54.3
Teambuilding (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	3.4	12.9	38.8	44.8
Interest in Subordinate Growth (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	2.6	7.8	41.4	48.3

Table 11 Continued  
Phases and Skill Areas

	Low	Lower than Average	Average	Higher than Average	High
Building Trust	0	0	6.8	30.5	62.7
Attribute: Group Motivation & Morale (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	4.3	27.6	64.7	3.4
Work Involvement (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	6.0	13.8	39.7	40.5
Co-Worker Competence (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	3.4	14.7	44	37.9
Team Atmosphere (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	3.4	11.2	25.9	59.5
Opportunity for Growth (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	14.7	34.5	34.5	16.4
Tension Level (2 missing, 1.7%)	12.9	65.5	17.2	3.4	0.9
Organization Climate (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	4.3	21.6	45.7	28.4
General Morale (2 missing, 1.7%)	0	6.9	19.8	33.6	39.7
Commitment (2 missing, 1.7%)	0.9	1.7	11.2	37.9	48.3

because low ratings on two of the skill areas within this Phase are desirable, as described below, the lower rating is optimal in this instance

Further examination of the specific skill areas that comprise each phase was conducted for a more detailed understanding of managers' perceptions of their abilities. The highest rated individual skill was building trust (6.04) which refers to the managers dependability, trustworthiness, and honesty. The four skills rated the lowest were goal pressure (2.58), control of detail (3.68), tension level (3.19), and opportunities for growth (4.90). A low rating for the first three skills is desirable, as the items in each skill area indicate behaviors associated with micro-managing (i.e. "supervises the work very closely" and "insists that everything be done his/her way") and negativity (i.e. "punishes or yells at people when they make mistakes" and "there is conflict between the group and management"). The low rating on opportunities for growth, which is related to the opportunities for advancement and employees' growth, may be less of an indicator of the managers' skill level and more a function of the nature of advancement opportunities within higher education.

An examination of the percentages of the specific skill areas showed that only 69% of second-level professionals rated their delegation skills higher than average or highly. A sharp contrast to 80% or more rating the majority of the skills higher than average or high, in the following order: building trust (93%), interest in subordinate growth and upward communication (89%), approachability (87%), team atmosphere and commitment (85%), time emphasis (84%), co-worker competence (82%), recognition of good performance (81%), and work facilitation and work involvement (80%). Consistent with lower ratings being more desirable for managers' control of details, goal pressure and

tension levels, more than 80% of second-level professionals rated these skills below average, results indicated these skills are not negatively impacting the managers' overall effectiveness.

The second question examined differences in managers' perceptions of their supervisory skills and abilities based on gender, ethnicity and number of supervisory training sessions attended throughout their career. A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to compare the group differences across the dependent variables, the six Phases and two attribute sections of Management Task•Cycle theory, based on the independent variables, gender, ethnicity and number of supervisory training sessions attended throughout their career.

Prior to conducting the MANOVA analysis, descriptive statistics were run to test the assumptions of a MANOVA. The results of the descriptive analysis revealed that Phase I, II, III, IV, VI and attributes Interpersonal Relations and Group Motivation and Morale were moderately to highly skewed in a negative direction, while Phase V was moderately skewed in a positive direction, thus the data are not normally distributed. The negatively skewed variables were reflected prior to using the Log10 and SQRT transformations to achieve normality. The Log10 transformation resulted in the lowest skewness for Phase I, II, IV, V, VI, and attributes Interpersonal Relations and Group Motivation and Morale, while the SQRT transformation resulted in the lowest skewness for Phase III. The transformed variables that were reflected prior to the transformation were reflected again to ensure the reflected variables were not negatively correlated with the original data. The final dependent variables used for the MANOVA were: Phase 1, Phase 2, Phase 3, Phase 4, Phase 5, Phase 6, Interpersonal Relations, Group Motivation.



Additionally, the interval variable, number of training sessions on supervision and management practices attended, was recoded into an ordinal variable, with five levels, to comply with requirements for use as an independent variable. The frequency analysis of the ethnicity variable revealed that the majority of respondents were Caucasian. As a result, the MANOVA was run a second time after recoding the ethnicity variable into two groups; minority and Caucasian. The significance level used for the MANOVA was .00625, after adjusting for the 8 dependent variables.

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices was not significant,  $F(144, 3612) = 1.165, p > .05$ , indicating that the data meet the assumption that the population variances among the dependent variables are the same across all variables. As such, Wilk's Lambda is used to evaluate group differences. The assumption that the error variances of the dependent variable is equal across groups was met for all dependent variables,  $p > .05$ , except Phase IV. No significant differences were found between groups for Gender,  $F(8, 86) = 1.172, p > .00625$ , Ethnicity,  $F(32, 319) = .903, p > .00625$ , Training Sessions,  $F(32, 318) = .815$ , indicating there were no main effects. Additionally, there were no interactions because no significant differences existed between Gender and Ethnicity,  $F(16, 174) = 1.010, p > .00625$ , Gender and Training Sessions,  $F(23, 256) = .664, p > .00625$ , Ethnicity and Training Sessions,  $F(40, 450) = 1.078, p > .00625$ , and Gender, Ethnicity and Training Sessions,  $F(8, 86) = .569, p > .00625$ . The MANOVA results for second-level professionals are found in Table 12.

No follow-up analysis was conducted as a result of finding no significant differences between the groups and combination of groups including gender, ethnicity and training. The exploratory analysis using the recoded ethnicity variable resulted in

similar findings, with no main or interaction effects when ethnicity was recoded into two groups. The results indicated that the second-level professional's perceptions of their managerial skills and abilities do not differ based on gender, ethnicity, the number of supervisor training sessions, or any combination of the three.

Table 12

*Multivariate Analysis of Variance for Second-Level Professionals*

Source	<i>Df</i>	<i>F</i>	$\eta$	<i>p</i>
Gender (G)	8	1.172	.098	.325
Ethnicity (E)	32	.903	.077	.622
Number of Training Sessions (T)	32	.815	.070	.754
G x E	16	1.01	.86	.448
G X T	32	.664	.058	.920
E X T	40	1.078	.090	.350
G X E X T	8	.569	.050	.800

Research question three investigated subordinates' perceptions of managers skills and abilities as defined by the Task•Cycle theory. This question was addressed using the same procedures as question one, calculating the mean and standard deviations for each of the six Phases and two Attribute sections of the Management Task•Cycle Theory, as well as percentages for each skill area on the *SMP* instrument.

The same ratings and groupings were used here as in question one so as to ensure consistency of analysis. Presented in Table 13, first-level professionals perceived managers' performance on all Phases and Attributes as average. The two Attributes, Interpersonal Relations (mean = 4.81) and Group Motivation and Morale (mean = 4.81), were rated highest, while Phase V, Exercising Positive Control (mean = 4.01) was rated lowest. Phase I, Making Goals Clear and Important (mean = 4.27), and Phase IV, Providing Feedback (mean = 4.18) were the other two rated lowest by first-level professionals. Higher ratings on Phase I reflect a strong foundation of management skills. Therefore, subordinates perceived managers to have a weak foundation of management skills as evidenced by first-level professionals' lower ratings of second-level professionals on Phase I. The variance in responses for all phases and attributes was rather high, ranging from the lowest standard deviation of .293 to 1.61.

Table 13

*First-Level Professionals Rating of Phases and Skill Areas*

Phases and Skill Areas	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Phase 1: Making Goals Clear and Important	72	4.27	1.38
Clarification of Goals	72	4.27	1.38
Phase 2: Planning and Problem Solving	72	4.50	1.2
Upward Communication	72	4.78	1.37
Orderly Work Planning	72	4.10	1.46
Expertise	72	4.57	1.39

Table 13 Continued

Phases and Skill Areas	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Phase III: Facilitating the Work of Others	72	4.3	1.44
Work Facilitation	72	4.3	1.44
Phase IV: Providing Feedback	72	4.18	1.3
Feedback	72	4.18	1.3
Phase V: Exercising Positive Control	72	4.01	.793
Time Emphasis	72	4.44	1.34
Control of details	72	3.40	1.35
Goal Pressure	72	2.81	1.41
Delegation	72	5.25	1.18
Phase VI: Reinforcing Good Performance	72	4.70	1.61
Recognition for good performance	72	4.70	1.61
Attribute: Interpersonal Relations	72	4.81	1.33
Approachability	72	4.97	1.48
Teambuilding	72	4.67	1.44
Interest in Subordinate Growth	72	4.81	1.54
Building Trust	72	4.82	1.37
Attribute: Group Motivation & Morale	71	4.81	.795
Work Involvement	71	5.22	1.18
Co-Worker Competence	71	5.22	1.01
Team Atmosphere	71	5.37	1.11

Table 13 Continued

Phases and Skill Areas	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Opportunity for Growth	71	4.15	1.26
Tension Level	71	3.81	1.20
Organization Climate	71	4.72	1.10
General Morale	71	5.25	1.08
Commitment	71	4.27	1.38

An examination of the first-level professionals' ratings of specific skills revealed higher than average ratings on five skill areas; team atmosphere (mean = 5.37), delegation (mean = 5.25), general morale (mean = 5.25), work involvement (mean = 5.22), and co-worker competence (mean = 5.22). However, similar to the phases, the variance in responses was high, with the standard deviation ranging from 1.01 – 1.18. The three lowest rated skills were tension level (mean = 3.81), control of details (mean = 3.4), and goal pressure (2.81), indicating the managers' performing lower than average on these skill areas, which is positive as high ratings on these skills is associated with micro-management.

