



**SUPERVISION SUMMIT**  
**WHAT IT TAKES: SUPERVISING**  
**PEER SUPPORT**  
**SPECIALISTS/ADVOCATES**

March 15 and March 22, 2024





**KEYNOTE PRESENTER**

**DR. PEGGY  
SWARBRICK**

**March 22, 2024**





March 22, 2023

# TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVELY SUPERVISING PEER SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

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# OBJECTIVES

By the end of this keynote, you will be able to:

- Identify the benefits of supervision for Peer Recovery Specialists.
- Apply a structured strengths-based supervision process and flow.
- Explain to staff the purpose and process of strengths-based supervision.
- Use a strengths-based tool to plan for growth.

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## QUOTE

*“Supervision is a collaborative process built on a strengths-focused connection that promotes growth”*

○ ○ SUPERVISION AND  
SUPERVISOR:  
DEFINING TERMS



# SUPERVISOR

Person in the first-line management who ***monitors*** and ***regulates*** employees in their performance of assigned or delegated tasks.

Authorized to:

- Verify staff time worked
- Recommend and/or effect hiring
- Enhance staff potential for growth and promotion
- Provide constructive feedback and /or disciplinary action as needed

# BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION



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# KEY ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

- Guide day to day work for organizational efficiency
- Ensure deadlines are met
- Treat supervisees with respect, dignity, and fairness
- Monitor performance and support HR policies
- Support and develop competence, responsibility, trustworthiness
- Provide information and transparency on decision making
- Role model leadership, support, and guidance

# ***STRENGTHS-BASED SUPERVISION/SUPERVISOR***

A **process** in which supervisors and supervisees **collaboratively** examine and build upon supervisee strengths, including cultural assets, and in which supervisee contributions to supervision are valued.

- Acknowledges competency areas
- Empowers supervisee
- Strengthens and develops competencies

*Principles:* strengths-focus, growth, connection, balance

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# PRINCIPLES OF STRENGTHS-BASED SUPERVISION

Strengths-based supervision is based on four principles.

**Strengths-focus:** Emphasizes the person's competencies and potential

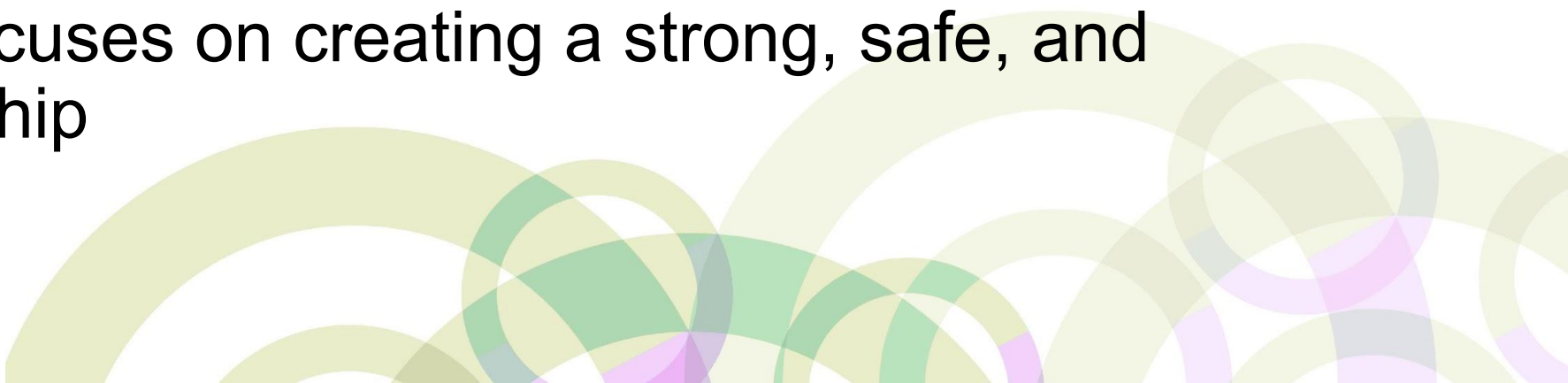
**Growth:** Assists the person in setting and achieving goals for improved job performance, increased knowledge and skill, and achievement of individual professional goals

