



Supervisory Development Training Program project

*Executive Summary
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Innovations in Training
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Summary and Overview

An analysis of existing Supervisory Development programming in the Denver/Rocky Mountain Region was conducted to determine the common components and the effectiveness of training in the area. Both email and phone was used to obtain samples of different programming. These materials were analyzed and are provided as a separate attachment (Excel 1).

In addition, a survey was distributed to Operations' Supervisors and Managers within the Rocky Mountain region. Requests to complete the survey were sent to 934 individuals. *By the time this summary was created, 99 participants had completed the survey, resulting in a 9% response rate. The results of this survey data are compiled here. (Reader note: I will update these numbers as new data becomes available).*

This summary report seeks to make sense out of these two primary sources of data, analyzed *against* and in *conjunction with* the data originally collected through the three (3) information-gathering sessions conducted in February of 2011. A combined competency model is presented as Addendum 1 in this Executive Summary.

In general, the results of these three sources of data suggest that there is a robust interest in professionally-produced Supervisory Development programming that addresses the unique and specific needs of Operations' Supervisors in the Water, Wastewater and Utility industry. Clear patterns emerge regarding core training topics. Clear preferences can be identified for the best time to conduct training programs along with the "model" for how to deliver training. In general, participants are willing to send their staff to training during winter months and recognize the value of "blending" both online training with classroom training.

I am presenting three possible models that I believe best reflect the input obtained through this research. I hope this information and my recommendations assist the next step of your program development. I remain available on an as-needed basis to assist the Rocky Mountain Section of the American Water Works Association with this exciting and important project.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you and conduct this research.

