

PART ONE

The World of Supervision

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CHAPTER 1

Supervision



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CHAPTER 1 OUTLINE

- Introduction
- Definition of supervision
- Attributes of the successful chef supervisor
- Chef supervisory role models
- Duties and functions of the chef supervisor
- Elements of kitchen supervision
- The concept of authority
- The evolution of supervision
- Conclusions
- Summary
- Discussion questions
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CHAPTER 1 OBJECTIVES

When you complete this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Identify the central position the chef supervisor occupies in assisting the management team to reach goals and achieve quality throughout the operation
2. Identify and discuss the attributes, skills, duties, and functions of the chef supervisor
3. Outline the key elements and ingredients of a desirable kitchen work environment
4. Understand the difference between culinary skills and human skills and the role each plays in the supervisory and management process
5. Indicate trends and new dimensions associated with the development of the chef supervisor
6. Recognize the role that chef supervisors play with regard to management, customers, and team members

CASE STUDY: West Village Country Club

Jason Lightner has been the chef of the West Village Country Club (WVCC) for two years. He has increased the quality of the food served and the amount of food sales. Additionally, Jason has reduced the overall cost of food sold from 60 percent to 40 percent.

WVCC membership was 250 for five years before Jason became the chef. The past 12 months have seen renewed community interest in joining the club. During this period, membership grew to 300 and is expected to reach 400 within the next two years.

Improvement of membership numbers and food quality with reduced food cost are the results of Jason's directly supervising preparation of every item served. Jason personally develops all menus and recipes. He checks and adjusts the flavor of every food item prepared in the kitchen. As Jason himself says, "This is my food, and the quality of every item depends on me."

The club's general manager is very pleased with the improvements Jason has brought to the kitchen at WVCC. But he has mentioned to Jason his continuing concern with the high labor cost for the kitchen staff. The general manager considers the club's annual overall staff turnover rate of 50 percent to be rather high because of the number of college students used in various service positions. He also is concerned that the turnover rate for the kitchen staff for the past 12 months has been 150 percent.

Jason tells the general manager he has dismissed only one kitchen staff member in the previous six months. Jason does not conduct separation interviews since he is certain that "staff that quit simply find the work too hard and the pace too fast." Jason tells all new hires that the baseline is simple: "It is my kitchen, my food, and my rules."

Introduction

The exact English translation of the French term **chef** is "chief" or "director." The 1988 edition of *Webster's New World Dictionary* defined "chef" as "1. a cook in charge of a kitchen, as of a restaurant; lead cook, 2. any cook." But all things change, and the role and duties of the chef are no exception. In 2010, the definition in the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* (www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary) changed to "1 : a skilled cook who manages the kitchen (as of a restaurant), 2 : cook." The shift in the definition from "in charge of" to "manages" reflects the changing nature of the chef's role in the foodservice operation and the overall industry. The role of chief cook in the kitchen continues to be the foundation of the chef's responsibilities. The chef is the person responsible for the food. This is no different from the fact that keeping the financial records of the operation or company is the foundation of the financial manager's role. But what is considered the core of the positions does not reflect their true complexity. These positions are both larger and more complex. Today, the chef is expected to be not only a first-class cook who can create gastronomic masterpieces. The same chef is expected to be a supervisor who can motivate and lead the kitchen team. The chef must lead the team to maximum profits and satisfied customer. All of this must be done in a fast-paced, stressful environment. To succeed, the chef today needs the finest culinary, supervision, management, and leadership skills. This text presents and discusses the elements of supervision, management, and leadership. These elements, like great recipes, are essential to the success of today's chef.

The first step to becoming a **chef supervisor** is work ethic. The individual selected to be a supervisor must first be a good worker. Beyond this first step, qualifications for the chef supervisor's job are impressive. Chefs need to be technically competent. They need to know all aspects of professional culinary practices. These practices include the processes, equipment, and quality standards. The chef needs to know the laws and regulations that govern the kitchen. These include safety and sanitation standards and labor laws. Chefs also must know the policies of their company.

WHAT IS THIS BUSINESS? THE CHEF IN AMERICA: YESTERDAY—TODAY—TOMORROW

In the early days of our country, cooking was a domestic chore. Then, as the country expanded, inns were opened to accommodate travelers. When villages and towns expanded, community ovens were built, which were tended to by the village baker. The first commercial bakery opened in Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1640 and was operated by English and European bakers. Europe had established culinary and baking guilds as well as apprentice systems for training journeymen cooks and bakers. European-trained chefs immigrated to the United States and formed ethnic chefs associations, which provided a steady stream of chefs, cooks, and bakers to hotels and restaurants in larger cities. Over time these chefs left the hotels and restaurants to open their own family businesses.

In the American home in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, cooking was still generally a domestic chore. Families dined together each evening, with special dinners on Sundays and holidays. There was a lack of mechanical equipment and no convenience foods. Cooking and baking were very physical, requiring strength and stamina, but the joy of these dinners inspired many young men and women to develop a passion for the hospitality industry. Unlike Europe, where there was an apprentice system, work was hard to find, and most had to start as dishwashers, prep persons, or servers. In the 1930s, there were only three vocational high schools teaching culinary and baking. These schools were in New York City, Chicago, and Detroit. In 1929, the American Culinary Federation was formed in New York City. The association membership once again was mostly European-trained chefs, but unlike other chefs associations, it embraced Americans who had not completed an apprenticeship. This was the first opportunity for Americans to be mentored by European-trained chefs.

After two world wars, the American household changed. During the war effort, many women went to work, leaving less time for domestic chores. They purchased bread, pies, and precooked foods, and they dined in luncheonettes and restaurants more often. The five years following World War II created an economic expansion and opportunity for soldiers returning home. America experienced a new prosperity: two incomes in each household. Two-income families doing fewer domestic chores led to the growth of the foodservice industry; many domestic chores were replaced by purchases at restaurants, hotels, clubs, bakeries, and food markets. There is little wonder why up until 1972 cooks and bakers were listed as domestic in the dictionary of occupational trades. The American Culinary Federation was a major force in the United States Department of Labor's changing the listing in 1972 to professional.