**Connection:** Focuses on creating a strong, safe, and trusting relationship

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# PRINCIPLES OF STRENGTHS-BASED (CONTINUED)

**Balance:** Attends to all purposes of supervision:

- Administrative purpose: fosters competent completion of tasks and job duties in ways that are effective, efficient, and ethical
- Educational purpose: increases knowledge and skill relevant to the job
- Supportive purpose: collaborates to enhance professional growth and maintain positive self-care routines to avoid burnout

# EFFECTIVE STRENGTHS-BASED SUPERVISION WILL:

**Support reflective practice** through questions and discussions that encourage self-observation; awareness of motives, reactions, and biases; and identification of strengths, occupational interests, and preferences.

**Teach needed knowledge and skills**, based on job description; do not assume that everyone already has or already does what they need. Remember that people who are new at their job may need guidance and instruction about things that you do automatically without having to think about them.

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# EFFECTIVE STRENGTHS-BASED WILL (CONT.)

**Role model desired attitudes and skills.** If you expect staff to behave in a certain way, such as being patient and respectful towards people using services, then you need to demonstrate those behaviors in your supervisory relationship. Model those values and approaches in your work.

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# PURPOSE OF SUPERVISION

Competent

Effective

Peer Support Specialist  
JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

Ethical

Efficient

growth

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# FEATURES OF A GOOD SUPERVISOR

- Empathy, respect, genuineness, concreteness, self-disclosure
- Available, supportive, and noncritical
- Knowledge of and experience with the responsibilities of supervisees and the process of supervision
- Sets clear and explicit goals and uses these goals as a guide for using teaching, performance evaluation, and data collection
- Able to use a variety of effective communication skills, including direct and systematic feedback



# COMMENTS: *AVAILABILITY*

## **My supervisor should continue to:**

- have ongoing consistent supervision weekly or bi weekly.

## **My supervisor should:**

- meet with me from time to time.
- Have time for my issues
- Provide monthly supervision
- Communicate more often
- Be intentional with supervision

# COMMENTS: *RESPECT AND SUPPORT*

## **My supervisor should continue to:**

- treat me in a positive way, which she always does.

## **My supervisor should:**

- Provide encouragement and praise for performance
- Acknowledge the value I provide and allow me to train others on my team so that they can provide similar value to our partners
- Provide more acknowledgement of the numerous changes thrown our way and how we have managed, more positivity

# COMMENTS: *PROMOTING STAFF DEVELOPMENT*

## **My supervisor should continue to:**

- be a role-model as a leader
- be supportive of my goals and passions.
- have confidence in my work
- keep inspiring me by acknowledging hard my work

## **My supervisor should:**

- Give regular constructive feedback
- Focus more strongly on positive feedback
- Have a clear understanding of my roles and responsibilities as related to my job description. ask more questions about my interests related to professional growth

# COMMENTS: *BEING A ROLE MODEL*

*My supervisor would benefit from ongoing training and support with managing the office and maintaining healthy relationships with employees.*

*My supervisor should be much more organized and have a defined management and training structure in place*