Due to the wide variance in responses, analysis of the frequencies, which are found in Table 14, was necessary to gain a more thorough understanding of the results. Over two-thirds of first-level respondents rated second-level professionals' skills associated with Phase I, III, II, and IV low to average. In contrast, over two-thirds of subordinates' perceived managers' performance on Phase IV and the Group Motivation

Table 14

*Percentages of First-Level Professionals Rating of Phases and Skill Areas*

Phases and Skill Areas	Skill Level			
	Low	Lower than Average	Average	Higher than Average
Percentages				
Phase 1: Making Goals Clear and Important (3, 4% missing)	5.6	31.9	26.4	26.4
Clarification of Goals	5.6	31.9	26.4	26.4
Phase 2: Planning and Problem Solving (3, 4% missing)	4.2	27.8	33.3	26.4
Upward Communication (3, 4% missing)	2.8	23.6	15.3	40.3
Orderly Work Planning (3, 4% missing)	8.3	40.3	20.8	20.8
Expertise (3, 4% missing)	6.9	22.2	26.4	25.0
Phase III: Facilitating the Work of Others (3, 4% missing)	6.9	30.6	26.4	22.2
Work Facilitation (3, 4% missing)	6.9	30.6	26.4	22.2
				13.9

Table 14 Continued

Phases and Skill Areas	Low	Lower than Average	Average	Higher than Average	High
Phase IV: Providing Feedback (3 missing, 4%)	2.8	40.3	25.0	23.6	8.3
Feedback (3 missing, 4%)	2.8	40.3	25.0	23.6	8.3
Phase V: Exercising Positive Control (3 missing, 4%)	2.8	40.3	25.0	23.6	8.3
Time Emphasis (3 missing, 4%)	6.9	25.0	31.9	23.6	12.5
Control of details (3 missing, 4%)	19.4	45.8	16.7	12.5	5.6
Goal Pressure (3 missing, 4%)	37.5	40.3	11.1	8.3	2.8
Delegation (3 missing, 4%)	1.4	12.5	20.8	30.6	34.7
Phase VI: Reinforcing Good Performance (3 missing, 14%)	5.6	29.2	11.1	27.8	26.4
Recognition for good performance (3 missing, 4%)	5.6	29.2	11.1	27.8	26.4
Attribute: Interpersonal Relations (3 missing, 4%)	1.4	26.4	19.4	34.7	18.1
Approachability (3 missing, 4%)	2.8	22.2	15.3	26.4	33.3

Table 14 Continued

Phases and Skill Areas	Low	Lower than Average	Average	Higher than Average	High
Teambuilding (3 missing, 4%)	4.2	26.4	18.1	34.7	16.7
Interest in Subordinate Growth (3 missing, 4%)	8.3	13.9	25.0	26.4	26.4
Building Trust (3 missing, 4%)	2.8	20.8	23.6	3.6	22.2
Attribute: Group Motivation & Morale (4 missing, 5.3%)	0	18.3	38	36.6	7.0
Work Involvement (4 missing, 5.3%)	1.4	14.1	21.1	25.4	39.4
Co-Worker Competence (4 missing, 5.3%)	0	8.5	22.5	43.7	25.4
Team Atmosphere (4 missing, 5.3%)	0	14.1	18.3	32.4	35.2
Opportunity for Growth (4 missing, 5.3%)	2.8	40.8	28.2	19.7	8.5
Tension Level (4 missing, 5.3%)	5.6	47.9	29.6	9.9	7.0
Organization Climate (4 missing, 5.3%)	0	25.4	28.2	33.8	12.7
General Morale (4 missing, 5.3%)	5.6	25.4	19.7	19.7	29.6
Commitment (3 missing, 5.3%)	0	11.3	23.9	36.6	28.2



and Morale Attribute as higher than average to high. Managers' skills in recognizing good performance were rated the highest, with most first-level professionals rating these skills as high (26%).

First-level professionals' ratings of manager's interpersonal relations were split with approximately 50% rating the managers' as average or lower, and higher than average and high. Phase IV, exercising positive control, was rated lowest with 89% of first-level professionals perceptions of managers' abilities being average or low average. Although this is a low rating, exercising positive control encompasses two skill areas where a lower rating indicates more effective performance, control of details and goal pressure. Thus, a review of the specific skill areas is necessary.

In contrast to the second-level professional's ratings of themselves, less than 70% of the first-level professionals rated the managers' specific skill as higher than average or high. Over two-thirds of respondents rated team atmosphere, delegation, work involvement, and commitment higher than average or high, with the highest percent of first level respondents rating work involvement as high (39%). The three skills with the highest percentage of lower than average and low ratings were: goal pressure (77.8%), control of detail (65.3%) and tension (53.5%), which indicates first-level subordinates perceive managers to exhibit low levels of micro-management and the tension levels to be low. Almost half of the first-level professionals perceive lower than average levels of work involvement. The majority of subordinates' perceptions of the other skill areas indicated managers' performance was in the lower than average to higher than average rating.

The fourth question explored the differences between the perception of managers' skills and abilities based on employee level. A MANOVA was conducted using the procedures described under research question two, to compare the group differences across the dependent variables, the six phases and two attribute sections of Management Task•Cycle theory, based on the independent variable employee level.

A MANOVA was run to determine if first- and second-level professionals perceptions of manager's skills and abilities differed. The same descriptive statistics used to test the MANOVA assumptions in question one were run. The results revealed that Phase I, II, III, IV, VI and both attributes Interpersonal Relations and Group Motivation and Morale were moderately to highly skewed in a negative direction, indicating the data were not normally distributed. Phase V was not skewed, indicating it was normally distributed, thus Phase V meets the assumption of normality. In order to proceed, the skewed variables were transformed, using both the Log10 and SQRT functions, to achieve normality. Prior to transformation, all variables were reflected due to negative skewness.

The Log10 transformation resulted in the lowest skewness for all transformed variables, Phase I, II, III, IV, VI, and attributes Interpersonal Relations and Group Motivation and Morale. To ensure the reflected variables were not negatively correlated with the original data, the transformed variables were re-reflected. The final dependent variables used for the MANOVA were: Phase One, Phase Two, Phase Three, Phase Four, Phase Five, Phase Six, Interpersonal Relations, Group Motivation.

The assumption that the population variances among the dependent variables are the same across all variables was violated, this was indicated by Box's Test of Equality of

Covariance Matrices being significant,  $F(36, 74987) = 3.652, p < .05$ . The MANOVA, using Pillai's Trace, is robust to violating the assumption of homogeneity of population variances of dependent variables. Pillai's Trace,  $F(8, 178) = 7.924, p < .0$  was significant using the .00625 level after adjusting for the eight dependent variables, thus indicating there is a significant difference between first- and second-level professional's perceptions of managers' skills and abilities. The MANOVA results are located in Table 15. Furthermore, Pillai's Trace was moderate, partial eta squared = .268.

