

**KEY CHALLENGES PREVENTING A SUCCESSFUL
TRANSITION TO THE FIRST TIME SUPERVISOR
OF SHARED SERVICES CENTER IN THAILAND**



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TRANSITION TO THE FIRST TIME SUPERVISOR
OF SHARED SERVICES CENTER IN THAILAND**

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**KEY CHALLENGES PREVENTING A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO THE
FIRST TIME SUPERVISOR OF SHARED SERVICES CENTER IN THAILAND**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find key challenge factors preventing a successful transition of first-time supervisor of shared services center in Thailand using the framework of 12 challenges of the-first-time supervisor from Center for Creative Leader. Propositions were tested by in-depth interview and collect data from over 50 supervisors work in Shared Services Centers.

The result of this study found 3 key challenges of Thai supervisors where all shared service center in Thailand should aware and provide support to supervisors. Recommendations to this study suggested by the analysis and supervisors have been provided in the conclusion part.

KEY WORDS: First Time Supervisor/ Transition to Supervisor/ Challenges of Supervisor/
Shared Service Center/ Thai Supervisor

34 pages

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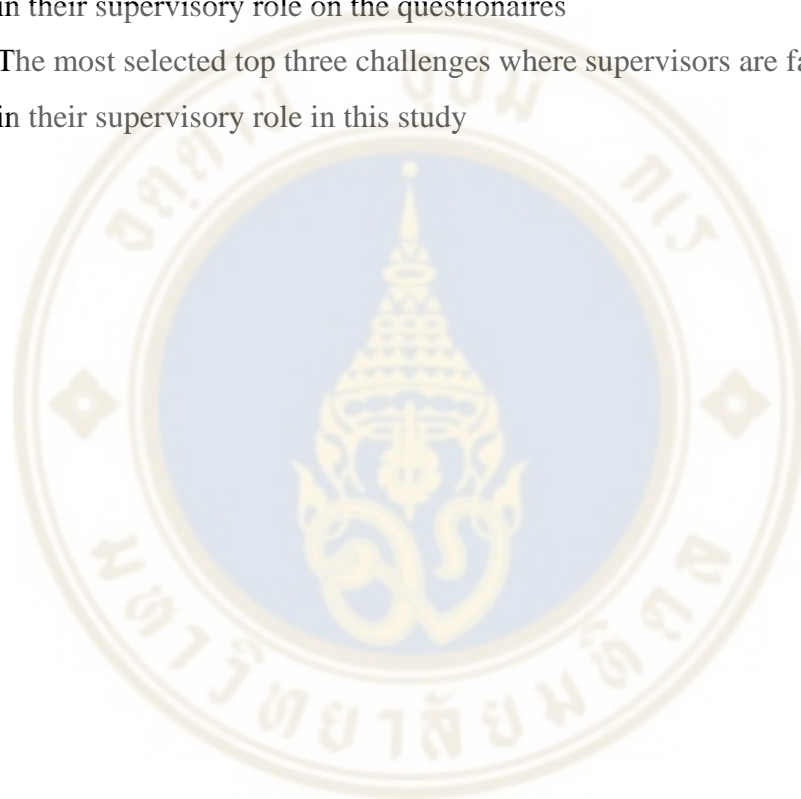


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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This paper intends to study challenge factors preventing a successful transition of first-time supervisor of Shared Services Center in Thailand.

A number of multinational survey showing the result that first-time supervisor failed in their transition, which contradict with the expectation of supervisor who play a critical role in the organization. This might be causing of failure in organization effectiveness and operations in companies. It's obvious that all of international corporations are expect to get reliable supervisors who can help maintain their operations and ensure the organization can deliver the great service according to service level agreement, including Shared Services Center.

Thailand is one of favorable country where many of international corporations established their Shared Services Center, in order to provide services to their associated companies in regional and headquarter business. Beginning of company set up in Thailand, they may have to send expatriates from headquarters to stabilize the operations in supervisory and management level. However, those multinational companies expect to develop Thai employees to fill those supervisory positions, aim to achieve the result of cost effectiveness and create local competitive advantage through local people. So those company will assess and promote individual who has a potential to be a good supervisor in their organization.