# ○ CONNECTION AND COLLABORATION





# COMMUNICATION SKILLS



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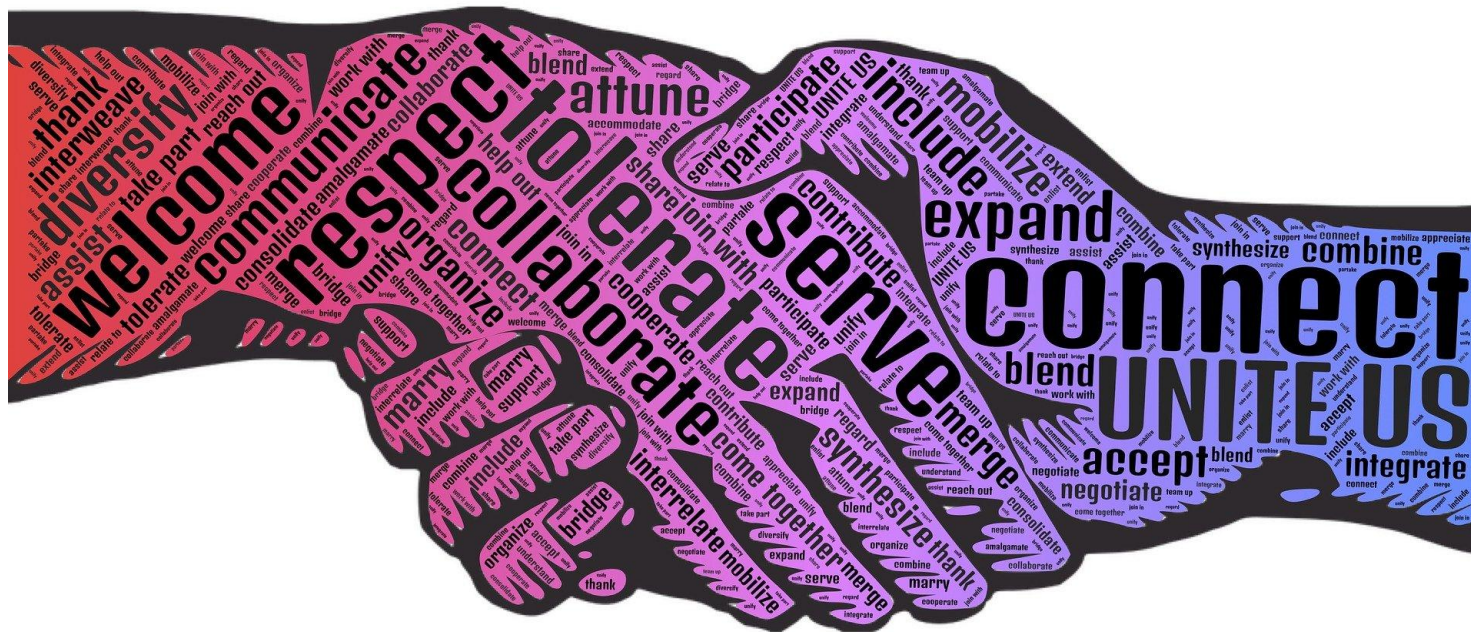


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# CONNECTION

- How do you know you are connecting?
- What do you do to build a trusting and supportive connection?



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# COLLABORATION



How do you know you have a collaborative partnership?

What do you do now (or can you do) to build a collaborative partnership?



# COMMITMENT



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# VALUES TO GUIDE SUPERVISOR

## Relationships as the means for growth and connection

- Use active listening, acknowledging what you don't know, and asking for greater understanding
- Hear/use respectful language in all conversation 

## People's potential and their ability to grow and change

- People are encouraged and expected to seek or create learning opportunities to build their skills, knowledge, and assets.



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# COMMUNICATING EXPECTATIONS

Communicating expectations requires that you:

- Are clear and specific (*observable actions*)
- Provide explicit and implicit expectations

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# DEMONSTRATING INTEREST AND RESPECT

Peer Recovery Specialists often experience a lack of inclusion and respect from colleagues—this is well documented in published literature on the peer workforce. For this reason, supervisors need to clearly show respect and also have a responsibility to educate colleagues about peer support roles.

What do YOU need to do as a supervisor to demonstrate **interest and respect** to the Peer Recovery Specialists you supervise?