Table 15

*Multivariate Analysis of Variance for Employee Level*

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	$\eta$	<i>p</i>
Level	8	7.92	.263	.000

Univariate analysis, presented in Table 16, confirmed the significant differences between both levels, however no post hoc analysis was run due to only having two groups for comparison. The results indicated that second-level professional's perceptions of their managerial skills and abilities were significantly higher than subordinates perceptions for all six Phases and both Attributes. The variables with the highest mean difference were the Interpersonal Relations Attribute, .65, Phase VI, .65, Phase III, .61, Phase I, .6, and Phase II, .59, all with moderate effect sizes. Although second-level professionals rated their skills and abilities that comprise Phase IV significantly higher, with a mean difference of .48, the effect size was small (.45). Similarly, the mean difference for Phase V was .3, with a small effect size (.49), followed by the smallest

Table 16

*Univariate Within-Subjects Results from Multivariate Analysis of Variance on Employee Level and Management Task*

*Cycle Phases & Attributes*

Source	Measure (variable)	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P
Level	Phase I (rLGrphase1)	1.01	1	1.01	37.26	.000
	Phase II (rLGrphase2)	.98	1	.980	54.79	.000
	Phase III(rLGrphase3)	1.10	1	1.10	42.92	.000
	Phase IV (rLGrphase4)	.733	1	.733	29.92	.000
	Phase V (phase5)	3.94	1	3.94	10.13	.002
	Phase VI (rLGrphase6)	.978	1	.978	22.08	.000
	Attribute: Interpersonal Relations (rLGrinterperson)	1.08	1	1.08	43.12	.000
	Attribute: Group Motivation and Morale (rLGrgrpmotive)	.118	1	.118	8.957	.003
Error (Level)	Phase I (rLGrphase1)	5.01	185	.027		



mean difference of .19 for Group Motivation and Morale Attribute for the smallest effect size (.28).

It is necessary to note that the assumption of error variances of the dependent variable being homogenous across groups was only met for Phase I and Phase IV,  $p > .05$ , and violated for Phase's II, III, V, VI and both attributes, Interpersonal Relations and Group Motivation and Morale. Again, the MANOVA is robust to this violation.

Exploratory analysis was conducted to examine the Phases and Attributes in more detail, by comparing the skills and abilities areas that comprise the Phases and Attributes. The same procedures for addressing violations of assumptions were completed. As expected based on the analysis of the phases and attributes, the Box Test for Equality of Variances was violated,  $F(276, 68267) = 1.587$ ,  $p < .05$ , and Pillai's Trace was also significant,  $F(23, 163) = 6.53$ , with a small effect size, partial eta squared = .480.

The univariate analysis indicated first- and second- level professionals perception of 15 of the 23 skills and abilities of managers were significantly different, at the .00217 level, adjusting for the 23 dependent variables. The skills and abilities found not to be significantly different were delegation ( $F(1, 185) = 1.11$ ), goal pressure ( $F(1, 185) = .02$ ), control of details ( $F(1, 185) = 3.41$ ), work involvement ( $F(1, 185) = 2.29$ ), general morale ( $F(1, 185) = 3.41$ ), and commitment ( $F(1, 185) = 6.982$ ). Goal pressure relates to the managers need to apply pressure to meet goals and punish staff for mistakes, while control of details refers to the managers need to track all details and direct the person on how to accomplish tasks. Work involvement consists of an employee's level of interest in, and excitement about, the work. Team atmosphere includes employees' sense of

support and cooperation among staff. Commitment focuses on how dedicated employees are to the organization and putting forth high levels of effort to goals.

These findings are consistent with the results of the earlier analysis of the Phases. Delegation, control of details, goal pressure three of the four skills and abilities that comprise Phase V, which were found to have a small effect size. The same trend is found with work involvement, team atmosphere, general morale, and commitment, constituting four of the eight skills and abilities within the group motivation and moral attribute.

The final two questions, five and six, looked at what managers' and subordinates' perceived were the most challenging aspects of being supervisors and the skill areas managers need to improve, as well as identified any difference in perceptions based on the employee level. The qualitative data for these two questions were analyzed using an inductive approach to identify emerging categories.

The first step was a review of all responses based on employee level. Following the initial review, the statements were reviewed a second time to generate a list of topics that emerged. Third, categories were identified based on the topics, and similar topics were grouped together within the appropriate categories. The researcher and a colleague conducted each of the above steps individually to improve the validity of the data coding, followed by a meeting between the researcher and colleague to discuss their findings. Based on the discussion, a final set of categories was developed. The researcher and colleague then randomly selected ten percent of the responses for both questions and coded them separately to check for interrater reliability, with the goal being 80 percent.

The interrater reliability on the review of the challenges facing supervisors was below 80% for both second- (51%) and first- level (67%) professionals. Similarly, the

interrater reliability was below 80% for the areas supervisor's need improvement for second- (79%) and first-level (47%) professionals. Therefore, the researcher and colleague discussed and refined the categories.

The above process of coding the data and checking for interrater reliability was repeated a second time. This resulted in the interrater reliability being above 80 percent for second- (97%) and first-level professional's (86%) perceptions of skills needing improvement, as well first-level professional's (90%) perceptions of the most challenging aspects of being a supervisor. The interrater reliability for second-level professional's perceptions of the most challenging aspects of being a supervisor was 76% on the second coding, therefore the categories were refined again and the data were recoded. The third process achieved an acceptable level of interrater reliability of 96%.

Participant language was used in the appropriate results and discussion sections that demonstrate support for each category. Additionally, the data were reviewed using the Managerial Task•Cycle Theory and the results of the quantitative survey to identify consistency of responses. Finally, the data were analyzed for discrepant data, to identify any rival conclusions and to determine if the data apply to other studies.

Almost all second-level professionals (97%) answered the question related to the most challenging aspects of being a supervisor. The themes are found in Table 17. The most common challenge for second-level professionals was performance management of subordinates (n = 55). Performance management included comments related to "dealing with performance issues," "determining specific strategies to improve employee performance," "holding someone accountable while also fostering their development."



Table 17

*Themed Categories of the Most Challenging Aspects of Being a Supervisor Identified by Second-Level Professionals*

<i>Second-Level Professionals' Themes</i>	N	Percentage
Performance Management	55	47.83%
Differences in Staff	23	20%
Time	20	17.39%
Communication	12	10.43%
Motivation	12	10.43%
Training	7	6.09%
Delegation	6	5.22%
Group Cohesion	6	5.22%
Change	5	4.35%
Evaluation	5	4.35%
Relationships	5	4.35%
Balancing the needs of others	4	3.48%
Other	13	11.30%

Supervising staff members who are very different ( $n = 23$ ) was the second most common challenging aspect of being a supervisor, according to second-level professionals. Staff differences included personalities, age, education, experience levels, and work styles. One respondent stated: "Trying to figure out how to supervise different

personalities. It is important to remember that the way you like to be supervised is not necessarily what will work for your employees.”

Second-level professionals cited time as the third most common challenge of being a supervisor. Several comments focused on the not having enough time to get “everything done,” while other comments related to not having the time to devote to subordinates individually, and the time it takes to supervise effectively, as well as having time to plan. One respondent captured several of these sentiments by stating “Balance the day to day expectations of my job as well as ensuring subordinates are doing what is expected of them.”

Communication and motivation were also identified as challenges of being a supervisor by 12 respondents. Respondents referred to both verbal and non-verbal communication. For example one second-level professional stated “staying attuned to staff’s unspoken feelings, needs,” while another stated “it is also important to have good communication and understanding. Sometimes people interpret things differently, if you have a concern about something...ask, don’t just assume and answer.” Motivation included determining rewards that are meaningful for employees, methods for increasing staff enthusiasm, morale, and preventing burn-out. One second-level professional specifically indicated monetary challenge associated with motivation, “motivating employees through any means but pay.”

Other challenges that were identified by less than 6% of second-level professionals included: training (n = 7); delegation (n = 6); group cohesion (n = 6); change (n = 5); evaluation (n = 5); relationship (n = 5); balancing the needs of others (n = 4); and conflict (n = 4). Thirteen comments were unique, thus not fitting into any categories. Some

examples were: “Setting clear expectations;” “Finding the time to supervise well;” “Not having control of the budget for area;” “Retention of Staff;” and “Having to fire an employee.” One second-level professional indicated “none.” One respondent summarized several of the themes in the following statement:

“(1) Confronting employees who are not performing well; (2) Coaching to each employee’s unique needs; (3) Finding the correct line and balance between being a ‘friend’ (i.e., not being disinterested in employees at a personal level and not being too standoffish) and being a ‘supervisor’ (i.e., not holding back from telling an employee the truth if his/her performance is not up to standards); (4) Celebrating the good as well as correcting the bad.”

First-level subordinate’s perceptions of challenges of being a supervisor were different from second-level professionals. Refer to Table 18 for a complete listing of the 18 categories developed based on first-level professionals’ responses. The most commonly cited challenge was the supervisors’ workload ( $n = 18$ ), specifically “the sheer volume of things she is responsible for.” Although the second-level professionals did not explicitly state the volume of work was a challenge, the comments alluded to that notion, indicating the lack of time to complete tasks while providing appropriate levels of supervision of staff.

Resources ( $n = 17$ ) was the other most commonly cited challenge of being a supervisor by first-level professionals. Resources included funding and staffing levels. The most explicit response capturing this theme stated “budget crunches, overloaded staff.” It is important to note that second-level professionals did identify resources as a challenge, however several of the comments related to time and one related to motivation also included statements related to resources.