Recognizing that the apprentice and guild system was not working in America, Francis Roth, an attorney from New Haven, Connecticut, obtained a government grant to train returning World War II Veterans. On May 22, 1946, the New Haven Restaurant School opened in New Haven, Connecticut.

Three years later Katherine Angel, the wife of James Roland Angel, President of Yale University, secured five acres on the Yale Campus. It was named the Restaurant Institute of Connecticut, and in 1951 it became The Culinary Institute of America.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. population continued to grow and become more diverse. Vocational secondary schools provided strong fundamental education in the culinary arts, and postsecondary schools trained many cooks and bakers. The period from the 1970s to the year 2000 would provide great opportunities for young culinarians. Throughout America, hundreds of high schools and colleges started offering a culinary education; this formal education replaced the European apprentice system. These schools taught culinary fundamentals and hospitality skills needed to keep pace with America's expanding market basket and menu diversity. The establishment of organized training programs gave professional recognition to cooks and bakers. In world competitions, American teams finished consistently in the top three. Certification programs were developed to verify skill levels in cooking and baking. Colleges and universities offered advanced degrees in managerial skills, which helped to improve the work environment. Every American with a passion for cooking and baking could obtain the knowledge to become a professional chef.

Chefs in the future will face many challenges. The chef will need to develop skills in workforce management, providing a more harmonious and productive environment, less demanding work schedules, and improved salaries for entry-level workers as well as adequate benefit packages. As the chef faces more competition and a demanding public, the key to profit will be utilization of food and resources, communications, and marketing. Together with these challenges will be more opportunities. Future chefs should begin their education and work experience in grades 9–12 at a technical high school, followed by two to three years of postsecondary schooling, five years' work experience, and a baccalaureate degree in hospitality. During this training period, they should travel as much as possible, studying local, regional, and international market baskets and menus, and developing tasting skills and knowledge by reading when travel is not possible. Grandiose opportunities may appear early in one's career, but caution is advised; build your career with a strong foundation of culinary fundamentals and a strong work ethic. It is estimated that you will have to stay in the workforce longer and will change your job three or four times during your career, which is much different from yesterday's chefs, who often spent 30 to 40 years with one company. The twenty-first century will provide great opportunity for those chefs who are properly trained.

—Chef Noble Masi, CMB, CEPC, CCE,
AAC, HOF (1938–2015)

In general, chef supervisors fail because they can't get others to work effectively. The failure is rarely because of their culinary skills. Chef supervisors fail because they lack good people skills. The chef supervisor is always working with others to satisfy guests. If the chef creates a workplace where trust and the Golden Rule are the standard, staff members will give their best effort, achieving more and enjoying their work.

Definition of Supervision

Simply put, a **supervisor** is anyone in the position of directing the work of others and who has the authority that goes with this responsibility. The legal status is defined by the federal Taft–Hartley Act (1947), which states that a supervisor is

. . . any individual having authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward or discipline other employees, or responsibility to direct them, or to adjust their grievances, or effectively to recommend such action, if in connection with the foregoing the exercise of such authority is not merely routine or clerical in nature, but requires the use of independent judgment.

The knowledge and skills required to be a successful chef supervisor fall into four broad skill categories. Those categories are personal, interpersonal, technical, and administrative.

To be a supervisor, the chef needs the vision to know what to do. They need certain skills to know how to do it. The chef supervisor must have the ability to get it done by empowering other people to carry out quality standards of performance. The chef supervisor plans, organizes, communicates, trains, coaches, corrects, and leads. The chef must motivate the kitchen team to meet the company's goals and objectives. These goals and objectives are reached by supervising people in an effective and caring way. The supervisor accepts responsibility for providing a positive workplace. The chef provides the resources needed to achieve meals and service that meet and exceed customers' expectations every time.

Philip Crosby, a leading management expert, states that “in the final equation, the supervisor is the person the employee sees as the company. The type of work accomplished and the attendance maintained by employees are very much indications of their relationship with the supervisor.”¹ Crosby suggests that a good supervisor can overcome, at least to some extent, the poor management practices of a weak company. At the other extreme, a weak supervisor can offset the good management practices of a good company.

Supervision is the act not of controlling the staff members, but rather of directing, coaching, and supporting them. The chef's performance as supervisor is measured by a variety of factors. These factors include customer satisfaction and customer retention. The factors also include the kitchen staff's ability to carry out the workload to meet and exceed set standards of quality. Poor chef's supervisory skills negatively affect the quality of the food produced and the work climate, all of which results in unhappy kitchen staff and customers. The outcome is high levels of employee turnover.

Attributes of the Successful Chef Supervisor

Today's chef supervisor, in addition to being an excellent cook, must possess a strong personal inventory of personal and professional qualities. An example of the chef supervisor's *mise en place* of personal inventories is shown in Figure 1-1. Today's chef supervisor is still a take-charge individual, but approachable. The management style that works

- Positive personal attitude
- Innovativeness in dealing with problems
- Honesty and sincerity
- Awareness of employee problems
- Respect and courtesy in communicating with employees
- Impeccable personal hygiene and grooming
- Technical competence
- High motivation with the ability to motivate others
- Consistency
- Assertive and action oriented
- Acceptance of diversity
- Ability to trust others
- Constant search for new ways to enhance skills
- Ability to praise others when deserved
- Leadership by example
- Team-building skills
- Loyalty to organizational goals and employees
- Ability to maintain control
- Good listening skills
- Desire to please customer
- Good persuasive skills and interest in imparting knowledge
- Love of cooking

FIGURE 1-1

Mise en place for the chef supervisor.

best for the chef supervisor is that of **coaching**. According to Bill Marvin, a respected restaurant consultant and author, “Coaches help bring out natural talent and measure their own success by the success achieved by their players.”² In all good coaching, the coach, chef, tries to get the best possible performance from the team, staff, by motivating the team members. Communication and training also are critical components of coaching. The coach demonstrates respect for each team member. The coach not only manages, but also leads the team. The good coach maintains an acute awareness of each staff member’s strengths and weaknesses. In the past, chefs were viewed as supervisors who ruled the kitchen with a rod of iron. Today, the chef must lead, not just rule.