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# FOSTERING SELF-REFLECTION, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Fostering self-reflection, knowledge, and skill development include:

- Asking for thoughts before sharing your opinions (*open-ended questions*)
- Guiding problem-solving rather than offer advice
- Working together to identify plans for knowledge and skill development (which may or may not involve your instruction during supervision)

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# FOSTERING SELF-REFLECTION, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

Fostering self-reflection, knowledge, and skill development also include:

- Self-disclosure - this is an important tool that Peer Support Specialists use to build relationships and promote recovery but often is discouraged as part of a clinical approach. As a supervisor, you need to be comfortable with this tool and appreciate its value. Consider using self-disclosure yourself during supervision.
- **When people talk, listen completely.**

# REQUESTING INPUT AND GIVING FEEDBACK

Building in feedback allows staff to express what can make their job better.

Ask for feedback from staff about the job and about supervision

- **Always explore staff self-assessment before providing any feedback**
- Ensure that the feedback you offer is specific, concrete, observable, and relevant to the job

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# PRAISE-POLISH-PRAISE

**Praise-polish-praise** is a method for providing feedback. You should be prepared to praise the positive use of skills learned, polish by sharing an area for continued development or improvement and end the feedback with another positive you observed.

- **Always request a self-assessment before giving feedback**
- Focus on concrete and specific behaviors and actions

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# PRAISE-POLISH-PRAISE (CONTINUED)

- Lead with strengths: What is the person doing well?
- Follow with one specific action or behavior for improvement
- End with strengths

**Why is it important to request a self-assessment before giving feedback?**

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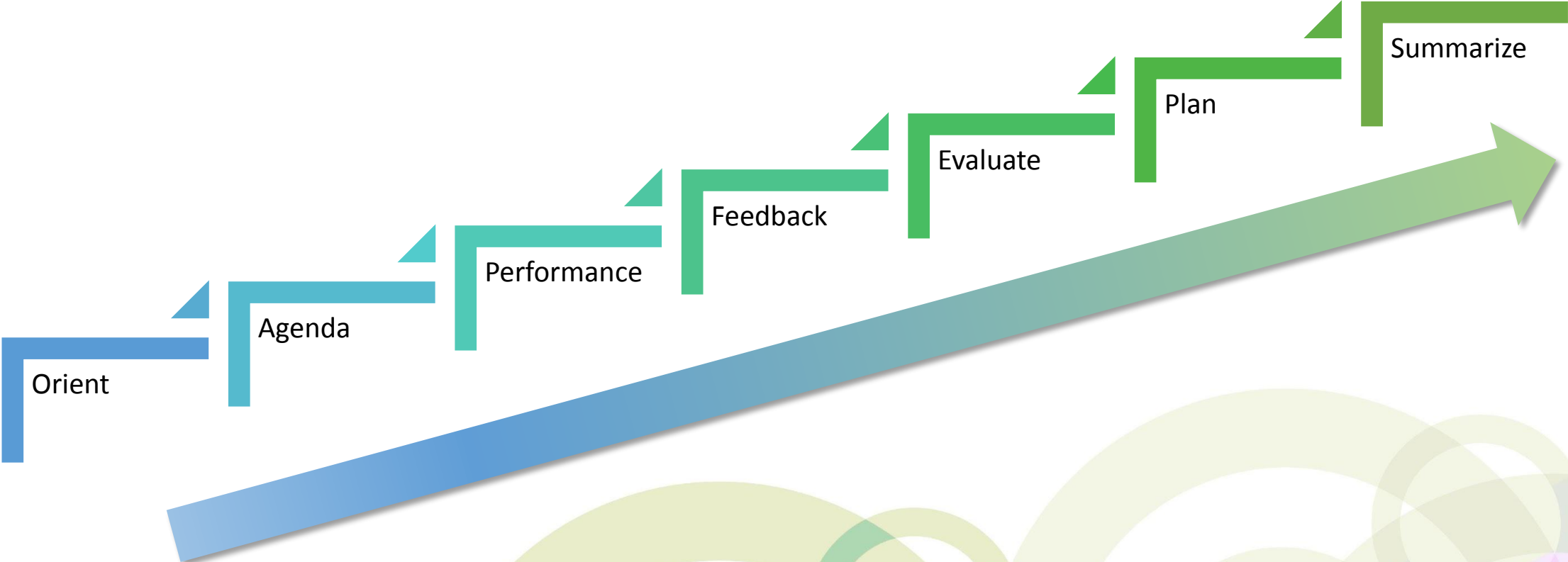
# CREATING A PARTNERSHIP

Connecting with staff requires creating a safe atmosphere built on mutual trust.