Table 18

*Themed Categories of the Most Challenging Aspects of Being a Supervisor Identified by First -Level Professionals*

<i>First -Level Professionals' Themes</i>	N	Percentage
Workload	18	25.35%
Resources	17	23.94%
Communication	10	14.08%
Balance	9	12.68%
Professionalism	7	9.86%
Variety of Responsibilities	7	9.86%
Lack of Experience	6	8.45%
Consistency/Equitability	5	7.04%
Delegation	5	7.04%
Politics	5	7.04%
Staff Development	5	7.04%
Advocacy	3	4.23%
Conflict	3	4.23%
Differences in Staff	3	4.23%
None	3	4.23%
Relationships	3	4.23%
Other	14	19.72%

Another common theme among both employee levels was communication; however the nature of communication was slightly different between first- and second-level professionals. Only two of the 10 comments first-level professionals reported about communication related to “being careful about how one says things and what is said,” which was the primary nature of the second-level professional’s comments. The majority of first-level professionals indicated that a challenging aspect of being a supervisor is sharing information with staff. Comments such as “Keeping all of the staff members in the loop on projects and decisions,” and “Communicating to his subordinates the discussions happening at his leadership level” could be interpreted as weaknesses of the supervisor as opposed to a challenging aspect of being a supervisor.

Delegation ( $n = 5$ ), differences in staff ( $n = 3$ ), relationships ( $n = 3$ ), and staff development ( $n = 5$ ), which is similar to training, were the other commonalities between first- and second-level professionals responses to this question. Similar to second-level professionals, 14 comments from first-level professionals were too unique to categorize. Some examples of these comments were: “Parent concerns. Being student oriented, while maintaining an educational mission;” “Recruiting;” “Lack of opportunity to advance career; burnout; frustrated subordinates;” “Dealing with student deaths;” and “Remembering details of every employee's position.”

Several of the themes identified by second-level professionals as challenges were also identified as skill areas needing improvement. The similarities included performance management, specifically providing feedback and conducting evaluations ( $n = 23$ ), discipline and holding staff accountable ( $n = 11$ ), communication ( $n = 15$ ); conflict ( $n = 14$ ), and delegation ( $n = 13$ ). Many of the comments concerning feedback emphasized the

need for regular, relevant feedback, as well as positive and negative feedback “so there are no surprises during performance evaluation time.” One respondent typified these sentiments with the following statement: “I am committed to continuous feedback but could use some help in circumstances where the feedback is negative. I generally use the technique of highlighting the positive implications first then addressing where improvement is needed. Sometimes I will avoid having to do this because it can be a challenging experience.” Other comments about evaluation simply referred to performance evaluations, assessment and indicated “it’s been a long time” since conducting any evaluations.

Comments about discipline and accountability expanded on the feedback theme, incorporating issues related to “correcting inappropriate behavior of subordinates,” being “too easy on things that don’t matter as much to me but are important to others – i.e. tardiness in the morning,” and “Finding developmental ways to hold staff accountable.” One of the respondents moved beyond just identifying areas needing improvement, but the need for “following through with periodic checks to see if behavior has improved.” Another respondent acknowledged the “need to address the area of concern early on, so that it does not keep happening.”

A majority of second-level professionals’ simply stated “communication” was a skill needing development, with no additional explanation. One individual referred specifically to “active listening and effective communication,” while another identified a need to be “assertive.” One respondent statement referred to Phase I of the Management Task-Cycle Theory (Making Goals Clear and Important), stating “communicating my expectations clearly.”

Conflict, the third most cited skill area needing improvement, focused on managing and resolving conflicts, including confrontations. This theme is associated with tension levels, an item in the Group Motivation and Morale attribute. Although 20% of second-level professionals reported differences in staff was challenging, only 6% reported needing improvement in this skill area. In contrast, 12% of second-level professionals reported needing improvement with delegation skills, a component of Phase V, yet only 5% reported delegation was a challenging aspect of being a supervisor. Staff development and relationships, identified by less than 7% of second-level professionals relate to several components of the Interpersonal Relationship Attribute. The following statement exemplifies the relationship: "I need more support on the interpersonal aspects of being a supervisor. I know how to relate to people as colleague and friend, but balancing the role of 'mentor', 'manager' and at the time part therapist is a challenge." More of the second-level professionals' responses to areas needing improvement ( $n = 15$ ) could not be categorized compared to those cited as challenges ( $n = 5$ ), as the items were too unique to develop a theme. A complete list of themes is presented in Table 19.

Table 19

*Themed Categories of the Skill Areas Needing Improvement Identified by Second-Level Professionals*

<i>Second-Level Professionals' Themes</i>	N	Percentage
Evaluation/Feedback	23	20%
Communication	15	13.04%
Conflict	14	12.17%
Delegation	13	11.30%
Discipline/Accountability	11	9.57%
Differences in Staff	8	6.96%
Motivation	8	6.96%
Planning	7	6.09%
Staff Development	7	6.09%
Time	7	6.09%
Difficult Staff	6	5.22%
Recognition	5	4.35%
Relationships	5	4.35%
Legal	4	3.48%
Politics	3	2.61%
Other	18	16.20%



A total of 18 categories emerged from the 72 first-level professionals' responses, which are found in Table 20. Communication was the most cited skill second-level professionals need to improve (32%), yet only 14% of first-level professional's reported communication as a challenging aspect of being a supervisor. The majority of comments about communication skills centered on the delivery of information, ensuring the message is clear and conveyed tactfully. One first-level professional stated "I think my supervisor needs help in how she offers assessments and makes requests. Sometimes it can be a bit of a grab/stressor." Although first-level professional's identified communication as a challenging aspect of being a supervisor, only two comments focused on delivery while the remaining eight comments emphasized the need to share pertinent information with staff.

Professionalism was the second area supervisors need improvement, according to first-level professionals (24%), and was also mentioned as a challenge of being a supervisor by (10%). Professionalism encompassed a managers "attention to detail", "follow through," "confidentiality," being "passive-aggressive," "accepting negative feedback," and "leading by example." Performance management was also identified as an area needing improvement by 19% of first-level professionals; specifically "holding people accountable," "developmental supervision versus reactive supervisions," "micro-managing," and "coaching staff." These sentiments are consistent with those reported by second-level professionals, and are directly related to Phase IV and Phase V.

Table 20

*Themed Categories of the Skill Areas Needing Improvement Identified by First-Level Professionals*

<i>First-Level Professionals' Themes</i>	N	Percentage
Communication	23	32.40%
Professionalism	17	23.94%
Performance Management	15	19.40%
Motivation	8	11.26%
Other	8	11.26%
Planning/Vision	8	11.26%
Staff Development	8	11.26%
Support	7	9.86%
None	6	8.45%
Relationships	6	8.45%
Time Management	6	8.45%
Recognition	5	7.04%
Delegation	4	5.63%
Balance	3	4.23%
Change	3	4.23%
Lack of Knowledge	3	4.23%
Consistency	2	2.82%
Politics	2	2.82%
Other	8	11.26%

Planning and vision, identified by 5% of first-level subordinates is directly related to Phase II, planning and problem solving, and illustrated by the comment: “strategic thinking for the office.” Several other items identified by less than 5% of first-level subordinates were identified by supervisors, and are components of the Management Task Cycle , including: relationships, Interpersonal Relations attribute; staff development, Phase III and Interpersonal Relations attribute; and recognition, Phase VI.

A comparison of themes identified by both first- and second-level professionals as challenges facing supervisors and skills needing improvement revealed similarities. Time which is parallel to workload and resources, and communication were identified by both employee levels as challenges facing supervisors. Another similarity was the identification of performance management skills by both levels, though supervisors identified this area as a challenge while subordinates perceived it as an area needing improvement. The primary difference was the professionalism theme, which was only identified by first-level employees. Based on this comparison, the hypothesis that first- and second-level professionals’ perceptions of challenges facing supervisors and skills needing development will differ is not supported.

## CHAPTER V

## Discussion

The final chapter discusses the perceptions of second-level student affairs professionals' skills and abilities, the most challenging aspects facing supervisors, and the skill areas where managers need to improve. The findings suggest first- and second-level professionals perceive managers' skills and abilities differently, with managers perceiving their skills higher than subordinates. Additionally, some similarities between the perception of the most challenging aspects of being a supervisor and the skill areas needing improvement exist between these two employee levels. The results also support the application of the Management-Task Cycle theory and the inclusion of subordinates in the assessment of supervisors' performance within student affairs.