Sincerely,

Karen Main

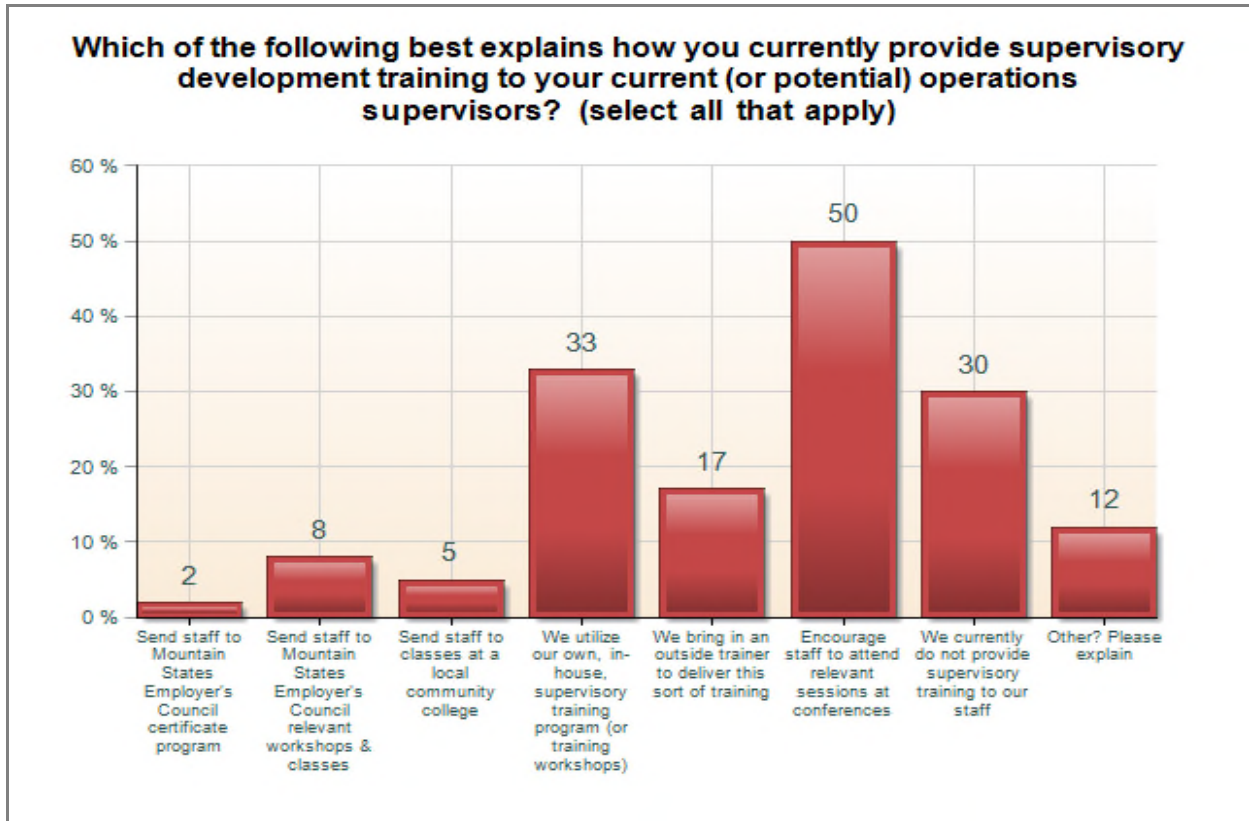
Principal, Innovations in Training, LLC

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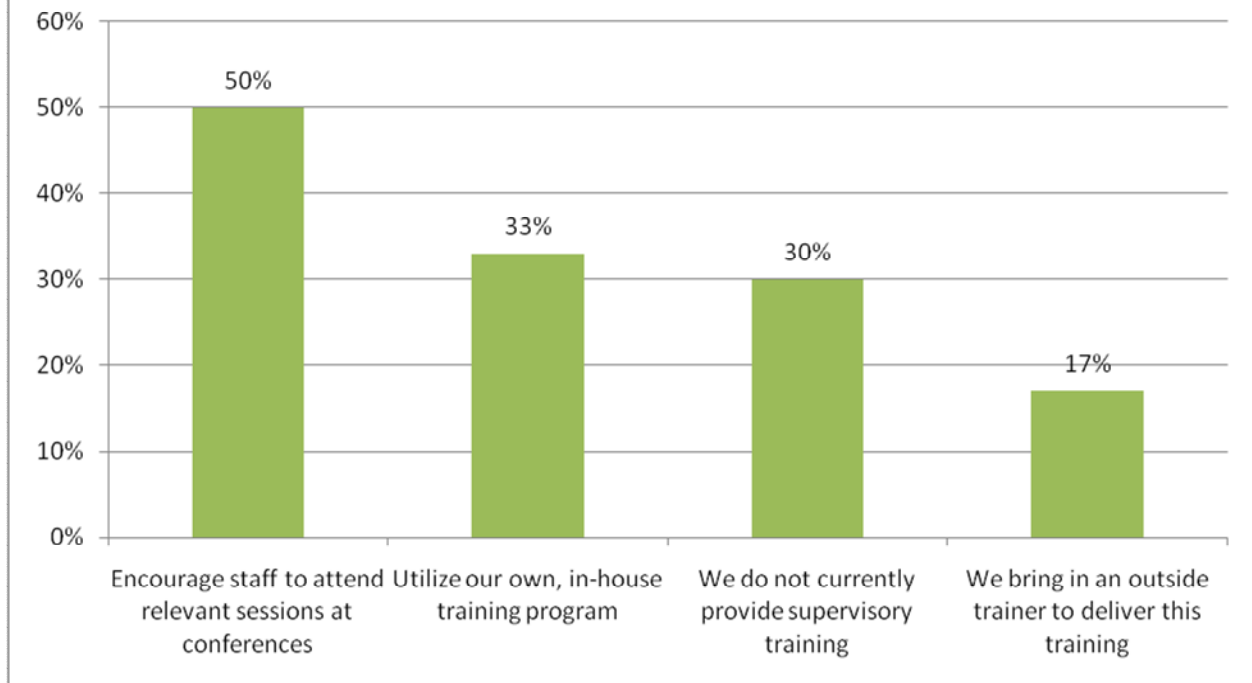
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Survey Data Overview

Assessment of Current Training by survey participants



How do you currently provide Supervisory Training?



50% of survey respondents utilize workshops and sessions at local conferences as a source of training for their staff.

33% of survey respondents utilize their own, internal training programs for staff development

30% of survey respondents do not currently provide any formal training to their supervisory staff.

Of those who responded, evaluation of existing Training Approach




34% of survey respondents evaluated their current method as “FAIR.”

27% of survey respondents evaluated their current method of supervisory training as “GOOD.”

A cross-tabulation of method of supervisory development against evaluation

Which of the following best explains how you currently provide supervisory development training to your current (or potential) operations supervisors? (select all that apply)



	Total*	How would you rate the effectiveness of your current supervisory training method for operations staff? (As answered in question #2)				
		No Training Available	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	98	19	14	34	27	4
Send staff to Mountain States Employer's Council certificate program	2 2.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 7.4%	0 0.0%
Send staff to Mountain States Employer's Council relevant workshops & classes	8 8.2%	0 0.0%	1 7.1%	3 8.8%	4 14.8%	0 0.0%
Send staff to classes at a local community college	5 5.1%	0 0.0%	1 7.1%	2 5.9%	1 3.7%	1 25.0%
We utilize our own, in-house, supervisory training program (or training workshops)	32 32.7%	0 0.0%	3 21.4%	11 32.4%	17 63.0%	1 25.0%
We bring in an outside trainer to deliver this sort of training	17 17.3%	0 0.0%	2 14.3%	3 8.8%	11 40.7%	1 25.0%
Encourage staff to attend relevant sessions at conferences	49 50.0%	1 5.3%	5 35.7%	22 64.7%	20 74.1%	1 25.0%
We currently do not provide supervisory training to our staff	29 29.6%	18 94.7%	5 35.7%	6 17.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Other? Please explain	12 12.2%					

Availability



55% of survey respondents would prefer Supervisory Development during the winter months. 36% will work with whatever schedule is proposed.

