

**Benchmark Personal Supervision Model Assignment**

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## Abstract

There are numerous models to choose from for the counseling supervisor. It is important that the supervisor chooses a model that aligns with their counselor identity and supervision style. For the Christian counselor, most supervision models can be integrated with a Christian worldview that will help encourage the growth of the supervisee in a collaborative and supportive manner. Clear communication regarding all aspects of the supervision relationship will be paramount to the success of the supervision relationship and the skills of the supervisee.

*Keywords:* supervision, alliance building, biblical worldview, collaboration

## Learning-Based Model of Psychotherapy Supervision

When a house is being built, the most important element is laying the foundation. A solid and stable base is essential for supporting anything else on top of it. Like building a house, a strong model of supervision is fundamental for building the skills of a new counselor. Supervision provides support and stability, oversight and encouragement, inspiring growth in an environment that fosters trust and collaboration. While there are many supervision models available, the learning-based model of supervision provides a tripartite common factors model of supervision that considers the affective, cognitive, and behavioral facets of learning the role of the therapist as well as viewing that role through the lens of supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). This model contains three domains: alliance building/maintenance, educational interventions, and learning/relearning; it includes a total of fifteen elements that are critical for successful supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

There are six elements that comprise the alliance building and maintenance domain. This particular domain is considered the foundation and touchstone for the conceptualization of the entire theory (Watkins & Scaturo, 2013). The initial factor is secure base/facilitating

environment, which encourages a supervisor to provide a safe space that allows for trust and emotional containment (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). The safety of the supervisee is paramount to ensuring a successful supervision relationship. The second factor is empathy, genuineness, and positive regard: these are fundamental notions in clinical supervision and in the profession of counseling. The authors of this theory contend that modeling these foundational skills is the best remedy for supervisee fear and anxiety, as well as creating a nurturing learning environment for them (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). The third factor in alliance building and maintenance is supervisory alliance ruptures/repairs, where primary attention is given to repairing any that occur in supervision. Personal differences are identified and considered in this phase, with the hope of avoiding ruptures. However, human nature being what it is, the hope is that when they are identified, ruptures are repaired quickly and completely. The next common factor is remoralization, where the supervisor helps teach the supervisee boundaries between them and their client's pain. Through the arousal of hope, the supervisor helps the supervisee discover that the process of becoming a counselor is not linear but is developmental; this can help quell the supervisee's feelings of doubt regarding their counseling skills or abilities at any given level of competence (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). The fifth common factor is supervisee readiness and preparation, which essentially outlines the need for infusing supervision into all developmental models. This common factor is comprised of a supervisee assessment, acknowledgment of the supervisee's learning style, and carefully crafted supervision interventions tailored to the supervisee. The final common factor is corrective affective experience, which emphasizes the notion that being a good therapist requires self-regulation and self-awareness to avoid drawing the counseling away from the client and toward themselves. Supervision allows the new counselor to experience transformative learning that includes boundaries and emotional self-care

(Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

Educational interventions, the second domain, illustrate six supervision common factors.

The first is case conceptualization, which is a necessity in supervision to ensure consistency. The second is the stimulus question; it is an extension of case conceptualization and challenges the supervisee to expand their thinking with the goal of helping the supervisee become a reflective practitioner. The third common factor is feedback, another necessary tool in all supervision and is considered the “spine” in the “backbone” of supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

Feedback is conversational and should be offered in a positive and constructive manner, while always maintaining appropriate boundaries. Modeling is the next common factor, a fundamental and necessary skill for supervisors to use with supervisees. This skill is especially helpful when covering topics like supervisor multicultural expertise and ethical practice. The last common factor of educational interventions is corrective cognitive experience, which allows and encourages supervisors to be flexible in their thinking and lead supervisees to practice sound thinking instead of advice giving. This practice can help facilitate successful outcomes for their clients (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

The last domain is learning/relearning, and includes three common factors that make a feel, think, and do paradigm (Watkins & Scaturo, 2013). The first is behavioral practice and it is the cornerstone of supervision. The training includes role playing of a variety of therapist roles followed by detailed feedback of the experiences with clients; this process is crucial for incorporating all facets of conducting therapy successfully. Mental practice is the second common factor and encourages pre and post session reflections to help the supervisee grow in their skills. Lastly, corrective behavioral experience is the final common factor, and helps “unlearn” habits like interrupting, asking multiple questions, and fidgeting while listening. The

supervisor helps identify these behaviors for the supervisee to help them grow in their practice. One great benefit of this model is the ability to add or remove factors that align with their counselor identity (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

### **Role of the Supervisor**

Supervisors are entrusted with the responsibility to ensure the welfare of clients and to serve as the gatekeepers for the counseling profession (Falender et al., 2014). The supervision approach is the behavioral orientation applied by the supervisor in carrying out the supervision (Winono et al., 2021). A successful and effective supervisor must realize that they assume the responsibility both for their supervisee, but also for that of the client (Falender et al., 2014).

Supervisors must model clear communication for their supervisees, and best practices require that they include outlining sound informed consent practices and any limits of confidentiality in their supervision agreement (Borders, 2014). They also facilitate the evolution of the working alliance that helps discover the supervisee's preferred learning and communication style (Borders, 2014). Simply repeating performance without effective feedback and orientation does not necessarily lead to improved competence or outcomes for the supervisee (Falender, 2018).