## Perceptions of Managers' Performance on the Task-Cycle Theory

Second-Level Professional's

In general, second-level professionals perceived their performance as better than average on all Phases and Attributes of the Task-Cycle Theory. Overall, these findings are similar to studies outside of higher education (Carlyle, 1992; Matheson, 2007), and to some extent differ from earlier research on skill performance within Student Affairs. The similarities in findings were comparable to ratings on managers' interpersonal relations, goals, organizational development (Foley, 1989), utilizing the expertise of others, conflict, and recognition (Roberts, 2003). In contrast, second-level professionals perceived higher skill performance on the following skill areas: developing a strategic plan and goals, communicating the mission and vision of the unit, mediating conflict among staff, delegation, training staff, motivation (Roberts), and evaluating staff and

providing feedback (Foley; Roberts). It is important to note that both the question structure and the rating scales used in Foley's (1989) and Roberts' (2003) examination of the performance of student affairs managers differed substantially from the current study, as described in Chapter 2. These differences signify a need for additional research in this area using the *SMP* to enhance the reliability of this study.

Second-level professionals' higher ratings on Phase I (Making Goals Clear and Important) and Phase II (Planning and Problem Solving) suggest managers possess a strong foundation of management skills, and as a result are better positioned to perform well in all subsequent skill areas. The results also indicate that supervisors involve subordinates in the planning and problem solving process, which aids in identifying the best possible solutions to problems (Performance Programs Inc, 2003). Additionally, according to Performance Programs Inc., the co-workers competence may be a direct reflection of a manager's skill level. The second-level professionals' above average rating of the co-workers competence suggests their management skills are better than average.

Despite the findings that second-level managers' perceive their performance as effective, they perceived their feedback skills (Phase IV) lower than their upward communication skills (a component of Phase II), suggesting some tension may exist in the work environment (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003). Based on the Management-Task Cycle, supervisors would need to improve their skills in Phase I and Phase II in order to achieve improvement in this area (Performance Programs & Inc, 2003). The results also suggest managers may be overbearing and viewed as micro-managers based on an average self-rating of their ability to control details. Additionally, the higher rating on their need to control detail, combined with the average rating on tension level, may

negatively impact a manager's effectiveness. As such, second-level professionals need to find a balance between their need to monitor details and providing subordinates autonomy. This can be achieved by development of their communication skills, planning, and facilitation of work (Performance Programs & Inc).

The hypothesis that managers' perceptions of the skills and abilities would differ based on gender, ethnicity, or number of supervisory training sessions attended, was not supported. No significant differences were found between any of the dependent variables. Comparison of the perceptions of managers' performance between gender, ethnicity or training sessions has not been conducted in earlier studies. None of the prior studies compared managers' performance based on ethnicity. In addition, the earlier research that compared males and females cited the need to develop skills is conflicting. Ivy (1981) found females identified minimal need to develop their interpersonal relations and communication skills. In contrast, Sermersheim (2002) found that women placed more importance on developing their interpersonal relations and communication skills, while Stokes (1981) and Wade (1993) found no difference between the need males and females placed on improving skills in these areas.

The finding that no differences exist between self-perceptions of performance based on the number of training sessions attended is in contrast to the results of the research on the *SMP*. Wilson et al. (1990) found that managers and subordinates' ratings of managers on the *SMP* improved after the manager participated in training using the Task-Cycle Theory and focused on the skills identified during the initial administration of the *SMP*. Respondents in this study were not asked if the training sessions attended were based on the Task-Cycle theory. Two possible explanations for the lack of difference

could be related to the curriculum used in the trainings as well as the lack of using of an instrument to assess the managers' performance prior to attending training.

Overall, the second-level professionals' perceptions of their skills and abilities indicate they possess the skills associated with effective management regardless of gender, ethnicity and the number of management training sessions attended, yet some skill areas were identified as needing improvement. The difference between these findings and that of earlier studies suggests a need for further research on this topic.

#### First-Level Professionals

In contrast to managers, subordinates' perceptions of second-level professionals' skills and abilities were lower, with all Phases and Attributes being rated as average. The lower ratings are consistent with Winston and Creamer's (1997) finding that subordinates had lower satisfaction with the skills used by managers and their helpfulness. The first-level professionals' perceptions are also more comparable to several of Foley's (1989) and Roberts' (2003) results on managers' self-assessment of skills. Some literature purports subordinate assessment of supervisors is invalid due to a lack of ability and aptitude as well as knowledge about the position (Bernardin, 1986). However, the consistency of these findings with other research on managers' self perceptions suggests subordinates ratings may provide useful feedback on second-level professionals' performance. Support for the inclusion of subordinates' feedback has also been demonstrated through companies' use of the practice (Bernardin) as well as research on the positive impact subordinate feedback has on a supervisors' performance (Boyatzis, 1994; Hegarty, 1974; Shipper & Dillard, 2000; Seifert et al., 2003).

One of the lowest rated skills by subordinates was Phase I (Making Goals Clear and Important), the critical foundational skill for effective management that impacts (positively or negatively) a manager's performance on all subsequent Phases (Wilson et al., 1990). In other words, subordinates perceived that managers lack the foundation necessary for effective managerial performance; implying managers need to improve their ability to clearly articulate the goals of the organization. Additionally, first-level professionals lower ratings of managers feedback skills (Phase IV) was consistent with the findings of Janosik et al. (2003) regarding feedback received by managers, as well as managers' self perceptions found by Foley (1989) and Roberts (2003). Perhaps training on communication skills, related to clarity of content as well as positive and constructive performance-related feedback, should be provided to second-level professionals.

In general, the subordinates' ratings had a large amount of variance, suggesting that the managers' of half of the respondents may be very effective while the other half less effective. One possible explanation of this divergence may be that subordinates were either very satisfied or very unsatisfied with their manager's performance. Therefore, they may have been more interested in responding to a survey on management practices than subordinates who perceived their managers performance as average. The finding also demonstrates the need for additional research in this area.

#### Comparison of Perceptions by Employee Level

First-level professionals had significantly lower ratings of managers on all Phases and Attributes than that of second-level professionals' self-perceptions, supporting the hypothesis that managers rate their abilities higher than subordinates. Differences in perceptions of abilities based on employee level are consistent with Carlyle's (1992)



findings, as well as Foley's (1989) and Roberts (2003) as discussed above. A potential drawback of the study was that managers were not evaluated by their own employees specifically. It is plausible that the second-level managers over-rated their skills or are less competent than they perceived, contributing to the differences found. This is supported by the literature on the accuracy of self-ratings (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988; Kruger & Dunning, 1999; Shipper & Dillard, 2000) and calibration (Bol, Hacker, O'Shea, & Allen, 2003).

Examination of the specific skills within each Phase and Attribute revealed subordinates' perceptions did not differ significantly from second-level professionals' perceptions of six skill areas. This similarity suggests managers may have inflated their ratings and that subordinates are capable of accurate assessments of a manager's performance. In contrast, the differences could be a result of disgruntled subordinates deflating their ratings of second-level professionals, while the managers' ratings of their performance may have been more accurate. Thus, it is likely that both subordinates' and managers' ratings are not entirely accurate. It would be useful to incorporate both employee levels' in the assessment of managers' performance. The results could enhance the understanding of second-level professionals' performance, which has been supported by other research (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Bass and Yammarino, 1991; Harris and Schaubroeck, 1988; Wilson et al., 1990).

#### Challenging Aspects of Being a Supervisor and Skills Areas Needing Improvement

Second-level professionals noted that skills associated with performance management were the most challenging aspect of supervision. This finding is consistent with other research (Benke & Disque, 1990; Domeier, 1977; Fey, 1991; Foley, 1989; Ivy,

1981; Kane; 1982; Roberts, 2003; Semershiem, 2002; Steege, 1977; Stokes, 1981; Tillotson, 1995; Wade, 1993), yet these studies did not expand upon the concept of performance management, rather simply identified the concept. The qualitative nature of the current study allowed managers to provide details about the aspects of performance management that are challenging. These included: providing ongoing positive and negative feedback in a constructive manner, addressing performance issues and attitudes, balancing the development of staff with holding staff accountable for their performance, being fair and consistent, avoiding micro-managing staff, and coaching staff members based on their needs. Although first-level professionals did not identify performance management as a challenge, they did identify it as one of the top skill areas in which second-level professionals need to improve. Second-level professionals did identify some of the specific areas as needing improvement; conducting evaluations and providing feedback was the most commonly cited skill needing improvement, while a small percentage identified the concept of discipline and holding staff members accountable for their performance as a skill needing improvement. This knowledge can be used to develop training programs tailored to the specific performance management skill areas that are most challenging for supervisors and need improvement according to subordinates and managers.