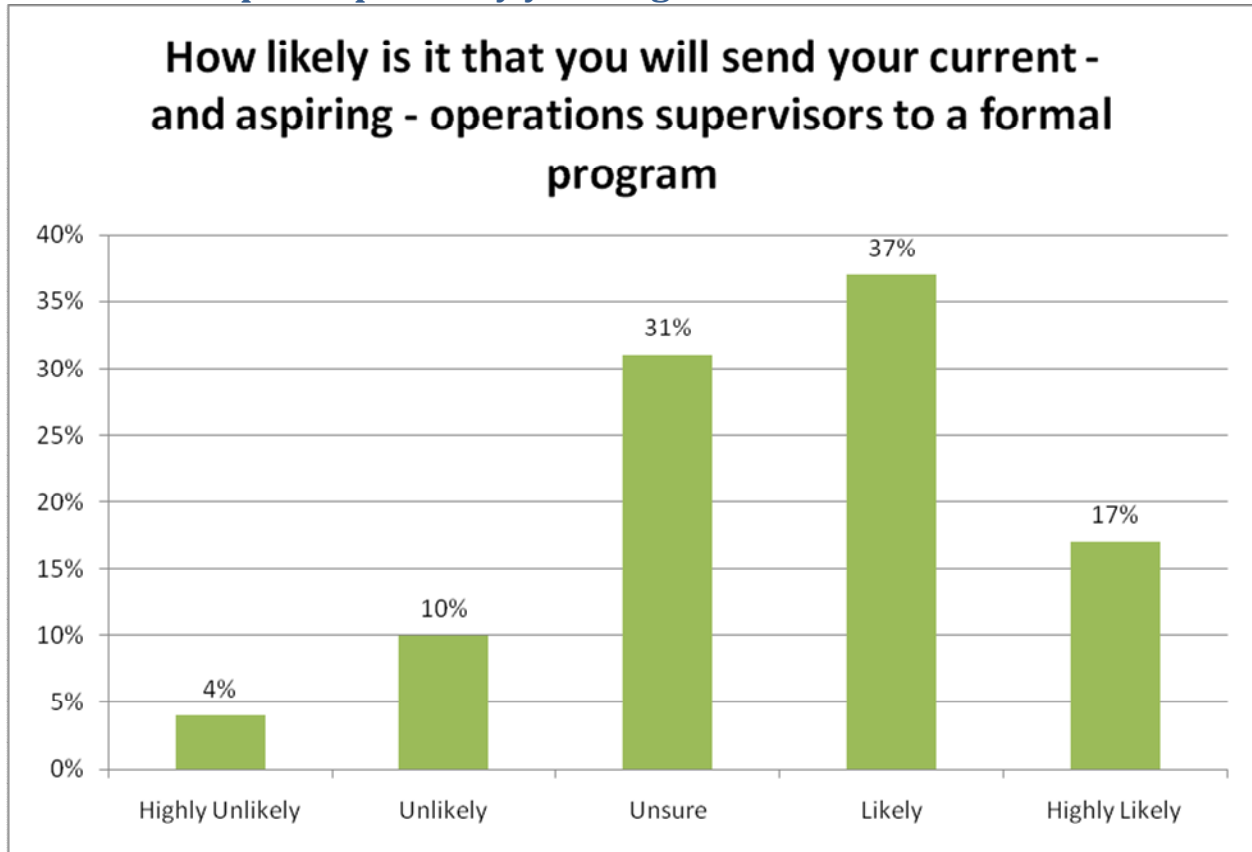
Number of potential participants

Average number of participants by county: 3

Total possible participants by survey respondents: 204

Median number of participants by county: 2

Likelihood of participation by your organization?



Counties likely to attend:

Alamosa County
 Arapahoe County
 Boulder County
 Costilla County
 Custer County
 Denver County
 Douglas County
 Eagle County
 El Paso County

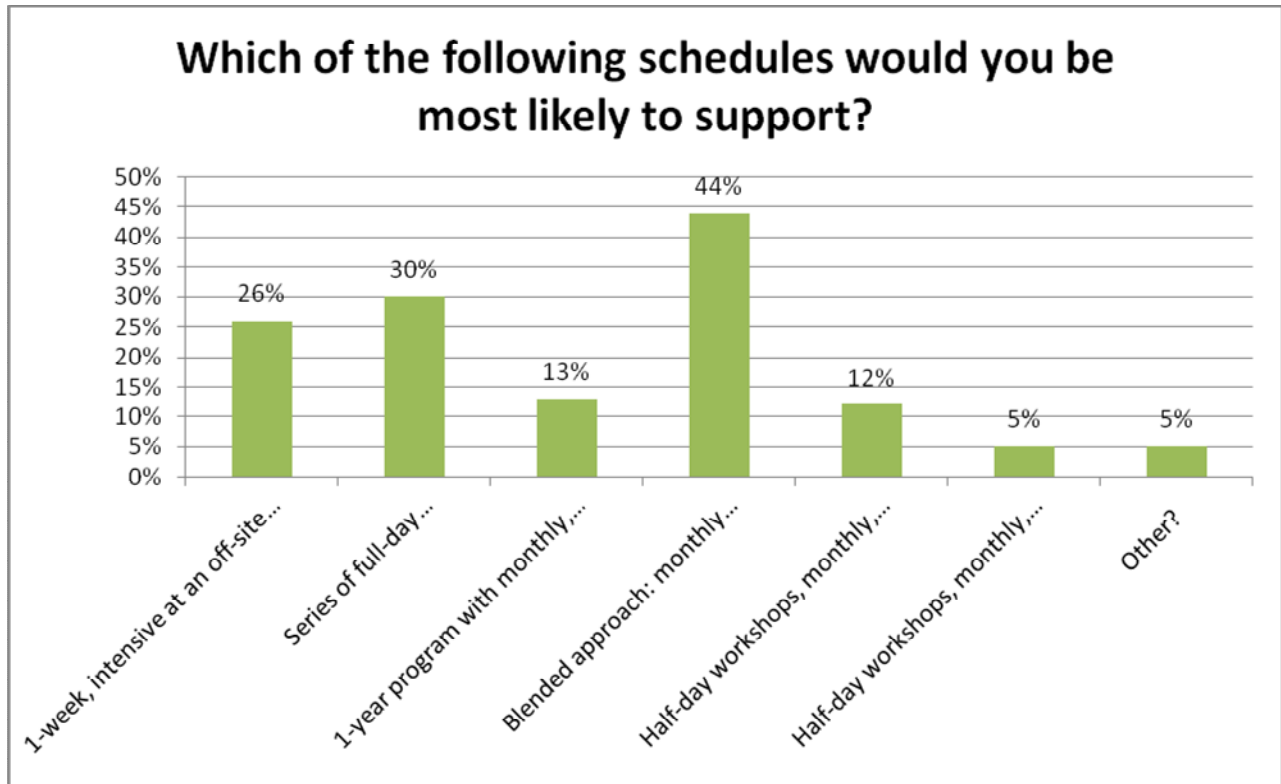
Jefferson County
 Larimer County
 Las Animas County
 Montrose County
 Otero County
 Rio Blanco County
 Rio Grande County
 Summit County
 Weld County

Counties "Unsure" if they will attend (also unlikely to highly unlikely)*

Arapahoe County
 Denver County
 El Paso County
 Garfield County *

Grand County
 Huerfano County *
 Jefferson County
 Larimer County
 Lincoln County
 Montrose County
 Otero County

Scheduling Preferences



Responses – by County – on preferred model for program delivery

Blended approach/monthly workshops

Arapahoe County
Denver County
Boulder County
Douglas County
El Paso County
Fremont County
Garfield County
Grand County
Gunnison County
Hinsdale County
Huerfano County
Jefferson County
Las Animas County
Larimer County
Lincoln County
Mesa County
Montrose County
Park County
Routt County
San Miguel County
Summit County
Weld County

22

1-year program/monthly, full-day workshops

Alamosa County
Arapahoe County
Boulder County
Douglas County
El Paso County
Grand County
Larimer County
Rio Blanco County
Weld County

9

3-4 month program w/ full-day workshops

Arapahoe County

Boulder County
Costilla County
Denver County
Delta County
Douglas County
El Paso County
Garfield County
Grand County
Gunnison County
Jefferson County
Larimer County
Lincoln County
Montrose County
Otero County
Pueblo County
Sedgwick County
Summit County
Weld County

19

1-week, intensive off-site

Arapahoe County
Boulder County
Custer County
Douglas County
El Paso County
Grand County
Larimer County
Mesa County
Montrose County
Otero County
Pueblo County
Rio Grande County
Summit County
Weld County