Chef supervisors need to be able to bring all these qualities to the workplace. Chefs must be able to coach and supervise under the pressures of busy meal service periods. The chef supervisor should have the ability to understand the feelings, attitudes, and motives of others. The chef must communicate effectively. Good relations with the kitchen team and all other departments in the company are critical. These attributes apply whether the chef is employed in a restaurant, hotel, institution, club, the military, education, or any other foodservice organization.

Chef Supervisory Role Models

Professionalism and ethics are essential in the chef supervisor. **Ethics** refers to the moral principles of individuals and society. **Professionalism** is the conduct or actions that characterize a profession positively. Together with professionalism, ethics is concerned with the determination of right and wrong in human behavior. The actions of the chef supervisor affect the staff being supervised and the management of the property. Equally important, the chef supervisor’s actions affect the health and safety of the public being served. Although the effect of the chef supervisor’s actions can be positive or negative, according to Dr. Christine Lynn, “Ethical behavior is recognized as resulting in good business with increased profits and reduced turnover.”³

An **ethical code of professional practice** is necessary for both employees and supervisors. According to Jernigan, “It serves as a framework in which various other standards can be evaluated.”⁴ Professional practices include policies. A **policy** is a statement of how the individual is to handle specific matters. Policies are created by companies to address a number of issues. The issues include the areas of hiring or firing and confidentiality. Policies are also created to address stealing and lying. A major concern in policy making is any action that causes the loss of human dignity. Actions in this area can include malicious gossip; harassment; and racial, gender, or ethnic slurs.

The chef supervisor should establish a code of professional practice. This code must be applied fairly and without bias to all employees regardless of their position, gender, and ethnic or religious backgrounds.

History has provided us with examples of outstanding chef supervisors as role models. These chefs are known for their culinary ability and advancement of culinary art. They advanced culinary art through new gastronomic creations, techniques of cooking, improvements in kitchen design, and contributions in nutrition. Besides being culinary inspirations, they also were excellent managers and leaders. They practiced a high level of professionalism and were supervisors, trainers, and coaches. Consequently, the legacy of these chefs goes beyond their food. They are true role models for the chef of today.

Antoine Carême, one of 25 children, was born of poor parents in France in 1784. It is generally believed that he was placed in the kitchen as a scullion (kitchen helper) between the ages of 7 and 10. He taught himself how to read and write, and went on to write several books before his death at the age of 50. From his writings, we get a sense of his professionalism. Describing a banquet, he provides a glimpse of the awful working conditions chefs had to endure at that time:

Imagine yourself in a large kitchen such as that of the Foreign Minister at the moment of a great banquet [Talleyrand was Foreign Minister at the time]. There one sees twenty chefs at their urgent occupations, coming, going, moving with speed in this cauldron of heat. Look at the great mass of live charcoal, a cubic meter for the cooking of the soups, the sauces, the ragouts, the frying and the bain maries. Add to that the heap of burning coals in front of which bears a sirloin weighing 45–60 lbs, and another two for fowl and game. In this furnace everyone moves with tremendous speed; not a sound is heard; only the chef has the right to make himself heard, and at the sound of his voice everyone obeys. He concludes by saying, . . . “Honor commands, we must obey even though physical strength fails. But, it is the burning charcoal which kills us.”⁵

Carême’s power and influence is due not only to his writings and culinary creations, which still survive today, but also to his character and personality. His professionalism throughout his life asserted a new prestige for the chef. He was an innovator and simplifier who demonstrated all the elements of an outstanding chef leader and supervisor.

Alexis Soyer, born in 1809, lived almost exactly as long as the great Carême. Soyer was the chef at London’s Reform Club for many years. While there, he was sent by the British government to Ireland during the potato famine to establish soup kitchens. He donated funds from these kitchens to charitable work. He also gained fame by traveling to the Crimea during the war there between the British, French, Russians, and Ottoman Turks. While in the Crimea, he worked with the famous nurse Florence Nightingale to improve food preparation for the troops. In addition, he authored cookbooks priced for the poorer classes. He invented a military cooking stove that was still in use during World War II. Soyer was an outstanding example of a chef leader. He could hold his own among the professional class of his time by his personal qualities as much as by his culinary skills. He helped to further enhance the image of the chef through his writings and his superb organizational skills and leadership abilities.

Auguste Escoffier, known as the “King of Chefs” and the “Chef of Kings,” dominated the first quarter of the twentieth century. He continues to influence chefs and the culinary arts to this day. Escoffier is perhaps still the greatest role model for chefs as a culinarian. He was a chef supervisor and coach who cared about his staff. He was a man whose talents dovetailed into the trends of his times.

Economic and social forces were changing in the early part of the twentieth century, as were the dining and drinking habits of society. Escoffier was in tune with the needs of his time. He was prepared to go with trends and appreciated the importance of anticipating them. He refined and simplified classic cuisine, and he also created dishes that have become part of classic cuisine.

Escoffier was a pioneer in the movement toward what Chef Casey Sinkledam would later term “simple but elegant.” He believed in the simple concept that food should look and taste like food. Escoffier applied his beliefs to his kitchen and brought about change that helped to shape the modern kitchen. It was he who created the “partie system.” This system streamlined the work flow and processes of the foodservice industry. Some of his beliefs and innovations are shown in Figure 1-2.

Escoffier’s book *Le Guide Culinaire* is still one of the most widely respected textbooks for professional chefs. In the foreword of his text, he states:

“. . . the more one learns the more one sees the need to learn more and that study, as well as broadening the mind of the craftsman, provides an easy way of perfecting himself in the practice of our art.”⁶

Having started his career at the age of 12 (in 1859), Escoffier retired from active duty at the Carlton in London in 1921. He was then 74 years old and had practiced his art for over 62 years.

