



MANAGING CHALLENGES, BLOCKS, RUPTURE, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN SUPERVISION



01.

Why it's Important

Supervisors shape the supervision environment. Managing challenges, addressing blocks, repairing ruptures, and fostering psychological safety ensures supervisees can grow confidently and sustainably..



Golden Principles

Challenges: Stretch supervisees with constructive feedback and achievable tasks.

Blocks: Notice when supervisees feel stuck and use reflective questioning to unblock learning.

Rupture: Acknowledge tensions or misunderstandings openly; repair trust through dialogue.

Psychological Safety: Create a space where supervisees feel safe to share mistakes, doubts, and vulnerabilities.

02.

03.

Practical Strategies

- 🌱 Normalise struggle – Reassure supervisees that challenges are part of growth.
- 👂 Listen actively – Use open questions to explore barriers.
- 🔧 Repair ruptures – Name tensions and co-create solutions.
- 👐 Model vulnerability – Share your own learning experiences.
- ⚖️ Balance support & challenge – Affirm strengths while setting stretch goals.

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- 🔍 Detect → Notice when you feel challenged, stuck, or when tension arises.
- 💬 Discuss → Bring those feelings into open conversation with your supervisor.
- 🛠️ Design → Collaborate on strategies and set achievable goals.
- 🌱 Develop → Monitor progress, celebrate growth, and check in on psychological safety.



04.

FRAMEWORK FOR SUPERVISOR'S

Detect

Notice signs of challenge, block, or rupture.

Purpose: Spot early signs of challenge, block, or rupture.

- Example Action: Notice supervisee avoiding certain topics or showing disengagement.
- Example Script: "I've observed you've been quieter when we talk about risk assessments – is something making that difficult?"

Discuss

Create open dialogue about what's happening.

Purpose: Create open dialogue about what's happening.

- Example Action: Invite supervisee to share their perspective without judgment.
- Example Script: "How are you experiencing this challenge? I'd like to hear your view before we explore solutions."

Design

Collaboratively plan strategies to move forward.

Purpose: Collaboratively plan strategies to move forward.

- Example Action: Set one SMART goal together to address the issue.
- Example Script: "Let's agree on one specific step you can take before our next session – what feels achievable?"

Develop

Monitor progress and reinforce psychological safety.

Purpose: Monitor progress and reinforce psychological safety.

- Example Action: Review progress regularly and celebrate achievements.
- Example Script: "I can see you've made progress here – let's acknowledge that before we set the next goal."

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REFLECTION FOR SUPERVISOR'S

Example of Managing Relationship Rupture

Detect

Example: Supervisor notices the supervisee is unusually withdrawn and avoids eye contact after a tense feedback exchange.

Action: Acknowledge the shift in tone and behavior.

Script: "I sense some tension between us after our last discussion – have I understood that correctly?"

Discuss

Example: Supervisor invites the supervisee to share their perspective on what felt difficult.

Action: Create space for open dialogue without defensiveness.

Script: "Can you tell me how my feedback landed with you? I want to understand your experience."

Design

Example: Together, they agree on how feedback will be delivered in future sessions (e.g., balancing positives with challenges).

Action: Co-create strategies to rebuild trust.

Script: "Let's plan to start with strengths before moving to areas for growth – does that feel supportive?"

Develop

Example: Supervisor checks in regularly to ensure the relationship feels safe and collaborative.

Action: Monitor progress and reinforce psychological safety.

Script: "I appreciate how openly you shared last time – let's keep checking in to make sure our supervision feels constructive."



Reflective Prompts for Supervisors

"When was the last time I acknowledged my supervisee's strengths before giving constructive feedback?"

"Do I create enough space for supervisees to voice discomfort, or do I move too quickly to solutions?"

"How do I respond when a rupture occurs – do I avoid it, or address it openly and constructively?"