Time was another common challenge identified by second-level professionals, referring to not having enough time to accomplish their responsibilities while still devoting the necessary time to the supervision of subordinates. First-level professionals also identified this as a challenge, focusing on the volume of work facing managers. Interestingly, subordinates, not managers, identified resources (financial and personnel)

as a challenges. Perhaps second-level professionals have become desensitized to the lack of resources because higher education is in a constant fiscal crisis (Birnbaum & Shushok, 2001).

Even though approximately the same percent of first- and second-level professionals identified communication as a challenge, the focuses differed. Subordinates were focused on the need to share information with staff whereas managers were more concerned with the manner in which the information is communicated. In general, the differences in the perceptions of challenges facing managers by first- and second-level professionals could be directly related to the finding that the role of a manager and an employee are different and specific transition needs exist in order to become an effective manager (Boyd, 1984; Hooper, 1991; Kay & Palmer, 1961). As such, training for new supervisors is needed, as well as research to identify transitional needs of managers within student affairs.

Fewer similarities existed between first- and second-level professionals' perceptions of the skill areas on which supervisors need to improve. In addition to the similarities discussed earlier on performance management, five other areas were identified by a small percentage in each employee level: delegation, motivation, planning, recognition, and politics. Therefore, additional research is necessary to determine if these results are generalizable. One notable difference was first-level professionals' identification of professionalism as the second most common skill where managers need improvement. The concept of professionalism, referring to follow-through, attention to detail, confidentiality, avoiding passive-aggressive behavior, and modeling appropriate behavior, did not arise in any statements made by supervisors. This is consistent with a

study by Janosik et al. (2003) which found that new professionals reported managers' role modeling is helpful to their success as professionals. The implication for this finding could be a lack of respect for, satisfaction with, and commitment to the supervisor, which research has shown is an impetus for employee turnover (Eisenberger et al, 1990; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger et al., 2001; Eisenberger et al., 2002; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Rhoades et al., 2001; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006; Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Tull, 2004; Wayne et al., 2002).

The majority of themes identified as challenges by second-level professionals relate directly or indirectly to the Management Task Cycle theory. Specifically, three of the top five themes are direct components of theory: performance management, communication, and motivation. Performance management relates to Phase III, IV, and IV; communication is a component of Phase IV and the Interpersonal Relations attribute; and motivation is associated with Phase VI and the Group Motivation and Morale attribute. Time and being able to supervise staff members that are different are not directly represented in the theory. However, time is needed to implement the skills associated with the theory. The ability to supervise staff members requires that supervisors adapt their actions to the needs of the subordinate to ensure they are effective in all aspects of the theory.

Fewer themes identified as challenges by first-level professionals relate, directly or indirectly, to the Management Task-Cycle theory. The two themes directly related to the theory were delegation, a component of Phase V (Exercising Positive Control), as well as lack of experience, part of Phase II (Planning and Problem Solving). The other themes loosely associated with the theory are staff development, relating to Phase III; the

interest in subordinate growth, a component of the Interpersonal Relations Attribute; and conflict related to tension levels, which is an aspect of the Group Motivation and Morale Attribute. This suggests that the majority of first-level professionals' perceptions of challenges facing supervisors are not directly related to skills associated with good management, but rather circumstances of the organization, as illustrated by the workload and resource theme. However, similar to second-level professionals, workload and resources can impact a supervisor's ability to develop and implement the behaviors associated with the theory.

Overall, the majority of skill areas identified as needing improvement by first- and second-level professionals are components of the Task-Cycle Theory. Examples of similarities between first- and second-level professionals include: evaluation and feedback which relate to Phase V (Providing Feedback); discipline, accountability, performance management, and delegation which are components of Phase IV (Exercising Positive Control); clear communication of expectations and goals which is connected to Phase I (Making Goals Clear and Important); recognition and motivation which are associated with Phase VI (Recognition of Good Performance) as well as the Group Motivation and Morale Attribute; planning which is part of Phase II (Planning and Problem Solving); and staff development which is a component of both Phase III (Work Facilitation) and the Interpersonal Relations Attribute. Although some themes differed from the theory, these items related to aspects of management that are not directly related to supervision including: legal issues, politics, budget, balance, and professionalism. Several of these items relate to managers' responsibilities that have been incorporated in other research on mid-managers, which legitimizes these findings.

Ultimately, the relationships between the skills in the Management Task-Cycle Theory and themes from both first- and second-level professionals' perceptions of challenges of supervision and skills needing improvement demonstrates the applicability of this theory to Higher Education, and more specifically to student affairs. Additionally, similarities between the ratings from the *SMP* on the Task-Cycle skills, and the skills needing improvement, provide further support for the theory's relevance to student affairs.

### Implications

The results of this study suggest that differences exist between subordinates' and managers' perceptions of second-level professionals' managerial performance. Although the limitations of this study may have contributed to the differences, the results of this study as well as prior research, supports the inclusion of subordinates' feedback during the evaluation of a manager's performance. Inclusion of subordinates' feedback will provide the initial information necessary to begin the process of improvement. The applicability of the Management Task-Cycle, as discussed above, allows for the use of the *SMP* in student affairs to obtain the specific areas of weakness of each individual manager. This information can be used to design targeted training sessions based on the theory, which is more likely to improve the effectiveness of the training sessions and ultimately the performance of managers. Mather, Bryan, and Faulkner (2008) advocate for the development of individualized orientation programs for supervisors that include specific strategies for addressing staff performance issues and other transition issues facing managers. Improvements in managers' performance as a result of individualized training programs and orientation programs will likely result in improved satisfaction of

employees. These improvements will likely result in improved performance of, and increased retention of, employees based on the research that demonstrates that satisfaction with managers' performance is related to employee turnover and performance (Ash, 1954; Baehr, 1954; Fleishman & Harris, 1955; Kahn, 1963; Lawler, 1997; Tallarigo & Rosebush, 1992; Twery, Schmid, and Wrigley, 1958; Wherry, 1954).

Due to the financial limitations many higher education institutions are facing, institutions may not be able to utilize the *SMP* on a regular basis. However, national organizations associated with student affairs professionals could use the results of this study to develop training programs and workshops. Also, since many second-level student affairs professionals hold master's degrees, student affairs educational preparation programs should consider incorporating topics on management and supervision of staff based on theory into the curriculum. Although graduates may not be placed in supervisory roles immediately, exposure to this information during the masters' degree preparation may be one of the few opportunities for training prior to becoming a supervisor. At a minimum, preparation programs should offer training sessions on this topic. Additionally, student affairs professionals interested in advancing to management positions should seek professional development opportunities focused on supervision.

Specifically, the professional development programs and resources should focus on the following skill areas: 1) Communication, planning and facilitating the work of others in order to reduce micro-management and tension levels to improve the overall environment of the organization; 2) Demonstration of a genuine interest in subordinate's growth, in an effort to improve subordinates perceptions of the opportunities for growth and advancement within the organization; 3) Performance management skills related to

holding subordinates accountable in a developmental manner, providing on-going positive and negative feedback, and conducting regular performance evaluations; as well as 4) The need for professionalism since managers are role models for employees.

Because second-level professionals serve as examples for employees, they may impact performance by following-through on their commitments, being attentive to details, establishing professional boundaries, avoiding passive-aggressive behavior in lieu of addressing conflict, and being willing to accept constructive feedback.

Second-level professionals may not be in a position to address the challenges of high workloads, lack of resources, and balancing the time it takes to accomplish tasks while providing ample time for supervision of employees. Therefore, senior-level administrators in student affairs should develop strategies for ensuring second-level professionals receive the support necessary to be effective in their roles. This could be achieved by examining the current organizational structure and reducing the number of staff supervised by each individual. Another option is to investigate how technology can be used to reduce the day-to-day workload, increasing efficiency of operations while allowing employees to focus on the critical responsibilities of supporting students' development. A third option is conducting a program evaluation to identify areas that have become obsolete or those that no longer match the goals of the institution. Eliminating these areas would serve to refocus staff energies on activities designed to achieve the mission and goals of student affairs and the institution.

#### Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The findings of this study provide foundational knowledge about the perceptions of second-level professionals' management performance. One shortcoming of the



research was the low response rate, which limits the generalizability of the findings. The timing of the survey distribution may have impacted this response rate. Many student affairs professionals change positions during the summer and use vacation time when the workload is lower due to lower enrollments. The substantial number of replies received that indicated the individual was out-of-office, or no longer working at the institution, confirmed these speculations. Since these messages are not required it is difficult to estimate the actual number of individuals who may not have received the message, or were unable to participate due to their workload after having been out of the office. As such, replicating the study during the academic year, when vacation time is minimized might increase the response rate. Another possible explanation for the low response rate was the use of two platforms to administer the two sections of the instrument. Replicating this study using one online platform for both instruments may improve the response rate, as substantially more individuals responded to the demographic survey only.