Being a first-time supervisor have many challenges, so this paper intends to understand what are those challenges for supervisor in Shared Services Center, in order to create an awareness of shared service company in Thailand of challenges of first-time-supervisor in their organization and identify the opportunities to get rid of those challenges by improving effectiveness of supervisor.

Resulting of success in transition of first-time supervisor in shared services centers in Thailand could create additional opportunities of expanding business from multinational companies in Thailand by increasing more value-added jobs in Thailand

which reducing unemployment rate in Thailand and boost up Thailand GDP from incremental investment.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Why this paper would like to study about first-time-supervisor?

In the past decades, there are many studies support one of favorite statement in behavioral theories of leadership “Leader are made, not born”, so there are many leadership training aim to equip individual, who never supervise people or manage team become a good leader through mentoring, learning and practicing their leadership experience, given nowadays most people believe that most of leadership skills could be developed and learned.

Every company expect their supervisor to be a key person who run the company operation, manages their subordinates to work together as one team, develops individual capabilities of employees and leading the team to the same direction of organization. However, we have seen a number of multinational survey showing result that first-time supervisor failed in their transition like following examples:

- Based on The New One Minute Manager® book from The Ken Blanchard Companies, 60% of new supervisor underperform during their first two years. Those that survive develop bad habits that stay with them throughout their career.
- 20 percent of first-time supervisors are doing a poor job according to their subordinates [William A. (Bill) Gentry, Paige Logan, and Scott Tonidandel, WHITE PAPER-Second in the Transitioning Into Leadership Series]
- 7 percent of managers’ poll by UK business school think that their company develop leader effectively. [Developing Global Leader of Tomorrow, Ashridge Business School, July 2009]
- From Corporate Executive Board, Institute for Corporate Productivity Linda A. Hill, Harvard Business School, 47% of first-time supervisor don’t receive supervisor training. Also, first-time supervisors are usually promoted without the skills needed to be a good supervisor.

- 30 percent of US companies admit that they failed to expand their international business opportunities because they lack enough leaders with the right capabilities. (Pankaj Ghemawat, Developing global leaders, Mckinsey Quarterly, June 2012)

2.2 Why this paper would like to study a Shared Services Center in Thailand?

In a fierce competition in global business perspective, there are many international corporation looks for opportunities to save their cost of operation, so many of corporation around the world decided to set up their service center to other countries to provide managerial, technical, or other supporting services to their associated companies in regional and headquarter business.

Some of shared services jobs like business planning, procurement process, information technology support, research and development of products, human resource management, corporate financial services or customer services organization could be located anywhere in this world. Thailand is one of attractive country to establish the shared services center given Board of Investment in Thailand provides a hugh tax benefit and support international corporation to set up their service center or Regional Operating Headquarters (ROH) like flat rate for corporate income tax, exempt from personal income tax for expatriate or exempt in dividend.

According to Board of Investment information, many of multinational companies have established parts and components production facilities or shared service centers in Thailand following:

- Honda has opened Asian Honda Motor runs the regional operating headquarters, serving to organize logistics and parts procurement for much of the Asia-Pacific region.
- Toyota has opened its Toyota Motor Corps Asia-Pacific office as its regional headquarters, supporting services across ASEAN, India, and Taiwan, support R&D, staff training courses in production processes, logistics and quality control.

- Royal Philips Electronics has been operating a shared service center in Bangkok since 2002, offering multiple services to customers in 15 countries in 6 different languages, including reporting, accounts payable and receivable processing, planning, and purchasing.
- Nestle (Thai) Ltd. selected Thailand as regional headquarters because of its central location in Asia, and has a good infrastructure for the expatriate community.
- ExxonMobil, providing services in the petrochemical sector, also set up a Shared Service Center in Bangkok in 2003, supporting affiliates in the Asia-Pacific region elsewhere in other regions, employed over 2,100 staffs, support operations including accounting services, information systems, payroll and human resources data administration, accounts payable and customer services.