## Collaborative Agenda Setting

- *Start by asking*, “What’s on your list for us to talk about today?”
- Paraphrase and follow up with clarification questions, if needed.
- *Share your agenda*: “The things on my list are...”
- *Ask*, “Where would you like to begin?”

# FOLLOW A STANDARD PROCESS



# SUPERVISION FLOW/PROCESS CHECKLIST

Orient to today's supervision session (length of time, purpose and focus)

- Review agenda, discuss priorities
- Review individualized performance expectations and goals
- Ask staff to self-assess strengths and areas for improvement
- Explore needed support/assistance to improve or maintain performance
- Provide feedback
- Request feedback
- Plan next steps and next meeting
- Follow up with a summary email (Date sent \_\_\_\_\_)

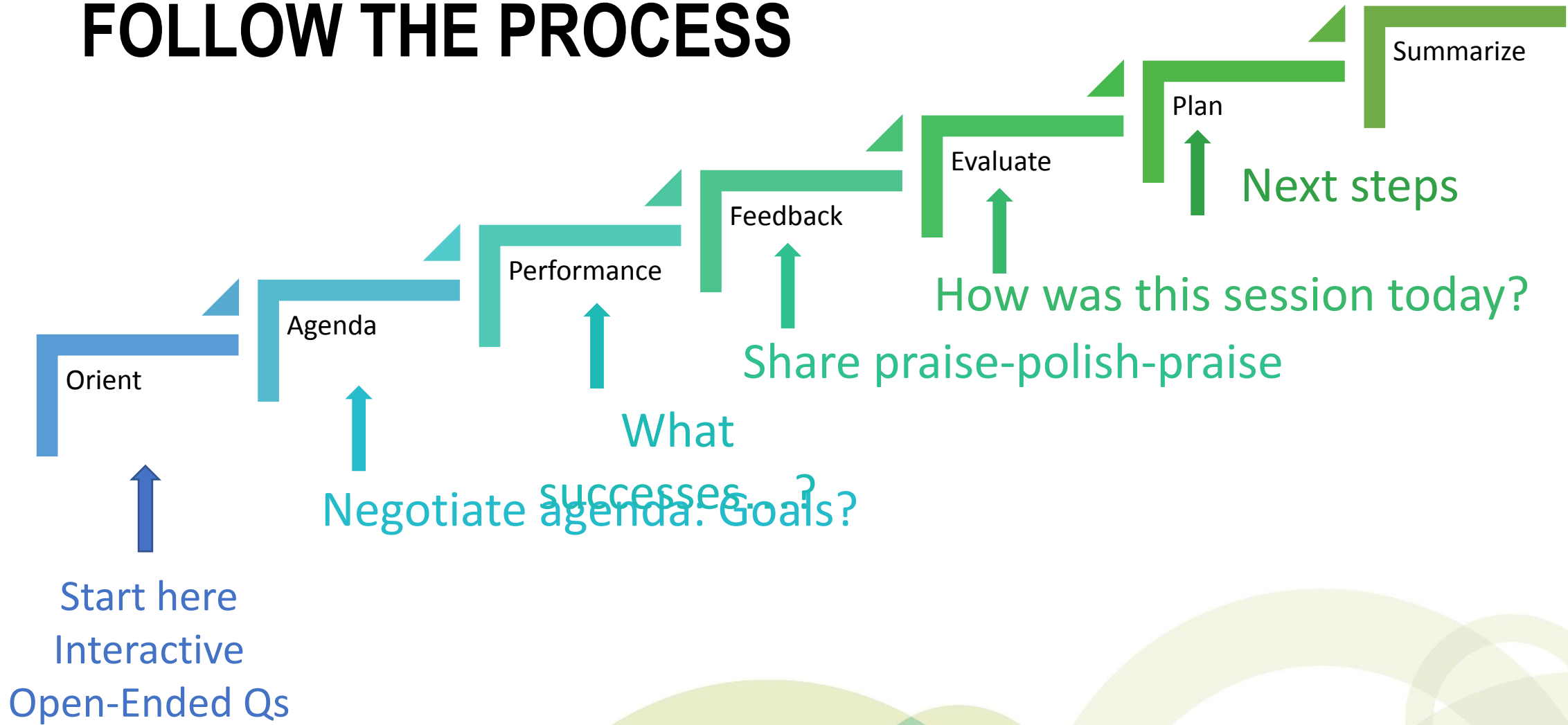
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# FOLLOW THE PROCESS