Ferdinand Metz has influenced how food is prepared around the globe today. Chef Metz was president of the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) from 1980 to 2001. He initiated the development of extensive educational and training programs for aspiring culinarians in the United States and around the world. He was a leader in the establishment of apprenticeship and certification in the United States.

Chef Metz, through his work at the CIA and his activities in the American Culinary Federation (served as president), the National Restaurant Association, the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (served as chair), the World Association of Chefs’ Societies (served as president), and other organizations, has been a major factor in the elevation of the culinary profession around the world. He was the manager of the American Culinary Olympic Team and led it to three consecutive world championships. In 1995, *Nation’s Restaurant News* named Chef Metz as one of the 50 most influential people in the industry. He has, by example, established that the chef is a professional, an educator, and a business person.

Chef Metz has been recognized in many ways for his contributions to the profession. He is the recipient of both the James Beard and the American Culinary Federation

- Moved the kitchen out of its traditional location in the basement
- Created the *partie* system
- Insisted on the highest standards of personal hygiene from all staff
- Required that cooks wear the newly fashioned jacket and check pants
- Discouraged his staff from smoking and drinking
- Advocate of education
- Strongly supported schooling for employees
- Proponent of lifelong learning
- Began the standardization of recipes

FIGURE 1-2

Beliefs and innovations of Escoffier.

WHAT IS THIS BUSINESS? CAN ANYONE EVER BE OVERQUALIFIED?

The obvious answer to this question is, of course, a resounding NO. An individual may sometimes have more qualifications than a current responsibility demands, but surely can never be overqualified in anticipation of future career opportunities. Consequently, it would seem prudent to take advantage of every opportunity that presents itself, whether it is convenient at the time or not.

This is easier said than done, but it is exactly the path that the author of this text, Dr. Jerald Chesser, and I took.

Dr. Chesser realized early on that today's chefs need more credentials, in the area of both experience and academics. I am sure that it was not easy for the author, a certified chef on several levels, to earn an Ed.D., which made him unique among his peers.

In my case, when I joined the H.J. Heinz Company's R&D department, I enjoyed, for the first time in my life, regular "office" hours. Rather than becoming spoiled by this newfound luxury, I enrolled at the University of Pittsburgh and earned a baccalaureate and a master's degree in business administration over a seven-year period.

Nonetheless, I did not neglect my responsibilities at Heinz and to the Pittsburgh Chefs Association, as we established the national models for today's Certification, Apprenticeship, and

Master Chef certification programs. In addition, managing the U.S. Culinary Olympic Team and my own Gourmet Cooking School understandably kept my plate full.

As the result of all these activities, in the early 1980s I was the only person in the United States who was a Certified Master Chef and had an MBA. These credentials and others gave me the opportunity to lead the R&D department of a global company and later to assume the presidency of the Culinary Institute of America, which I held for over 22 years. My earning of additional credentials was never motivated by the goal of heading up the most prestigious culinary school in the country; rather, it was the uniqueness of my qualifications that qualified me for that position.

Students who have the opportunity to combine a specialized craft with academic credentials make themselves more valuable in their chosen field and gain a broader and more inclusive perspective for themselves. It is not by accident that many academic institutions today have come to value the concept of a SPECIALIZED LIBERAL ARTS program, which recognizes the need for specific skills combined with academic credentials.

—Ferdinand Metz, MBA, CMC, AAC, HOF
Managing Partner, Master Chefs' Institute

Lifetime Achievement Awards and is a member of the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation's College of Diplomates. As an author and speaker, he continues to be a leader in the culinary profession.

Paul Bocuse is considered one of the finest chefs of the twentieth century. He continues in the twenty-first century to influence cuisine and food preparation. He was one of the founders of the *nouvelle cuisine* movement in France in the 1970s. This cuisine is simpler and lower in calories than the traditional *haute cuisine*. *Nouvelle cuisine* stresses the importance of fresh ingredients of the highest quality. Chef Bocuse has influenced the preparation of food through a chain of brasseries (restaurants) under his license.

Chef Bocuse was one of the first chefs to make public appearances away from his restaurant to promote the preparation of food. He also has authored numerous books. In 1987, he established the Bocuse d'Or. The Bocuse d'Or is considered one of the most prestigious culinary awards in the world today. Through his extensive endeavors, Chef Bocuse has had a major impact on culinarians of today.

To be a leader in any profession, it is necessary to model a high standard of ethics and professional practice. Food workers who lack ethics and professionalism are a threat. They are a threat to the image of the foodservice industry. More importantly, they are a threat to the health and safety of the public. True culinary professionalism will always embrace high ethical standards.

Duties and Functions of the Chef Supervisor

In the past, chef supervisors reported mainly to the food and beverage manager. In many foodservice establishments, this manager supervised all food and beverage operations. Kitchen operations were a major portion of this manager's responsibilities. The food and beverage manager, or some higher level of management, usually

evaluated the chef supervisor. The criteria for evaluation were limited to achieving a targeted food cost percent and producing meals smoothly with a minimum of customer complaints. Provided that these criteria were achieved, the manner in which they were achieved was left up to the chef. The manager made all other major decisions. These included menu positioning as well as personnel decisions dealing with recruitment, orientation, training, and termination. Today, the responsibilities of both the chef and manager have changed. The duties of the chef as a supervisor have expanded to include personnel decisions.

The modern chef exercises greater decision-making power. With the power to make decisions comes greater responsibility. The chef must be more than a highly skilled culinarian. The chef must be a supervisor. This means the chef must be a coach who develops people. The chef also must be a team builder. Today's chef is part of the management team of the operation.

Traditionally, the chef supervisor was viewed as the person who supervised the foodservice operation from the back door to the front door. The supervisor's primary duty was overseeing the receipt of food products at the back door and then their processing into a customer meal at the front door. Quality human resources management involving the kitchen staff as a team was not a major concern. Consequently, this system was **authoritarian** by nature. Directives and orders were given with little or no input from employees and even less interest in what the customers had to say. The modern chef supervisor, however, is a team leader who exhibits a different style of management. This style of management is still focused on the kitchen but goes beyond food preparation.