Although online survey software and personalized e-mail invitations were used to increase the sample response rate, it is important to note the inherent limitation associated with an online survey delivered via e-mail. Many individuals have activated filter systems to reduce the amount of spam mail received. It is plausible the survey invitations may have been identified as spam by the automatic filter. Thus the individual may not have recognized the invitation as a legitimate e-mail. One strategy to address this limitation is to mail the sample a postcard informing them of the survey and the expected delivery date of the e-mail invitation. This might prompt some individuals to review their spam mail or contact the researcher if the survey invitation is not received.

The generalizability of the findings is also limited by the lack of representation from many of the functional areas within student affairs. Replicating the study using a stratified sample to ensure the variety of functional areas that typically comprise a student affairs division are represented, may provide additional confirmation of these findings, as well as support or disagree with the differences found. In addition, this would also provide an opportunity to compare perceptions of performance based on functional areas, to determine if differences exist, and to determine which areas have higher and lower perceptions of performance. Additionally, in each replication of the study, increasing the sample size would enhance the reliability of the results.

Another concern for the external validity of this study is the inability to determine if the sample is representative of the population. Demographic data for student affairs professionals could not be located for the population of individuals in first- and second-level positions. Future studies need to address this limitation in the methodology design in order to strengthen the ability to generalize the findings.

The lower response rate of first-level professionals compared to second-level professionals is another constraint. The subject line of the e-mail invitation as well as concern for confidentiality may have contributed to the lower response rate. Therefore, conducting the study using only first-level professionals may reduce concerns related to confidentiality. Additionally, these studies should also include more relevant subject line that is designed to capture the attention of subordinates.

Another direction of research that would yield more reliable results would be the inclusion of supervisors' and peers' perceptions of second-level performance. The methodology used should ensure that other employees' ratings can be paired directly with

the managers' self-ratings. Although including subordinates' perceptions of managers' performance addressed the limitation associated with the second-level professional's self-assessment, it is important to minimize the drawbacks related to subordinates' assessment of their managers. This would also present a more comprehensive understanding of managers' performance, including strengths and weakness, allowing further interpretation of results as they relate to the training and workshop curriculums developed by institutions, national organizations and higher education preparation programs.

The differences in first- and second-level professionals' perceptions of managers' skills and abilities demonstrates further research is warranted. The sample did not allow for a one-to-one relationship between managers and subordinates responding to the survey, which compromised the internal validity of the study. This is a considerable limitation. Conducting research that allows for this direct relationship within the sample would address such limitation. It is likely that this type of study would need to be conducted at specific institutions as opposed to using a random sample. In order to minimize impact on the external validity of this methodology the research would need to be replicated across many institutions to allow for enhanced generalizability.

The finding that both first- and second-level professionals identified performance management skills as challenges facing managers, as well as skills needing improvement, presents another avenue for future research. A qualitative study with second-level professionals would provide the details necessary to understand reasons managers find these skills challenging. This could also shed light on the types of training programs that would provide managers the resources necessary to improve their skills. Another qualitative study could be conducted with first-level professionals to determine the most

effective approaches managers' use when providing feedback, conducting evaluations, and addressing performance concerns. This information can be used to guide the development of training and resources on performance management.

A final direction for research is to investigate first-level professionals' intentions to leave and the reasons for turnover. This type of research would validate the application of research on turnover from other fields to student affairs professionals. Furthermore, research should examine first-level professionals' intent to leave the organization and their perceptions of managers' performance to identify any correlations that may exist. These findings would confirm the need for further investigations of the perceptions of managers' performance within student affairs.

### Conclusions

In conclusion, this study addresses the lack of research in student affairs on the management skills of second-level professionals, as well as builds upon the research about the importance of, and the need for development of, skills essential for effective management. The findings provide foundational knowledge about differences in managers' and subordinates perceptions of second-level professionals' management performance. The use of a theoretical framework to assess the quality of managers' performance, unlike earlier research, enhances the quality of this study. The findings, in conjunction with the Task-Cycle Theory, present a structure for future discussions on the content to include in orientation and professional preparation and development programs for student affairs professionals. Finally, several implications for practice and areas for future research were identified that will serve to advance the student affairs profession as well as the quality of student affairs professionals.

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## Appendix A

April 14, 2006

Dr. Paul Connolly  
President, Performance Programs Inc.  
P.O. Box 630  
Old Saybrook, CT 06475

Dear Dr. Connolly,

Thank you for your timely response to my inquiry about the Survey of Management Practices (SMP). After reviewing the sample report you provided me, I am confident this instrument is an excellent fit for my dissertation research. Additionally, I am interested in possibly including some questions from the Coaching Survey, based on your approval of any modifications.

The purpose of my research is to identify the strengths and areas of improvement for specific management skills of student affairs manager, using the theoretical foundation of the Task-Cycle Theory. Several dissertations in the field identify supervision as a training need, yet do not delve into the subject in depth. Additionally, these dissertations fail to consider the input of subordinates in their research. Thus, my research will include obtaining subordinates responses to the SMP.

The adaptation of SMP will be disseminated to members of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and American College Personnel Association (ACPA), the two leading professional organizations for student affairs managers in higher education, upon their approval. The instrument will be disseminated using Inquisite Data Collection Software, sometime during late summer or early fall of 2006, after receiving approval from the Old Dominion University Human Subjects Review Committee. The data will be analyzed by comparing the mean scores for managers on each dimension and phase to the mean scores of subordinates.

The intended use of the results of this study is to inform curriculum design of management training programs within student affairs, as well as demonstrate the need to incorporate 360 degree feedback on management practices in the field. An ideal follow-up study would include the use of the SMP at specific institutions of higher education in an effort to improve management practices.

Thank you in advance for considering my request to use your instrument in my research. In addition to providing you a copy of the data and results, I will also provide Performance Programs, Inc. copies of any subsequent articles I successfully publish on this research. I look forward to hearing your response. Should you have any further questions, I can be contacted via e-mail at [jkingsle@odu.edu](mailto:jkingsle@odu.edu), via phone at 757-683-4781 (work) or 757-572-6746 (cell).

Best wishes,

Jennifer Kingsley, Ph.D. Candidate  
Old Dominion University

Cc: Dr. Dennis Gregory, Dissertation Committee Chair



## Appendix B

From: Paul Connolly [Paul@performanceprograms.com]  
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2006 4:30 PM  
To: Jennifer Kingsley  
Subject: RE: Proposal Statement Follow Up

Jennifer -

Yes, you can use the instrument ... it just has to be on our site and it can't be edited.

Paul

---

Paul M. Connolly, Ph.D.  
President, Performance Programs Inc.  
Old Saybrook, CT 06475  
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## Appendix C

### *Perceptions of Second Level Managers' Performance in Student Affairs*

Thank you for participating in this survey about the perceptions of supervisory skills and abilities of second-level professionals in student affairs. The survey will take you approximately 20 – 30 minutes. All responses will remain confidential and will only be reported in aggregate form. As a thank you for taking time to respond to this survey, you have the opportunity to enter yourself in a drawing to win one of two registrations to a professional development opportunity by clicking on the entry form in your e-mail invitation upon completion of this survey.

Section 1 of the survey asks for demographic information and general perceptions of supervisors

Section II of the survey is the *Survey of Management Practices* which asks you to rate statements about your performance as a manager or your managers' performance.

Employee Level:

- a. First Level Professional: Full-time (including ten, eleven, and twelve month appointments) student affairs employees who have never been responsible for supervising full-time staff employees within student affairs units in two-year or four-year, private or public institutions of higher-education.
- b. Second Level Professional: Full-time (including ten, eleven, and twelve month appointments) student affairs employees who have been responsible for supervising full-time staff employees, within student affairs units in four-year or two-year, private or public institutions of higher-education, for ten years or less.

Subordinates: A first level professional, as defined above.

Supervisor or manager: A second level professional, as defined above.