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## Supervisor Development Plan

**My greatest strengths as a supervisor:**

**Areas I would like to strengthen as a supervisor based on what I learned through this training:**

**My priority goal:**

By \_\_\_\_\_, I will  
date to achieve goal

**Check to see if your goal is SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-Limited  
If needed, rewrite your goal here:**

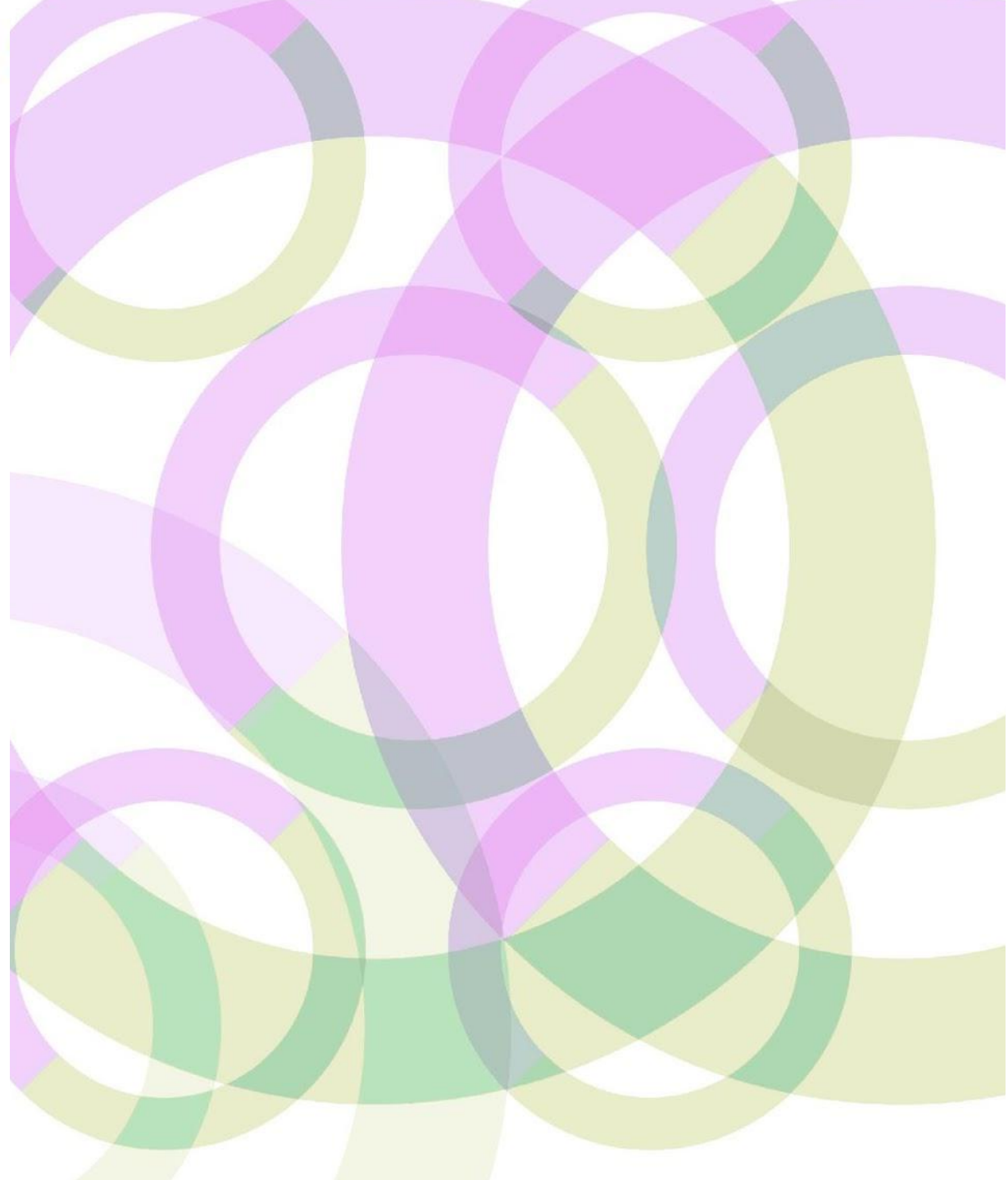
By \_\_\_\_\_, I will  
date to achieve goal