The chef supervisor as an unreasonable, temperamental artist, as historically portrayed, has no place in the modern foodservice industry. In fact, this type of conduct never has had a place there, nor will it be tolerated by management or staff today. Foodservice workers, like other workers, need to be recognized as contributing team members. They want to know what their chef supervisor expects of them. As in other areas of industry, kitchen employees need a workplace where communication is frequent and encouraged. The employee needs a workplace in which they can develop a sense of belonging. Even-handed and fair treatment is required from the chef supervisor. Employees want to give their best, so it's up to the chef supervisor to provide a work climate that helps them do so. This is vital because a chef supervisor's success depends on his or her staff.

The principal driving force behind the modern chef is customer satisfaction. Today's chef manages the culinary operation from the front door to the back door rather than the other way around. One of the main reasons customers stop coming to a foodservice establishment is an attitude of indifference by the staff. It makes little sense to prepare food that customers don't want. The chef should be aware of customers' preferences and be trained in all the contributing elements of customer satisfaction.

Supervising the functions involved in food production comprises many elements, some new, and others not. Many of these elements, such as rationalization, downsizing, risk management, yield management, management by objective, and so on, have swung with the pendulum of different management fads over the years. Several of them, however, remain part of a chef supervisor's arsenal of skills.

Elements of Kitchen Supervision

Supervising

Supervision is concerned with the most effective and timely use of personnel and materials to achieve goals. The goals of the chef supervisor focus on customer satisfaction and retention. These goals are achieved by maintaining a highly motivated, well-trained kitchen team.

- Preparing new employee induction/orientation programs
- Assessing training needs
- Preparing training objectives
- Developing standards of performance
- Implementing standards of total quality
- Ongoing and continuous training and team building
- Coaching and correcting employees
- Setting high standards of personal hygiene and grooming
- Setting excellent standards of conduct and fairness
- Developing and encouraging teamwork
- Providing decisive leadership
- Building and fostering professional pride
- Providing timely employee feedback on performance
- Encouraging a desire to meet and exceed customer expectations
- Demonstrating a total quality respect for all kitchen team members

FIGURE 1-3

Elements of the chef supervisor's duties.

A major part of being a supervisor is clearing away obstacles and providing the resources the team needs to accomplish the declared goals and objectives. The goals and objectives must be clear and well defined. Another part of being a supervisor is the recruiting and interviewing of potential kitchen team members. Other elements of the chef supervisor's general duties are shown in Figure 1-3. In future chapters, you will study the various elements of supervision.

Planning

Following the Allied Forces' successful invasion of Europe during World War II, it was suggested to General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme commander of the successful invading forces, that he must have had an outstanding plan to have carried out such a massive operation. The operation involved moving thousands of men and equipment with all the ancillary support of materials and men. His response to this suggestion was most enlightening: "The plan is nothing, but planning is everything."⁷

A **plan** can be defined as a carefully considered and detailed program of action to achieve an end. The development of a plan that can be communicated and then executed requires three steps. The three steps are information gathering, analysis of the information, and development of the program of action. The process requires the supervisor to stop, look, and listen. This allows a broader and more long-term view of the current situation and potential future situation. Planning is very different from "firefighting." **Firefighting** is the solving of problems as they arise without consideration of the base cause of the problems. Firefighting does not achieve long-term goals. To plan, the supervisor must make the time to plan.

The chef supervisor obviously needs to plan menus, but this is only part of the chef supervisor's planning responsibilities. Extensive planning is required to run a smooth, efficient foodservice operation. The major areas of planning for the chef supervisor include:

- Setting and communicating standards of performance
- Communicating clear job expectations
- Determining training needs
- Planning and forecasting workloads
- Preparing employee work schedules
- Ascertaining guest satisfaction levels
- Planning equipment repair and replacements

- Determining food and supply inventories
- Developing employee empowerment programs
- Planning future personnel levels
- Providing effective communication with team members and other departments
- Conducting employee performance appraisals

The chef supervisor's execution of each of these areas of planning will have an impact on the success of the team and the operation.

Organizing

A quality plan is the basis for good organization. Good organization is needed to carry out a plan. One of the chef supervisor's key roles is the organizing of people and materials to succeed in completing the plan. This happens through good organizational ability on the part of the chef supervisor. Carrying out the plan requires using the available resources and being prepared to adapt as circumstances and conditions warrant. Typical organizational goals of a kitchen department include:

- Organizing the kitchen team to:
 - produce and serve meals in the most efficient, economical, and effective fashion
 - utilize each team member within a limited time period and within criteria of effort and productivity
- Defining job tasks, analyses, and descriptions
- Preparing task lists to accomplish the planned goals
- Determining relationships with each member of the kitchen team together with management, other departments, and customers
- Organizing support areas of purchasing, receiving, storage, and stewarding
- Organizing training sessions
- Organizing and implementing employee empowerment and reward systems
- Organizing and implementing recycling programs

Coaching

Coaching is the guiding, supporting, and correcting of kitchen staff to perform their jobs in a way compatible with the organization's goals and objectives. It means creating a workplace in which staff members feel comfortable enough to give their best. Good coaching requires excellent communication and leadership skills. More importantly, coaching requires chef supervisors who trust people. To succeed as a coach, a chef supervisor should be consistent and not subject to wild mood swings. The chef supervisor must work to be fair at all times. The chef supervisor must be firm in dealing with performance issues, when appropriate, yet still be approachable and friendly. As the link between management and staff members, the chef supervisor needs to believe in the "team" concept. A good coaching style involves:

- A positive people attitude
- An interest in helping people attain personal goals
- Respect for the dignity of every individual in the team
- Sincerity, honesty, fairness, and impartiality
- Sensitivity and respect for different cultures
- Strong ethical and moral values
- An emphasis on the future rather than the past

- Praise where praise is due
- Correction of mistakes without apportioning blame

Effective supervision requires adaptability combined with quality coaching. This combination will allow the team to succeed and consistently achieve guest satisfaction.