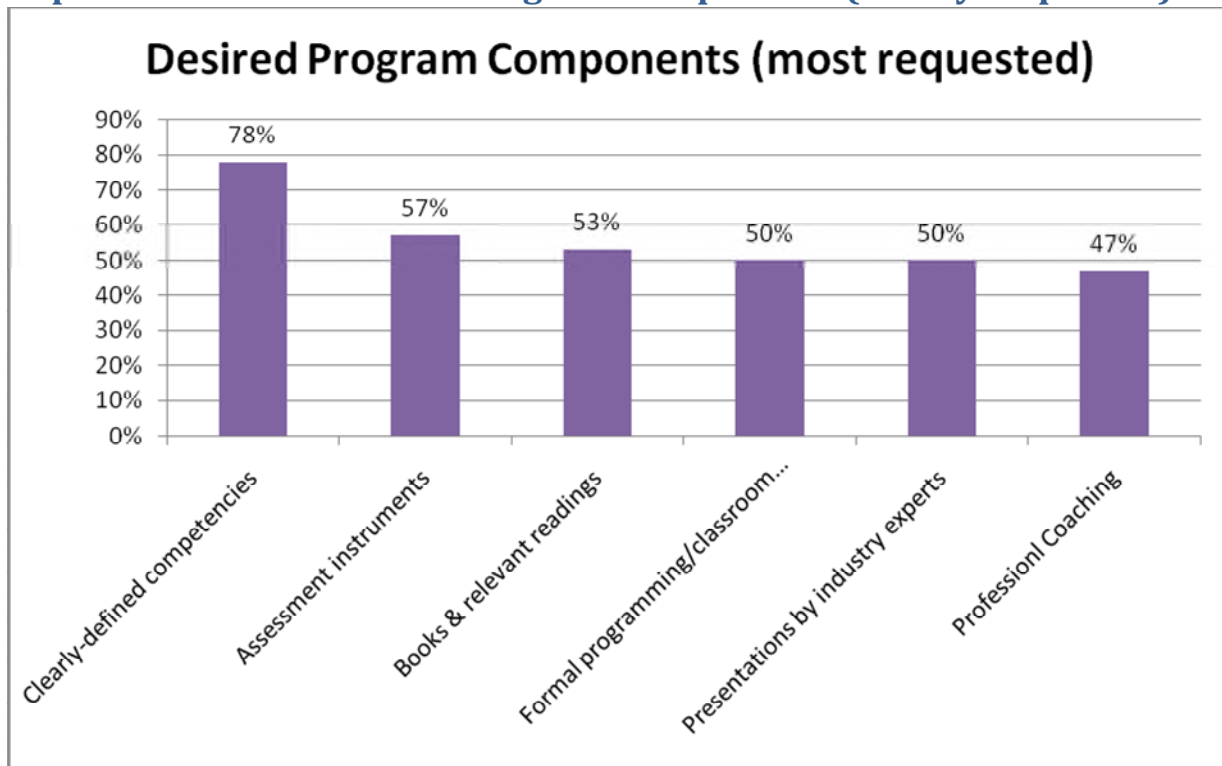
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Most flexible on models:

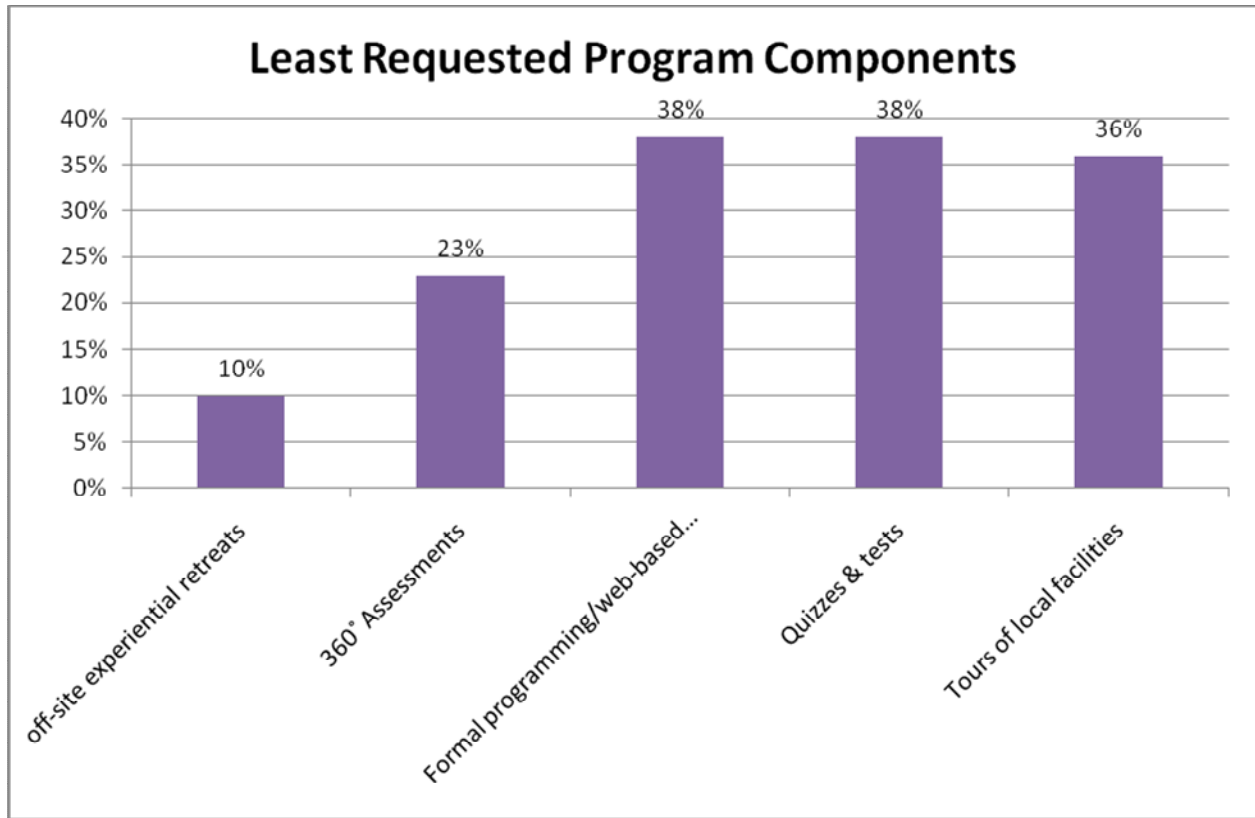
Boulder County
El Paso County
Arapahoe County
Douglas County