However, government's benefits are not only aspects to set up the shared service center in Thailand. People is one of aspect that multinational companies need to thoroughly think whether or not Thai people can provide an excellent service or able to deliver premium support beside the advantages of cost effective workforce. Those Multinational companies need to get reliable resources, and definitely good supervisors who can help maintain their operation and ensure the organization can deliver the great service according to key performance index and expectation of business.

2.3 Why this paper research would like to study how first-time supervisor in shared services center in Thailand have challenges in their transition to a new role?

It's a big opportunity to expand shared services centers in Thailand, if people, specifically Thai supervisors are strength in business perspective, it would create a sense of expanding business of multinational companies in Thailand by increasing more value-added job or challenging service in our country, which reducing unemployment rate in Thailand and boost up Thailand GDP from incremental investment.

At the beginning of setting up shared service center, those multinational companies have to send their expatriates from regional or head quarter to ensure the smooth operation handled by Thai people. Year-by-year, Thai people have developed

their capabilities and showed that they can supervise this operation and managing a team in Thailand, and proved that there is no need to require expatriates in this shared service center. Then, Thai people would get those supervisory roles from expatriates, and further on move up to managerial role or regional director role.

What if Thai supervisor failed to be a good supervisor and shows that a team managed by Thai supervisor failed to operate and keep repeating this kind of situation of many times, those companies might rethink whether they should grow their shared service center in this country due to failure of people capabilities, those company might not able to afford the cost of their expatriates for many positions in a long term. They may decide to close a shared service center and find other countries who has more capabilities to manage their service.

These are main reasons that how we develop Thai employees, and create a positive transition from individual contributor to great supervisor, in order to take those expatriates jobs, and create more opportunities for Thai people to grow up in global arena by taking regional or global position from the head quarter of those multinational companies.

2.4 What are the main theoretical frameworks related to this study?

There are many theoretical frameworks about developing new supervisors or help transition individual contributor to first-time supervisor, hence we do not know what is the framework fit with Thai new supervisor who works in shared service center.

Most of framework will pick some areas of functions of management and build up the methodology to build capabilities of supervisor around 3-10 functions.

Table 1.1 Functions of management

Leading	Assessing employee	Directing	Managing
Advising	Organizing	Mentoring	Inspiring
Coaching	Coordinating	Clarifying	Communicating
Delivering	Building network	Delegating	Developing people
Driving result	Forming team	Prioritizing	Personal Learning
Supporting	Planning	Motivating	Inspecting

For example, one of the most famous model would be Situational Leadership framework which categorized the leadership style into 4 behaviors types (Directing, Coaching, Supporting, Delegating), and supervisor should be able to identify maturity and self-motivation factor of their employee before adjusting their supervising style of each employee. There is another research from Marquette Education, identified the behaviors that supervisor should have and created over 20 lists of supervisor leaders and 24 personal characteristics, we can also found 100 of articles about what supervisors should learn and develop their behaviors and skills on the internet.

Hence, Center for Creative Leadership conducted a research from over thousands from participants of their three-day training program. They asked their participants about the leadership challenges first-time supervisor have, as part of participant pre-work before attending the training program. Center for Creative Leadership asked their participants to answer, three biggest leadership challenges (free format wording) are in their supervisory role. Researchers from CCL and Davidson College analyzed the actual words provided by each participants and coded into 12 challenges.

Table 1.2 The Leadership Challenges First-Time-Supervisor Have

Challenge	Frequency (% of First-Time-Supervisor that Mentioned Challenge)
1. Adjustment to People Management/Displaying Authority	59.3
2. Developing Managerial & Personal Effectiveness	46.1
3. Leading Team Achievement	43.4
4. Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics	33.9
5. Motivation of Others	27.1
6. Performance Management & Accountability Issues	24.1
7. Coaching, Developing, & Mentoring Others	21.4
8. Communication	17.6
9. Delegation & Micromanagement	17.6
10. Conflict Management	15.3
11. Working With a Range of Employees	14.2
12. Doing More With Less	5.4