Team Building

Kitchen employees can be developed into teams with the help of a committed chef supervisor. In an effective kitchen team, each member has an assigned role. When the members integrate their skills to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses, foodservice quality objectives are assured. On the other hand, when members of the kitchen staff are poorly led and work as individuals, they often will fail. Unfortunately, many chef supervisors today fail to recognize their roles as team builders. In the past, many have not understood how to transform their employees into productive teams.

Teamwork is effective at all levels. It is just as important among top executives as among kitchen employees. If the chef supervisor does not place a high value on teamwork, it will not occur. Teamwork takes conscious effort to develop and continuous effort to maintain. Part of this maintenance is recognition of team performance through celebration of positive performance. There also must be acknowledgment of

CHEF TALK **“COACHING”**

Building a successful kitchen team requires a great deal of patience and a lot of time and effort. Years ago, when I took over at Harpoon Louie’s (6 million dollars a year in sales), I found a kitchen staff without a single professional chef on board. My first step was to recruit four experienced chefs who had worked with me before and understood what needed to be done.

With the four on board, a foundation was set. The professional chef’s uniform was mandatory for all kitchen cooks. The fryer cooks, broiler cooks, and all other cooks were terminated, and those who were interested in becoming professional chefs were rehired as apprentices. No specialized positions were offered until such time as all the cooks had become competent in all areas of the kitchen.

Hiring procedures were developed and implemented. Crucial to these new procedures was the hiring of kitchen team members who had a real and genuine interest in cooking. We started our formal apprenticeship program soon afterward under the auspices of the American Culinary Federation Educational Institute.

Constant coaching, in-house cooking classes, and encouragement of our apprentices to compete in professional chef competitions were key to bonding the team together. Once the team was in place and working, employee retention became a priority. As common in other establishments, financial reward alone does not guarantee retention. It is vital to be sympathetic to the needs of the team, which can be very demanding, but with careful motivation a team spirit can be maintained.

Respect is key. It has a tremendous bearing on what type of coach you are. Unskilled employees in the kitchen are a vital part of the foodservice operations. How these team members are treated has a dramatic impact on their performance level. The coach must be sure to communicate with these team members on a regular basis—coaching, correcting, and offering words of encouragement. Chefs who have to wash their own pots know how important their team members are and have a great deal of respect for them. I very clearly see myself as a coach rather than a manager. Today’s kitchen staff should be led rather than managed or directed. Without a team approach at our restaurant, we would not be successful.

—Kenneth G. Wade, CEC, AAC,
Palm Beach, FL

negative performance and assistance in correcting it. A team that is properly trained and is working in a positive environment will require less direct supervision. The team will not need to be micro-managed. Central to team building is investment in the individual and the team. The chef supervisor who ensures that the team has the training, equipment, and guidance to succeed will in fact experience success.

Communication

Communication is a basic and essential element of the supervision process. Supervision often breaks down or fails because of poor communication. All elements of supervision and management require effective communication. The challenge that must be addressed is the difference that often exists between what is said and what is heard. The communication process involves a sender and a receiver exchanging and understanding information so that the information can be received and understood.

Communication is the foundation for understanding, cooperation, and action. A good communication system maintains a two-way flow of ideas, opinions, information, and decisions. The first step in any effort to open communication is to establish and maintain a climate that encourages the free exchange of ideas. It is the umbrella under which all effective supervision lies.

Delegation

Delegation means granting to a kitchen team member the authority to oversee specific tasks and responsibilities. This includes letting other team members know that these responsibilities have been delegated to this team member. Just telling a team member to perform a task is not delegation; it is assigning work. Assigning work may be sufficient for simple, short-term jobs, but more complex tasks that require a sustained effort should be delegated.

Before delegating, the chef supervisor should answer the following questions:

- Does the team member understand the purpose of the task?
- Is the value of the task recognized by the team member?
- Is the workload too much for just one person?
- Has the employee been provided with detailed, step-by-step instructions?
- Has the employee been given the resources needed to accomplish the task?
- How will satisfactory completion of the tasks be evaluated and measured?

Chef supervisors should not “delegate” those portions of their work they consider unpleasant, unimportant, or risky. Kitchen team members are seldom deceived by the chef supervisor’s efforts to “dress up” the task. What usually results from such a practice is resentment, and the team member’s motivation to do the task will decrease. The end result is often a team member trying to avoid or off-load the task.

In addition, before delegating, it is useful to consider:

- Is there acceptance and understanding of the task?
- Has a reason for the delegation been given?
- Is the task being delegated a worthwhile and whole task?
- Can the team member be trusted and encouraged to do the job correctly?
- Have checkpoints been built in to check progress?
- Has knowledge been shared by pinpointing possible problems?
- Has information been withheld that could have simplified and speeded up the task?
- Have sufficient training, encouragement, coaching, and leadership been provided to make the team member look good and succeed?

Delegation by the chef supervisor encourages cooperation among kitchen team members. It demonstrates trust in the team while building morale. The advantage of delegating is that the workload is spread in a planned, orderly way. It allows more time for creating and planning. The chef supervisor who tries to do everything personally will not succeed. The support of the kitchen team is essential. It is impossible for a chef supervisor to prepare, cook, and present every meal every day. The chef supervisor who fails to delegate to other team members will be frustrated, unproductive, and viewed as a weak leader by the entire kitchen team.

Empowerment and Ownership

Empowerment is the process of enabling people to do what they have been trained for and are qualified to do. Empowerment leads to a feeling of ownership. A team member who has a feeling of ownership—a personal stake in the operation—will work harder to make the operation a success. Empowering kitchen team members to take more initiative is an important part of team building. It is a basic piece of quality supervision and management. There is no better way to create a shared vision and to generate commitment and loyalty than through empowerment and the feeling of ownership. The goal is a team member who has “buy-in.” This is when the team member feels they have had a part in creating the vision of the company. They believe there is respect for their ideas. The team member feels the chef supervisor recognizes their contribution to the company’s success. The “buy-in” will lead to continuous improvement and innovation.