Larimer County
Summit County
Weld County

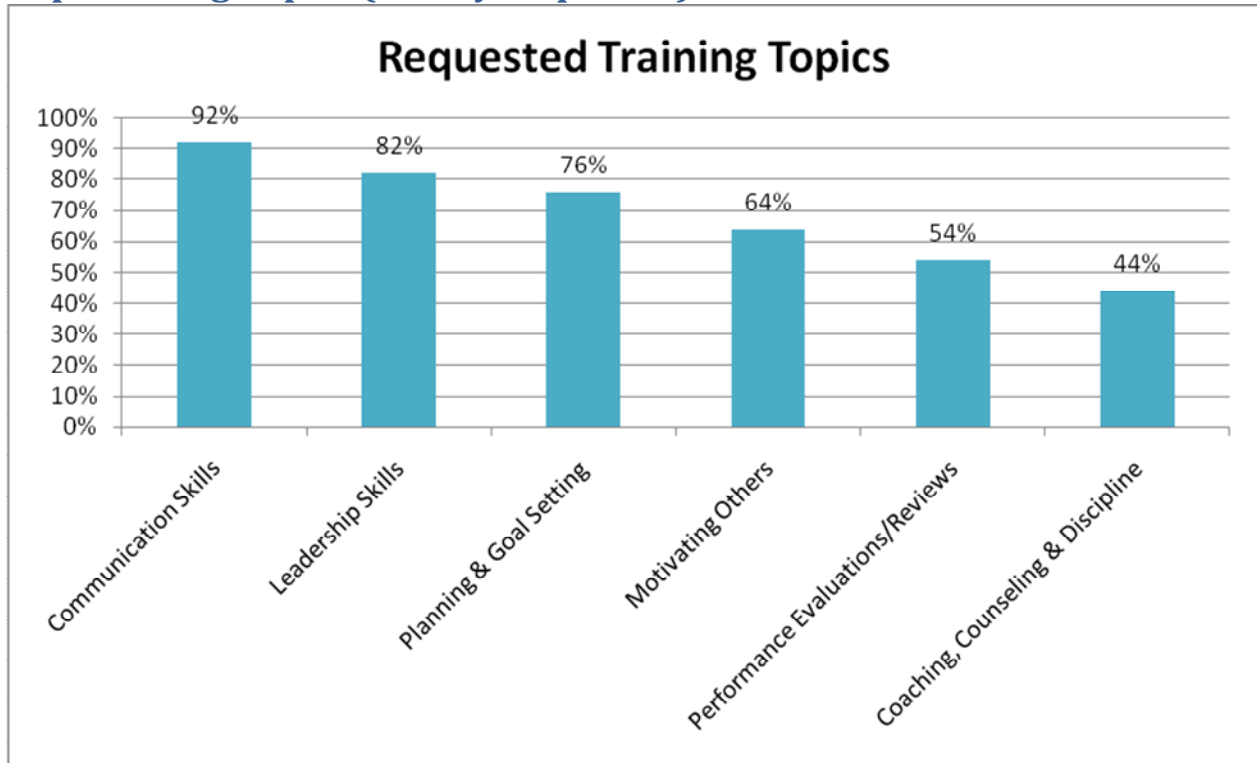
Top recommendations for Program Components (survey responses)



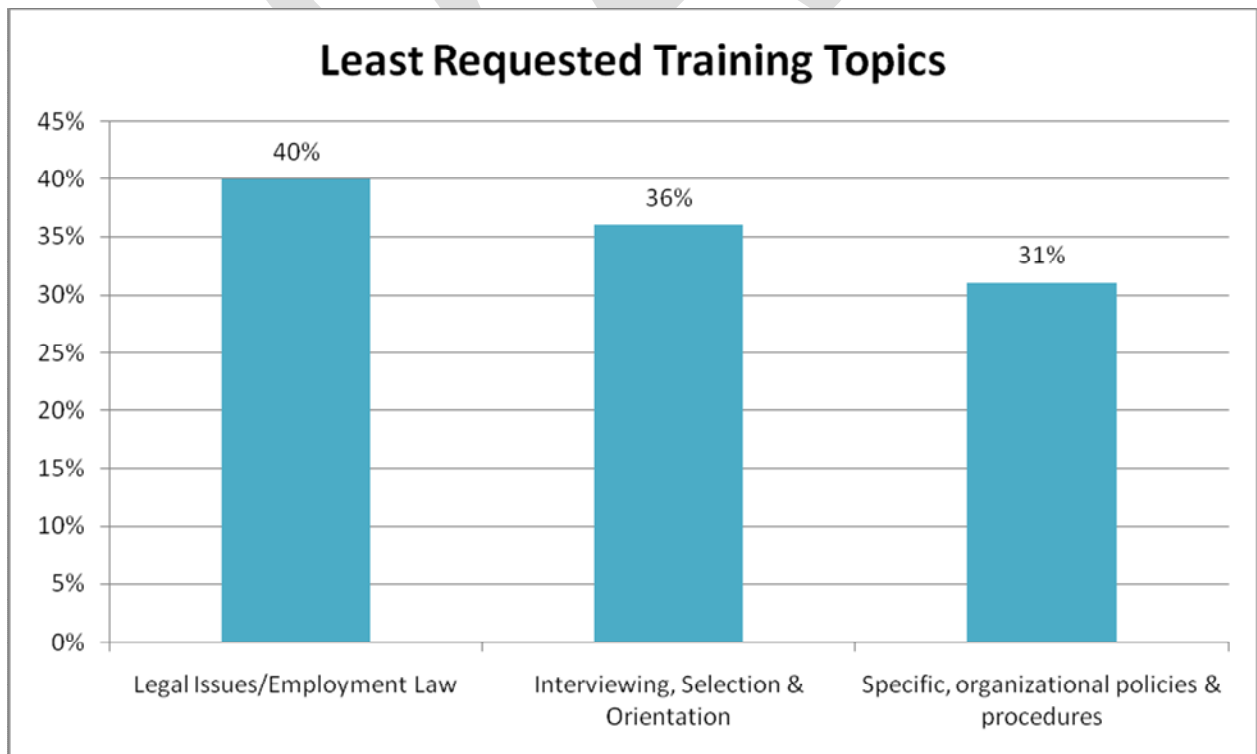
Least-requested Training Components (survey responses)



