

V. Self-Audit for Managers

Do you

- Does each staff person have a clear sense of his or her job duties?
- Do you give staff personnel additional responsibilities as their competence and experience increases?
- Do you delegate responsibility for educating and supervising newer employees to competent and experienced support staff?
- Do you give regular evaluations to lawyer and nonlawyer staff to let them know both what they need to improve and what they are doing right?
- Do you assign each new associate a "mentor" he or she can come to with questions?
- Do you give written instructions for complex tasks?
- Do you provide a timetable or deadline for completion?
- Do you introduce your clients to your staff?
- Do you hold regular non-lawyer-staff meetings?
- Do you hold regular attorney meetings to discuss clients and work?
- Do you rethink your employees' job duties (and salaries) periodically, as personnel, caseload, and experience change?
- Do you tell your employees what not to do, as well as what to do? (ex., please give Ms. Smith the personal injury fact sheet, but don't discuss whether you think she has a good case.)
- Do your employees understand why, as well as what?
- Do you provide opportunities for your staff to suggest changes in procedures or job responsibilities?
- Do you emphasize education for both lawyers and nonlawyers and demonstrate your support by paying for it?

Or, do you ...

- Do you criticize an employee for following instructions that you had given incorrectly? (You should have known I didn't want it done like that!)
- Do you criticize employees in front of another person?
- Do you assume that brand new associates can manage their own projects without instructions or feedback?
- Do you change deadlines in the middle of a project?
- Do you forget to tell your staff that there was a deadline, or what the deadline was? (By the way, make sure to get that complaint done when you get back from lunch; my co-counsel wants to see it by 2:00 so we can file it by 5:00.)
- Do you tell your staff to let you know if they have any questions, and then tell them that you're too busy to answer their question right now?
- Do you only hold staff meetings when you want to give bad news or criticize employee behavior?
- Do you tell one employee to do something one way, and then tell another to do it another way?
- Do you insist on doing or reviewing everything yourself, because that's the only way you know it'll be done right?
- Do you let attorney meetings degenerate into gripe sessions?
- Do you reward mistakes with rage, and excellent performance with silence?
- **Do you tell yourself that you really need to change the way the office operates, and you'll develop a plan as soon as you have time for it -- maybe next year?**