## Section 1. Demographics and general perceptions

1. Based on the description above, which employee level best describes your current position?
  - a. First-level professional (subordinate)
  - b. Second-level professional (supervisor/manager)
  - c. Other
    - i. Note, if other is selected the respondent will automatically taken to a page that thanks them for their participation an and ends the survey.
2. Age
  - a. 20-25
  - b. 26 – 30
  - c. 31 – 35
  - d. 36 – 40
  - e. 41 – 45
  - f. 46 – 50
  - g. 51 +
3. Gender
4. Ethnicity
  - a. African American
  - b. Asian American
  - c. Bi/multiracial
  - d. Caucasian
  - e. Hispanic/Latino
  - f. Native American
  - g. Other:
5. Highest degree attained
  - a. Bachelor's
  - b. Master's
  - c. Education Specialist Certification
  - d. Doctorate

6. Institution enrollment
  - a. 1,500 or fewer
  - b. 1,501-5,000
  - c. 5,001 – 10,000
  - d. 10,001 – 20,000
  - e. 20,0001+
7. Institution Type
  - a. 2-year public
  - b. 2-year private
  - c. 4-year public
  - d. 4-year private
8. Number of years of full-time experience in student affairs:
9. Number of full-time employees you supervise (only asked of second-level professionals)
10. Number of training session on supervision and management practices you have attended throughout your career:
11. Manager: What are the most challenging aspects of being a supervisor?;  
Subordinate: What do you perceive are the most challenging aspects facing your supervisor?
12. Manager: In what supervisory skill area(s) do you need improvement?;  
Subordinate: In what supervisory skill area(s) does your direct supervisor need improvement?

Thank you. You have completed Section 1 when you click the finish button you will be taken to Section 2. the *Survey of Management Practices*. You have indicated you are a  
(Second-level professional/First-level professional)

You are rating yourself as the manager (second-level professional). On the first question about your relationship to the manager please select “I am the manager.”

Or

You are rating your manager’s performance. On the first question about your relationship to the manager please select “I REPORT to that manager and understand my answers  
WILL NOT be identified.”

Your password for the survey is:

Please copy and paste this into the password field to access the *Survey of Management Practices*.

Refer to Table 3, in Chapter 3, for sample items from the *Survey of Management Practices*. For more information on the instrument, please contact Performance Programs Inc., 1-800-565-4223, PO Box 630, Old Saybrook, CT 06475,  
<http://www.performanceprograms.com/>.

## VITA

**Jennifer Kingsley**  
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**EDUCATION**

The University of Arizona, BSBA, 1996  
 Northern Arizona University, M.Ed., 1998  
 Old Dominion University, Ph.D., Higher Education, 2008

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE****Assistant Director for Information Technology & Assessment**

Student Affairs and Institutional Research and Assessment,  
 Old Dominion University

January 2006 - present

- Assist departments identify and develop more effective and efficient processes for manage data and office procedures.
- Coordinate and administer a campus-wide focus group research progress to gain a better understanding of the ODU community experience as a foundation for developing the Student Affairs Strategic Plan
- Design Microsoft Access databases to more effectively manage data such as tracking student progress, attendance, registration, programs, completion of assessment requirements, and other information.
- Compile, manage, and analyze assessment data, including trend analysis, and write research reports
- Develop and implement instruments to assess student satisfaction levels with activities and services for Student Affairs departments and generate statistical and analysis reports
- Assist administrators and faculty write measurable outcomes for curriculum, activities and administrative processes. Coordinate and facilitate the development of assessment plans for all Student Affairs departments
- Manage WEAVE Online assessment reporting tool, including training faculty and staff to use the assessment tool and develop annual departmental assessment plans and reports
- Assist with assessment and research projects including student retention rates and student satisfaction levels
- Compile the Dean of Student and Executive Director of Student Affairs's monthly report including highlights and attendance for each office within the Division of Student Affairs
- Design and manage web pages for Student Affairs departments and Institutional Research and Assessment and create online database registration forms

### **Coordinator for Community Service and Outreach**

Student Activities and Leadership, Old Dominion University      July 2005 - January 2006

- Maintained a database program to administer a co-curricular transcript program as well as all other database programs needed for Student Activities and Leadership
- Created and administered the assessment plan and instruments for Student Activities and Leadership and generate statistical reports
- Designed and updated the Student Activities and Leadership web site
- Established and directed the Center for Community Service
- Coordinated and implemented all community service programs including Community Care Day, Relay for Life, Monthly Service Projects, We CARE Council, and other service projects
- Advised Omicron Delta Kappa, the SGA Judicial Court, and ODU Out

### **Coordinator for Off-Campus Students**

Student Activities and Leadership, Old Dominion University      August 2001-July 2005

- Supervised the Campus Information Center Manager, the Graduate Assistant for Marketing and Commuter Programs, a staff of 13 students, and the Event Management Webb Center Scheduler
- Served as the Commuter Advocate to assist commuter students address their concerns and needs with the campus community
- Coordinated and implemented commuter programs and developed new resources, including publications, for commuter students to promote and enhance these students connection to and involvement in University events. Received over seven national awards from ACPA for these efforts.
- Managed the Off-Campus Housing Listing database program and design of a roommate preference listing
- Managed the Debut Picnic Volunteers, who served over 1200 freshman students, including recruitment, assignment of tasks, and eating locations for 7 colleges
- Co-designed and maintained a database program to administer a co-curricular transcript program as well as all other database programs needed for Student Activities and Leadership
- Designed and updated the Student Activities and Leadership web site

### **Coordinator for Student Organizations**

Student Activities and Leadership,

Old Dominion University

November 1999-August 2001

- Managed all administrative activities for the Fraternity and Sorority Community and all student organizations
- Advised Panhellenic, Fraternity Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council and the individual chapter presidents on chapter and community development in the areas of chapter operations, leadership, scholarship, member training and education, and interpersonal skills
- Advised over 180 student organizations, interim advisor for Student Senate
- Coordinated and implement the volunteer fairs and student organization fairs
- Established Relay for Life as the campus' largest community service tradition

- Designed the Student Organization U-Center that provided cubicle and storage space for student organizations
- Supervised the Graduate Assistant for Greek Life

### **Assistant Director of Leadership Development**

Student Activities, The University of Texas at Arlington

June 1998- Nov. 1999

- Advised Panhellenic and National Pan-Hellenic Councils and Interim Advisor for the Interfraternity Council on current issues and long-term development of programs
- Advised the *Panhellenic Judicial Review Board*, and created a joint council *Judicial Review Board*, to promote a community atmosphere and peer accountability
- Facilitated monthly Chapter President and Alumni Advisor meetings to discuss prominent issues facing the Greek Community, and address administrative responsibilities
- Supervised the Cheerleader Coach and the Cheerleader and Sam Maverick Mascot program
- Trained and advised the *Peer Leadership Trainers*, a group of 10 student leaders responsible for teaching a one-unit, accredited course on basic leadership skills
- Coordinated, marketed and maintained the *Campus and Community Involvement Record*, a database program that produces certified co-curricular transcripts which track students' involvement
- Advised EX-CEL Campus Activities, the campus programming board, Leadership and Development Committee, assisting in securing local and national speakers to provide educational programming for the campus community

### **Graduate Assistant for Greek Life/Educational Programming,**

Office of Residence and Greek Life,

Northern Arizona University

August 1996-May 1998

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### **PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT**

- Phi Kappa Phi, Inducted Fall 2006
- American College Personnel Association, 2003 - 2006
- Alpha Omicron Pi International Fraternity, 1993
- National Society for Success and Leadership, Board Member 2002 - 2005
- Association of Fraternity Advisors, 1996-2002;
  - Workshop and Pre-Conference Workshop Committee
- National Clearinghouse on Leadership Programs, 1998-2001
- North Texas Leadership Consortium, 1998-1999, Treasurer



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

- **NASPA's Mid-Level Managers Institute**, Duke University, NC 2004
- *"Strategies for Creating Successful Commuter Programs"* American College Personnel Association, Philadelphia, PA 2004
- *"Tracking Student Involvement: Three Solutions"* American College Personnel Association, Philadelphia, PA 2004
- **NACA Community College Retreat**, Facilitator, Towson, MD 2002
- *"Living La Vita Loca"* Leadership Lab, Norfolk, VA 2002
- *"Walkin' The Line"* Western Regional Greek Conference, Santa Clara, CA 1999;
- *"A Values Presentation on Sexual Assault"* Association of Fraternity Advisors/National Interfraternity Conference Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA 1997
- *"Risk Management...Fraternal Values?"* Bacchus and GAMMA Peer Network General Assembly, St. Louis, MO 1997
- **Western Regional Greek Conference**, Graduate Staff member, San Francisco, CA 1997
- *"Public Relations: Getting the Right Image"* Western Regional Greek Conference, 1997
- *"KXCI Audience Profile"* presented to General Manager of KXCI radio station, U of A, 1995
- *"Sharing My Ritual"* Greek Symposium, Arlington, TX 1998
- *"Does Anyone Care?"* Greek Emerging Leaders Program (GELP), NAU, 1997
- **Greek Leaders Institute**, Facilitator, NAU, 1997
- *"Public Relations: Getting the Right Image"* Western Regional Greek Conference, 1997
- *"What is Risk Management Really About: the Law or Our Brothers and Sisters?"* GELP, 1996