In 1992 and in 1999, the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company won the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. The Ritz-Carlton is the only hotel company to date (2011) to have been awarded this prize. Part of their winning strategy in 1992 was called “applied employee empowerment.” According to Horst Schulze, the Ritz-Carlton’s chief operating officer, “all our employees are empowered to do whatever it takes to provide instant pacification. No matter what their normal duties are, other employees must assist if aid is requested by a fellow worker responding to a guest’s complaint or wish.”⁸ When the Ritz-Carlton won the award in 1999, as part of the company’s employee empowerment program, every employee was empowered to spend up to \$2000 to immediately correct a problem or handle a complaint.⁹ This policy is still in place at Ritz-Carlton.

The biggest challenge to the concept of empowerment and ownership is its acceptance by chef supervisors. The position of chef has long been associated with power and control. This concept is changing now and will continue to change in the future. Team building and employee “buy-in” have become key components of supervision and management throughout the hospitality industry and in many kitchens.

Sanitation

Food safety is clearly an important issue for the chef supervisor. According to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study, in 2014, there were 864 foodborne illness outbreaks resulting in 13,246 confirmed cases of foodborne illness and 21 deaths.¹⁰ This study only addressed outbreaks, which means incidents where two or more people were involved. In a previous report, the CDC indicated that over 6 million people become ill from contaminated food annually in the United States, and almost 80 percent of these illnesses occur at foodservice establishments. Sanitation must be a front-of-the-mind consideration for everyone involved in the preparation and service of food. Supervisors must have up-to-date knowledge of sanitation regulations and procedures, both local and national.

One food safety and self-inspection system that the chef supervisor should be thoroughly familiar with is the **Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point**, more commonly known as **HACCP**. There are many chances in the flow of food preparation

and service for food to become contaminated. The HACCP system targets these areas. By emphasizing high-risk foods and handling procedures, the chef supervisor can reduce the risk of food contamination. You can learn more about HACCP at the Food and Drug Administration website, <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/HACCP/ucm2006810.htm>.

It is important for the chef supervisor to adopt a proactive position regarding sanitation. All foodservice workers are potential disease spreaders. This fact requires the chef supervisor to analyze the procedures involved in every aspect of the operation. These include food receiving, preparation, cooking, and storage of food leftovers. The baseline must be effective supervision of sanitation. The chef supervisor needs to look at the foodservice operation through a customer's eye, determining what sanitation messages are being sent and regularly checking to make sure the kitchen team is clean and well groomed. Initial training and regular refresh courses in the prevention of food contamination need to be provided. This important aspect of the duties of the chef supervisor requires constant attention.

Safety

One goal of excellent foodservice operation is to reduce the possibility of accidents in the kitchen. Accident prevention works best when it involves the participation and cooperation of all kitchen team members. A safety program should have incentives to encourage the entire team to work safely. Rewards may be given to kitchen team members who remain accident-free. The issue of safety needs to be incorporated into orientation and training programs. Its importance needs to be stressed and emphasized on a continuous basis. Supervisors must have up-to-date knowledge of safety policies and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) policies affecting the operation.

Technology

The chef supervisor must stay ahead of technological advances in equipment and machinery in order to be competitive and focused. Innovations in labor-saving devices and training devices appear each year. Computer-managed information programs for the kitchen, which allow the chef supervisor to give greater focus to all aspects of supervision, are improved constantly.

Leadership

Leadership styles and skills are vital to making all the factors and elements of supervision in the kitchen work. These two areas have a major impact on the quality of supervision.

The Concept of Authority

The chef supervisor is the formal leader of the group because of the **authority** of the position. A chef's supervisory success, however, depends on more than this source of authority. Success as a supervisor depends on many skills. A high level of team-building skill is critical to the ability of the chef supervisor. It is this skill that makes it possible to increase the kitchen's team productivity and job satisfaction. When team-building skills are applied rather than just the authority of position, employees cooperate more with each other and with other departments. Staff members develop better interpersonal relationships, and team spirit is generated. As John Maxwell states in his book on leadership, "The only thing a title can buy is a little time either to increase your level of influence with others or erase it."¹¹

The proper and effective use of authority:

- Requires an obedience in which employees retain their freedom
- Strikes a balance between authority and individual freedom
- Leads individuals toward growth
- Involves practical judgment skills
- Acts as a uniting element of a group's common goals
- Enhances cooperative efforts
- Reserves the right and power to make decisions

For authority to be genuine, chef supervisors exercising that authority must know what they are requesting of team members and why they are making those requests. Authority for the sake of power is useless. The chef supervisor must seek to inspire desired outcomes from each person. Requests or demands made on employees without good reason often lead to anger and frustration on the part of both the employee and the chef supervisor. Remember, kitchen team members will respond more freely to a request than they will to an order.

The Evolution of Supervision

Supervision has evolved over the past century. This evolution was based to a great extent on knowledge gained initially from two sources: the Hawthorne studies and the Likert studies.

The Hawthorne Studies

Begun in the 1920s, the Hawthorne studies represented an effort to determine what effect hours of work, periods of rest, and lighting might have on worker fatigue and productivity. These experiments were conducted by university professors Elton Mayo, Fritz Roethlisberger, and J. W. Dickson at the Western Electric Company's Hawthorne Works near Chicago, Illinois. These studies represented one of the first endeavors to evaluate employee productivity. The Hawthorne studies revealed that the attitudes employees had toward management, their work group, and the work itself significantly affected their productivity. Initially, the results of the research on the small study group baffled the researchers. Despite altering the work environment and measuring productivity against this changing environment (reducing rest periods and eliminating rest time), the productivity of the study group increased continuously. The group had fewer sick days than did other workers who were not in the research group.

The leaders of the research group concluded that productivity increased, not as a result of any of their contrived stimuli, but rather as a result of the absence of any authoritarian supervision and of the interest shown in employees by the researchers. The mere fact that the workers were being studied was sufficient for them to improve their productivity. This phenomenon is still referred to by researchers as the **Hawthorne effect**: Change will occur simply because people know they are being studied, rather than as a result of some form of treatment. The most important conclusion of the Hawthorne studies, however, was that people respond better when they have a sense of belonging.