Best practices for the supervisor include goal setting, giving feedback, conducting supervision, diversity and advocacy considerations, ethical considerations, documentation, evaluation, supervision format, supervisor competencies and characteristics, and supervisor preparation (Borders, 2014). While this is not an exhaustive list, it is a comprehensive illustration of what supervision entails. All the components provide experiences that are foundational to the process of learning how to practice ethically and competently as a clinician (Falender et al., 2014). Supervision is collaborative in nature and is the instructional strategy that best encapsulates the successful development of mental health professionals (Bernard &

Goodyear, 2019). The supervisor plays a dual role of consultant and teacher for the supervisee, which requires the supervisor to practice self-awareness and maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries with their supervisee (counseling.org).

Supervision through a Christian lens lays more responsibility on the shoulders of the supervisor. While ethically, a supervisor cannot impose their beliefs on their supervisee, they are free to model Christian behavior and treatment of clients in a way that fosters meaningful and respectful relationships (counseling.org). The characteristics that identify the supervisor as a Christian should hopefully be evident in their daily walk and interactions with their supervisee. Galatians 5:22 tells us that the fruit of the Spirit is “love, joy, peace, patient, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness” (Bible Socie International & International Bible Society, 2001). A supervisor is not a counselor who happens to be a Christian; being a Christian is part of their identity. As such, there cannot truly be a separation between supervisor and Christian. As counselors, we are to give unconditional positive regard to every client, and as Christians, we are to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. These are the bookends that encompass all counselor, client, and supervision relationships.

### **Philosophy**

Clinical supervision for is widely used in clinical and research contexts (Simpson et al., 2017). It is a complex psychotherapies and is built on a foundation of relationship and trust process that requires skill and balance on a variety of personal and professional levels (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). Philosophically, clinical supervision is an intervention, and recognizes that mental health professionals are more alike than different in their practice of supervision. Finally, supervision is effective in shaping supervisee competence in the practice of counseling, and

when supervisee proficiency is the goal, supervision outcomes are excellent (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

From a Christian perspective, 2 Corinthians shares that the nature of supervision is that of a servant-hearted teacher that is called to help others as a way of showing love, and Colossians illustrates to be kind to everyone, so that we may glorify God. When being a Christian is woven into our identity, it will spill over and into everything we do, including how we supervise and teach others.

### **Process of Evaluation**

Evaluation is considered the nucleus, or center, of clinical supervision and it is the umbrella under which all other clinical supervision activities occur (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). Because evaluation in the counseling profession relies heavily on interpersonal and intuitive abilities, it is crucial for supervisors to create favorable conditions for evaluation that include the following: supervisors must remember that the supervision relationship is an unequal relationship that is both supportive and evaluative. Roles of the supervisor and supervisee must be identified clearly. Supervisee anxiety should be addressed safely and openly, and individual differences between supervisor and supervisee should be discussed openly and amicably. The process of evaluation should be ongoing and collaborative and must occur within a strong administrative structure. Premature supervisee evaluations should be avoided, and supervisees should be able to participate in and observe the professional development of their supervisor. Supervisors must gatekeep the boundaries in the supervision relationship, while still enjoying their role as supervisor (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

One helpful method of evaluating a supervisee's performance through a Christian worldview is The Christian Counseling Supervision Instrument (CCSI) (Osborn & Jones, 2020).

This is a 16-item assessment that was created through a modified Delphi study that yields two factors: personal issues and theological issues (Osborn & Jones, 2020). The CCSI is a validated tool and was developed from a Christian worldview to encourage the assessment of integration into supervision (Osborn & Jones, 2020).

### **Theory of Counselor Development**

As discussed earlier, the learning-based model of supervision is one that is drawn from educational fields that supports a common-language structure for thinking about and guiding psychotherapy supervision practice (Watkins & Scaturo, 2013). Each stage of learning is coupled with a specific learning domain and style of learning and is a helpful conceptual model for considering supervision within a more unified framework (Watkins & Scaturo, 2013).

While the supervisee progresses through each domain of supervision utilizing the feel-think-do method, they will learn and relearn counseling skills and concepts with their supervisor (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). As the supervisee continues to grow in their meta-competence to assess what they know and what they don't know, they will continue to grow in self-awareness, self-assessment, self-monitoring, and self-reflection, and rely less on the direct feedback of the supervisor (Borders, 2018). The goal of therapy is to prepare for termination; perhaps that is also true of supervision. Carl Rogers shared that his major goal was to help the therapist grow in self-confidence, in understanding themselves, and to grow in understanding the therapeutic process, which is relational, genuine, and empathetic (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

The signature pedagogies of counseling are characterized by engagement, uncertainty, and formation (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). Engagement ensures that learning occurs through instructor-learner dialogue; uncertainty illustrates the personal and fluid nature of the counseling supervision process, and formation ensures that the supervisee's thought processes are clear to

the supervisor. Supervision is a complex process that requires skill and balance on many levels and is essential to the profession (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

## **Conclusion**

Supervision is a commitment and a challenge for both the supervisor and the supervisee. They enter a relationship built on trust and collaboration. To achieve success, the supervisee must assume a learning attitude that can collaborate and receive feedback in a positive manner. Recognizing that they are in the relationship to grow and learn will provide a helpful foundation on which to build their counseling skills. The supervisor role is that of a servant leader that is willing to dedicate their time, talent, and treasure to pour into the building of a future counselor. A supervisor is wise to consult others when considering a supervisee because it will cost them in many ways, but the outcome is the fruit of training the next generation of clinical counselors. The hope is that the skills instilled in the supervisee combined with a positive supervision experience, will encourage them to wear the mantle of supervision and continue the training of their next generation of counselors.

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