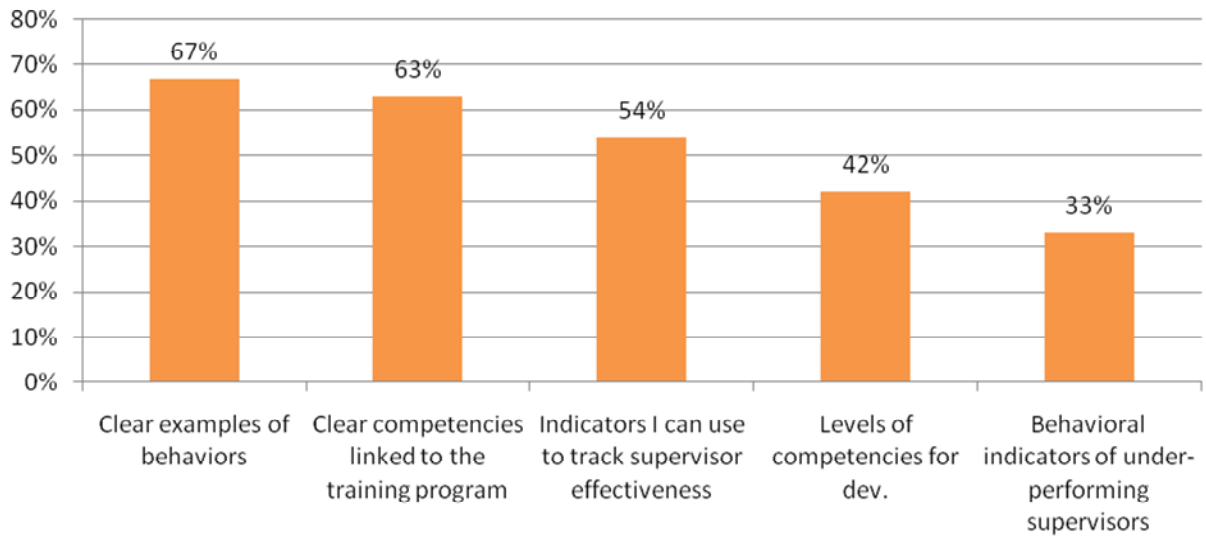
Top Training Topics (Survey responses)



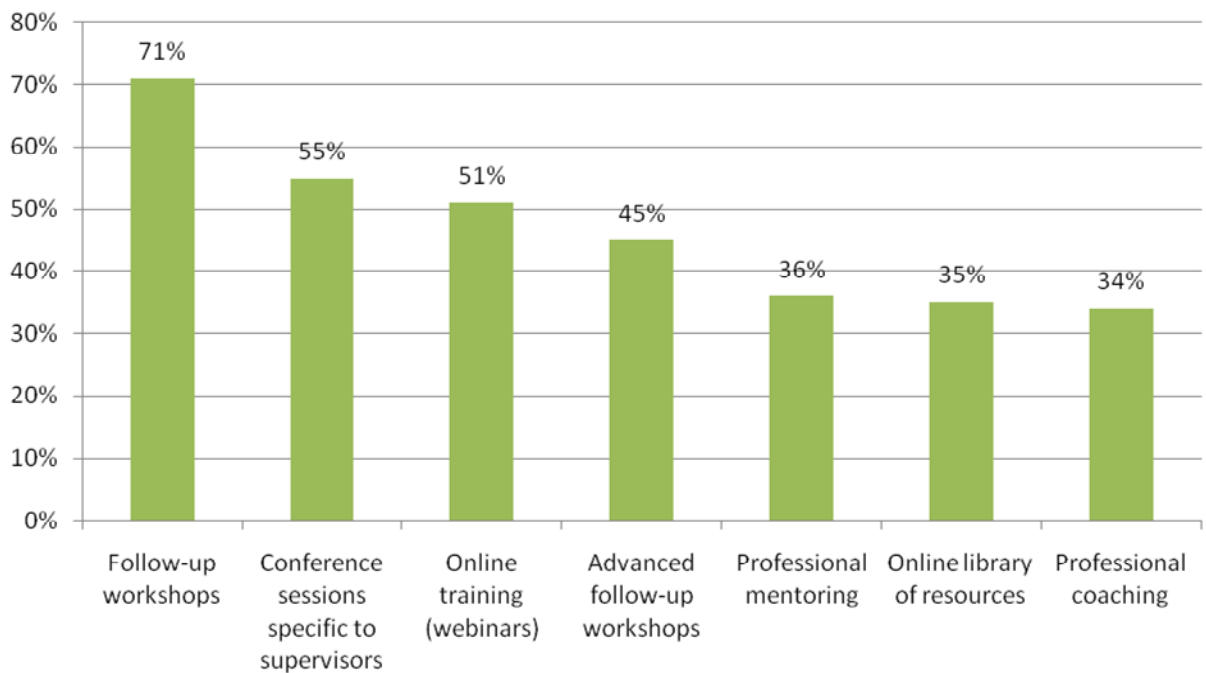
Additional Training Topics (least requested by survey respondents)