The findings of the Hawthorne studies produced a new direction for "people management." As a result of these studies, greater emphasis was placed on managing employees, with concern for them as individuals. The studies also focused attention on the need for managers and supervisors to improve their communication skills and become more sensitive to employees' needs and feelings. This new movement also emphasized the need to develop more participative, employee-centered supervision.

Likert Studies

In the 1940s, Rensis Likert conducted research into the creation of a productive and desirable work climate. He observed four approaches to supervision and leadership.¹² The first type was an authoritarian approach that was potentially explosive. It placed high pressure on subordinates through work standards and obtained compliance through fear. This approach resulted in high productivity over short periods, but low productivity and high absenteeism over longer periods. The second approach was authoritarian but benevolent in nature. The third approach was a consultative supervisor/employee approach. The fourth approach was group participation in which the supervisor was supportive and used group methods of supervision, including group decision making. The last three approaches yielded high productivity, low waste, and low costs, along with low absenteeism and low employee turnover.

Likert also developed the “linking pin” concept that focused on coordinating efforts through layers of middle management. It provided a formal, structured approach. Central to its philosophy was the idea that each level of management is a member of a multifunctional team that includes the next upward level.

Supervision in kitchens, and often in restaurants in general, has been authoritarian in nature. The Hawthorne and Likert research make it clear that authoritarian-style leadership and supervision are not the most effective. Authoritarian conduct by the supervisor does not deliver productivity. It does not create the positive workplace that results in high productivity of quality products and great guest service. Today’s chef supervisor must be what Merritt calls a *Theory Y manager*.¹³ This is a manager who believes that people not only want to do a good job but also thrive when supported and encouraged to grow.

Conclusions

The end of the twentieth century was a very exciting time for the U.S. foodservice industry. The economy was strong, with rapid job growth. These good times brought about a change in American dining habits and a higher level of gastronomic sophistication. People were traveling more and consequently gained more exposure to different cuisines. The chef as a leader, supervisor, and manager became the norm rather than the exception.

This professional evolution was supported by the growth of culinary education programs in the United States from a handful to hundreds. Culinary education matured and encompassed all levels from K–12 to university. This growth was fueled by the glamour and prestige that began to be associated with the culinary profession and the chef. There was a corresponding increase in professional associations for chefs. These associations, such as the American Culinary Federation, Research Chefs Association, International Association of Culinary Professionals, American Personal and Private Chef Association, and others, encouraged the exchange of ideas and information. They promoted lifelong learning and professional development through education and certification programs.

The successful chef now had to possess additional skills, along with a new attitude to food production that had to be customer-driven and focused on quality. The chef became a supervisor and leader. They became someone who created a motivational kitchen environment with a team culture. Chefs recognized the need for trained and educated team members and supported the growth of programs for culinary training and education in the United States.

The successful chef in the first decade of the twenty-first century is a supervisor and leader as well as a good culinarian. Today’s chef values training, education, diversity, individual initiative, and team cohesiveness. The chef of today has evolved from a domestic to a professional and from a chief to a manager. This evolution is

not complete. As the food industry changes, the role of the chef will continue to evolve. Those who constantly pursue knowledge will help to shape the changes rather than just react to the changes that are always part of progress.

Chef supervisors have responsibilities to senior management, customers, and other team members. Understanding the different elements of the chef supervisor's role will make it easier to refocus efforts toward creating a motivational environment in the kitchen. Experience has shown that establishing a team culture in the kitchen results in a feeling of ownership by the team members, which is the foundation for a quality-conscious staff.

As you study the rest of this text, remember that the goal is to be the best possible chef supervisor, and this requires far more than just cooking good food.

Summary

The modern chef supervisor's skill sets include the abilities to coach and lead the entire kitchen team by creating a motivational environment. Successful chef supervisors see themselves as facilitators and enablers whose job is to develop the kitchen team.

This means demonstrating attributes that include an understanding of feelings and attitudes that motivate the entire kitchen team. The attributes that a successful chef supervisor demonstrates are shown in Figure 1-4.

- Practice a code of ethics and administer this code fairly and without bias to all kitchen team members
- Emulate the outstanding chef role models that history has provided
- Be a customer satisfaction–driven professional
- Know, understand, and apply the elements of supervision and know how these elements interrelate with the foodservice organization's goals, the other departments, and the kitchen team
- Know and understand the various steps in planning, organizing, coaching, team building, communicating, delegating, empowering, safety, sanitation, leadership, and technology
- Separate and know the concepts of authority, power, and leadership

FIGURE 1-4

Attributes of the successful chef supervisor.

The professional development of a culinarian, particularly one who desires to be a chef, has evolved from purely the skills of the craft to inclusion of the principles of supervision, management,

and leadership. This evolution has occurred against the emerging development of the human resources management movement, from Hawthorne to Likert.

Discussion Questions

1. Define the following chapter key terms:
 - a. Chef
 - b. Chef supervisor
 - c. Supervisor
 - d. Coaching
 - e. Ethics
 - f. Professionalism
 - g. Ethical code of professional practice
 - h. Policy
 - i. Authoritarian
 - j. Supervision
 - k. Plan
 - l. Firefighting
 - m. Communication
 - n. Delegation
 - o. Empowerment
 - p. HACCP
 - q. Authority
 - r. Hawthorne effect
2. List and explain the functions of the chef supervisor's job.
3. What skills and attributes do you consider important for the chef supervisor's success?

4. Discuss the Hawthorne and Likert studies and their importance to learning how to be a chef supervisor.
5. Why is an ethical code of conduct critical to a chef supervisor's job?
6. What is meant by the concept of front-door to back-door management as it relates to the chef supervisor's job?
7. What are the elements of kitchen supervision? Describe them.
8. What are the benefits of team building and empowerment within the foodservice industry?
9. What is the concept of authority?
10. What is meant by the evolution of the chef with regard to supervisory positions?
11. How does the chef supervisor's role affect management, team members, and customer satisfaction?

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