**What action steps will you take in the next MONTH to achieve this goal?  
Be sure these action steps describe specific observable skills /tasks/behaviors that you will do.**

Week	What you will do	Target Date	How you will track progress
1			
2			
3			
4			

**How can your supervisor best support you?**

**Who else will support you in achieving this goal?**



# SUMMARY

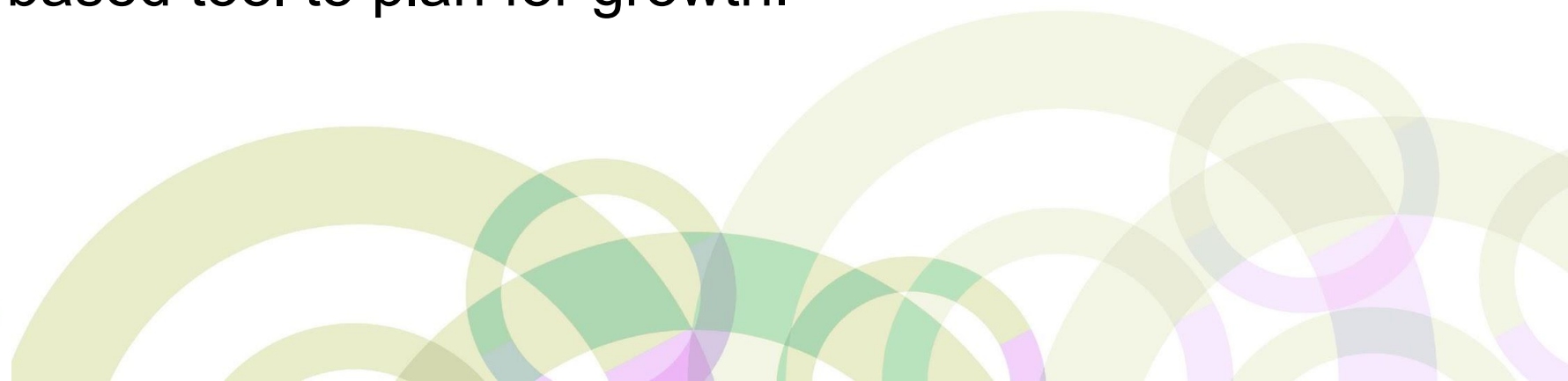
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○ Questions and  
Answers





# REFERENCES

Swarbrick, M & Spagnolo, A (2023). Peer Support Supervision Training CSPNJ [pswarbrick@cspnj.org](mailto:pswarbrick@cspnj.org)

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© **THANK YOU**





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