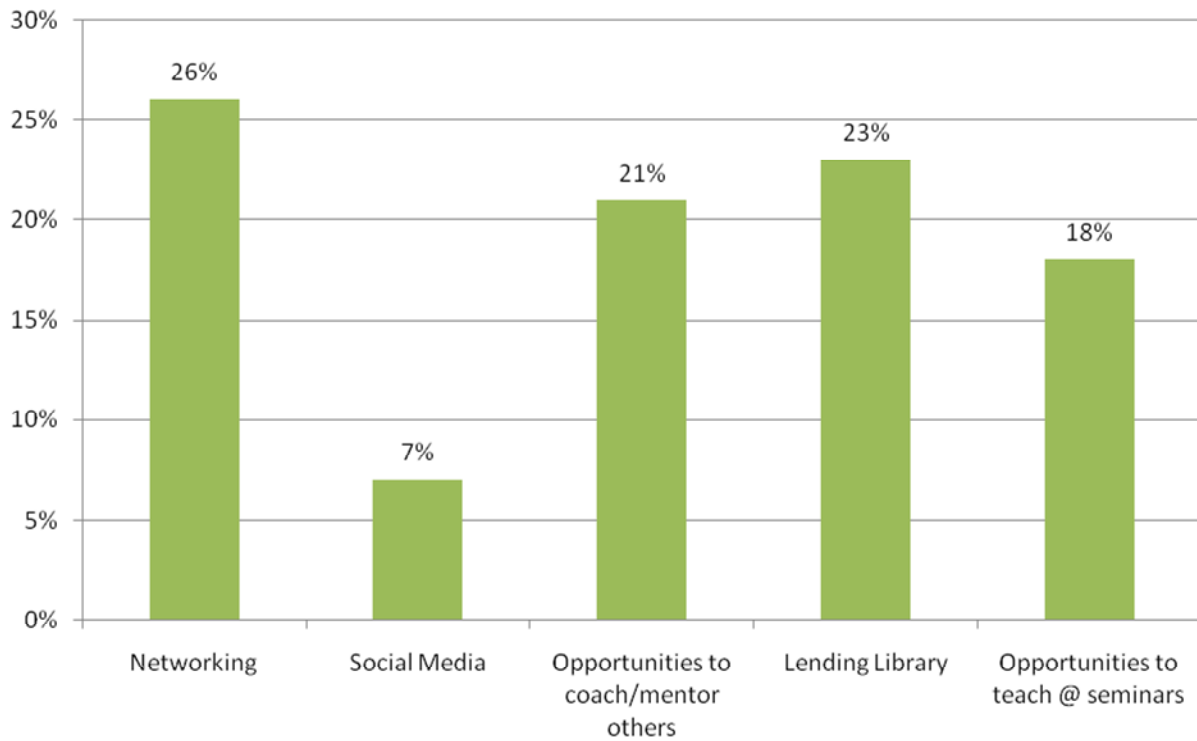
Requests for how to measure impact of training in workplace



Post-Training Resources to Support Supervisors



Follow-Up Resources (least requested)



Barriers to participation in a Supervisory Development program:

- Money/Cost/Budget
- Time away from the job/scheduling difficulties
- Distance/travel to get to training

Responses to how utilities will support participants after they attend training:

- Provide the time off to attend
- Support them financially (pay expenses & fees for training)
- Provide opportunities to practice & apply back at work
- Provide coaching back in the workplace

Examples of how utilities might select participants. Common answers:

- Any current supervisor may attend
- On the basis of seniority & experience
- On the basis of their desire and interest to learn

Recommended Program Models

Model 1

My first recommendation for a program model, delivery methodology and curriculum, addresses the preferences articulated by survey respondents. This model may be viewed as one that utilizes resources that are, largely, already in place and draws upon attendance and participation patterns already seen by utilities employees.

Deliver Supervisory Training through existing conference schedules

In this model, RMSAWWA delivers a series of pre-determined workshops at conferences. Recommend that the association identify a series of clear-competencies (see Addendum 1) which guide the curriculum development. Recommend that the association identify a series of hours that must be completed through classroom attendance and participation in order to qualify for “Certification” from RMSAWWA in Supervisory Skills. Based on best practices derived through research with organizations in the Rocky Mountain region, recommend that the association place a time-commitment of between 40 – 50 hours delivered in full-day sessions (8 hours) in order to earn “certification.”

Using this approach, certification from the association can be obtained after the participant successfully completes workshops offered over a series of years at conferences. From this perspective, participants would be able to achieve “certification” after attending workshops over a 2 to 3 year period. This approach encourages ongoing networking and participation by participants. Participants will be required to continue to participate in training using this approach, which is very different than a 1-week, intensive model of training in which, in theory, participants attend an off-site workshop for a week but could ostensibly not attend any further workshops in their career. Spreading out training over a period of time provides participants the opportunity to engage with concepts, return to their workplaces, apply practices and then return to learn and reflect on what has worked and what has not worked for them. This model of learning, in other words, builds an “ongoing component” into the practice.

Benefits of this approach:

- Draws upon existing attendance patterns of utility staff. Survey respondents identify that they already send staff to conferences as a professional development strategy.

- Use the Conference as a way to provide "follow-up" sessions (both status-specific and advanced). This was identified by 60 respondents as the most preferred method to provide "continued professional development" to participants who attend supervisory training.
- This approach utilizes resources and facilities that are already in place, thereby potentially reducing the costs and overhead associated with delivering a stand-alone training program.

An option is to consider offering Supervisory Development workshops as a Pre-Conference session rather than offer during the traditional conference.

Benefits of this approach:

- Provides participants with a separate opportunity, aligned with the time-frame of the conference, to attend to the specific requirements of supervisory development.
- Scholarships may help bridge some financial gaps for participants.
- Creates an increased sense of "community" among participants, especially if they remain for the rest of the conference.
- Can bring facilitators in earlier which could reduce expenses.
- Provides energy and excitement around training due to conference atmosphere.

Disadvantages of this approach:

- Will require additional coordination and management of additional resources aligned with conference.
- May add costs to participants that are out of their organization's financial reach.
- Can managers AND their Operations' Supervisors ALL get away for conferences? Some question re: staffing and time away from facility to make this approach viable.

Data to substantiate this approach:

- high level of survey respondents (51%) already take advantage of conferences for training
- 71% respondents request follow-up workshops at conferences
- 45% respondents request advanced, follow-up workshops at conferences
- "Post-training" workshops at conferences was listed by survey respondents as the top method for supporting participants after they attend training

Model 2

Blended Approach: Monthly sessions (over a 6 month period of time) supported with webinars and other online resources

By far one of the most requested approach by survey respondents. This approach includes traditional, classroom sessions delivered in a full-day format with webinars (or other virtual methods) to connect across geography. Sessions are full-day in length and are held monthly over a four-month period.

The purpose of traditional, classroom sessions provide participants with clear direction and information from trainers and facilitators. Participants benefit from meeting in-person and creating a sense of community among themselves. Participants further benefit from the opportunity to discuss material and scenarios in person, enhancing the learning.

In this case, there are multiple benefits/purposes of webinars:

1. Maintain the delivery of learning content to participants. Virtual meetings/webinars allow program facilitators to assign additional reading materials, engage participants in ongoing discussion and ensure the retention of new concepts while participants are back in their workplace environments. (53% of survey respondents suggest that additional readings are important to a training program). Serves as a way to introduce “new” content while simultaneously reinforcing concepts already taught through traditional means (continuity).
2. Maintain lines of dialogue and discussion among program participants and facilitators. Allows participants to share experiences, ask questions, and receive “coaching” from program facilitators. (47% of survey respondents believe that professional coaching should be an integral part of a training program and 34% believe coaching should be a “follow-up” or post-training experience; 36% believe mentoring should be included as a post-training experience). Participants have an opportunity to learn about a concept and then go back to their work environment and experience, first-hand, how implementing a new idea works. They can then obtain support through their virtual community.
3. Helps to maintain a sense of “community” and belonging among program participants. This is especially important because a sense of community serves as a support mechanism for new supervisors; it also serves to sustain learning among participants although they are not physically present together.

Recommend that this program is held at the beginning of the winter season for best rate of response. Recommend that software selected for webinars be vetted thoroughly in order to ensure ease of use in order to not discourage participation. Recommend that full-day workshops be offered on a geographically diverse basis to allow the majority of participants to attend. Suggest that the association consider offering TWO sets of classroom sessions – one focused on participants in the Denver metropolitan region and the other focused on the Western Slope.

A sample format:

Nov. – Session 1
Nov. – Webinar 1
Dec. – Session 2
Dec. – Webinar 2

Jan. – Session 3
Jan. – Webinar 3
Feb. – Session 4
Feb. - Webinar 4
March – Webinar 5 (recommended –
summary, check-in, additional coaching)

Participants would be encouraged to attend annual conferences and attend workshops at conferences specifically designed for them. “Credits” or training units should be associated with conference workshops.

Benefits of this approach:

- Provides for a specific period of time devoted to Supervisory Development.
- “Contains” costs associated with delivery of training
- Limits costs to only 6 sessions
- Other sessions are reduced in cost while delivered virtually

Disadvantages of this approach

- Where would these sessions be held? Would need facilities, however, could rotate every month to a different utility in a specific geographic area (again, recommend that one series of workshops be offered in the metro region; another be offered on the Front Range or Western Slope). Requires administrative time/work to schedule and manage rosters, etc.
- Having difficulty navigating webinar software will reduce participation rates. Need to fully vet software used to make sure that it is user-friendly.
- Costs associated with facilitators and facilities.

Data supporting this approach

- high number of survey respondents prefer this approach (Winter)(blended)(55%) (44% of survey recipients would attend a blended program offered during Winter months)
- 47% of survey respondents identify Professional Coaching as integral to an effective training program
- 53% of survey respondents identify additional readings & assignments as important to include in the program

- 44% of survey respondents identify a blended approach as their preferred model for training delivery

Model 3 - Hybrid

Provide a one-week, intensive training session during winter months. Supplement with web-based coaching component offered on a quarterly basis (or by request by participants). Further support with follow-up workshops (both continued education and advanced-level) at annual conferences.

Benefits:

- This approach limits resources expended to only one week (managing facilities, administration and facilitators)
 - Satisfies survey respondent's preference if conducted during winter months which assists with staffing issues and work load issues
- Provides the quickest and most comprehensive (intensive, immersion) of training content for participants
 - Further solidifies relationships among participants who go through comprehensive programs together
- Provides training facilitators with real-time opportunities to coach and track the progress of participants
- Follow-up sessions at conferences allow time to elapse between the 1-week, intensive. This gives participants experiences to report on at the conference.

Disadvantages:

- This approach still requires a concentration of resources dedicated to delivering a full-week at an off-site facility. Double the resources if the association offers this training at multiple locations. You may encounter a high-cost for facilitators to conduct a quality, 1-week course.

Data supporting this approach:

- Participants had the highest support for a "blended" approach to training
- Data suggest that high numbers of managers (and/or survey respondents) (71%, 55%, 45%) requested follow-up sessions at conferences as post training program support to participants.

ADDENDUM 1:

Competencies and Curriculum Suggestions

Recommendations, based on an analysis of data gathered through information-sessions (in-person), review of extant programs and survey responses. Competencies supported by all three data sources (extant programs, survey responses, info-gathering sessions) are highlighted. (Highlighted areas might represent 1st-level supervisory training topics?):

Technical KSA's	Non-Technical KSA's	Qualities/Traits
Budget (cost control) (fiscal management)	Communication: oral (feedback)	Flexible & Open-Minded
Compensation Management	Communication: written (documentation/internal communications)	Accessible
Public Speaking: Media Relations	Communication: listening	Accountable
Job Knowledge (day to day operations)	Conflict Management	Fair & Impartial
Job Safety	Motivate staff	Courageous
Scheduling/Planning/Prioritizing/Goal Setting	Performance Evaluations/Work Assessment	Trusting & Trustworthy
Data collection/record keeping/reporting/documentation	Mentoring	Non-judgmental/objective
Resource procurement & allocation (cost control)	Leadership	Patient
Policy development & enforcement	Interviewing/Hiring/On-boarding	Politically Savvy
Political Savvy	Discipline	Tactful
Computer literate	Political Savvy	Self-confident
Public Speaking: Vendor Relations	Rewards/Recognizes/ Appreciates staff appropriately (feedback) (performance mgmt.)	Self-Aware
Public Speaking: Customer Relations	Strategic thinking/Big Picture thinking/Visionary	Empathetic
Quality control	Training & Coaching staff (feedback)	Modeling a respectful workplace
Industry knowledge/ certifications/knowledge of industry standards & regulations	Team Development/Team Cohesion	
Employment Law Basics (ADA, FMLA, Discipline, Harassment)	Communicating Organizational mission, vision & goals	
	Staff development/Training	

	Performance Management (basics/overview)	
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