Table 1.3 Definitions of the Leadership Challenges First-Time-Supervisor Have

1. Adjustment to People Management/ Displaying Authority	Any expression of difficulty establishing or asserting one's authority. Difficulties associated with moving from a coworker to a superior and gaining respect while maintaining established positive personal relationships. Adapting to the new responsibility that comes from moving from individual contributor to a manager. The ability to influence, manage, and coordinate employees that are not in one's direct line of authority.
2. Developing Managerial & Personal Effectiveness	Concerns with becoming a better leader while still being a productive employee, including: time management; stress management; relationship management; acquiring leadership skills; acquiring job-specific skills specific to one's industry or organization.
3. Leading Team Achievement	Providing guidance to one's team and leading the team especially when directions or goals/ expectations are unclear. The ability to give directions to team members and monitor the team's work in order to stay organized and meet deadlines. Building a team. Team chemistry.
4. Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics	Asserting one's opinion to upper-level management or superiors including speaking for one's own subordinates or department. Gaining visibility with upper-level management. Gaining an understanding for an organization's corporate structure, and of the organizational culture and/or organizational politics. Navigating a change implemented by the organization for oneself as well as for the team/direct reports.

**Table 1.3 Definitions of the Leadership Challenges First-Time-Supervisor Have
(cont.)**

5. Motivation of Others	The ability to motivate others, both direct and non-direct reports. This includes inspiring all subordinates in general to complete assigned work as well as encouraging others to go above and beyond expectations or put in more effort than the minimum requirement. Understanding what motivates others and being able to motivate without monetary incentives.
6. Performance Management & Accountability Issues	Overcoming any reluctance or lack of comfort giving feedback about poor performance to subordinates. Holding subordinates accountable for their actions. Effectively dealing with employees who are lacking in ability, knowledge, or experience.
7. Coaching, Developing, & Mentoring Others	The act of developing subordinates' knowledge, skills, and abilities. Mentoring and coaching team members specifically pertaining to their overall career development.
8. Communication	The ability to communicate with people of all levels within the organization, including team members, superiors, and peers or additional work streams. Not only keeping lines of communication open, but also figuring out ways to communicate in order to achieve the best outcome. Effectively communicating goals and/or expectations with subordinates and superiors.
9. Delegation & Micromanagement	Ability to identify what tasks have to be done by oneself versus what tasks can be given to subordinates. Knowing when to interfere or provide assistance to team members without micromanaging or taking over a task. Giving up control (for example, the mental adjustment from wanting to complete all tasks individually to allowing others to take ownership of work). Trust and comfort with others doing work that supervisor will ultimately be responsible for.

**Table 1.3 Definitions of the Leadership Challenges First-Time-Supervisor Have
(cont.)**

10. Conflict Management	The ability to proactively manage or reactively resolve conflict between group members. Identifying and addressing smaller issues before they turn into larger conflicts and mitigating conflict once it occurs. The ability to deal with confrontation and/or resistance from team members.
11. Working with a Range of Employees	The ability to effectively work with and lead employees that have different opinions, personalities, and skills/abilities than oneself. Being able to adapt behavior based on the ways in which different people work.
12. Doing More with Less	Difficulties related to a lack of necessary resources including budgeting and staffing issues or the ability to perform despite these limitations.

This paper will leverage 12 challenges that Center for Creative Leadership emerged from the data in order of frequency mentioned by those participants and test with Thai supervisors who work in a shared service company, in order to understand the challenges that they have.

Nevertheless, proving whether Thai supervisors mention those same top 3 challenges identified by Center for Creative Leadership or not. The expectation to do this study is to create an awareness of challenges of first-time-supervisor in shared service companies in Thailand.

Researcher do hope that understanding organization issues regarding challenge in a transition of supervisor could bring a value to organization by identifying the opportunities to get rid of those challenges to improve effectiveness of supervisor with the resulting in effectiveness of organization in Thailand.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper will use 2 data collection methods to gather intensive information from supervisor's level in shared services centers.

3.1 Semi-Structured Interview with 10-15 Supervisors

At least 10-15 supervisors from shared services centers will be asked about their experience in supervisory role, interviewer will try to understand those supervisor pain points on a transition process and also real examples or situation where they can explain why they feel struggle in a supervisory role, and what could make them be a success supervisor if they would be equipped by those knowledge, skills and capabilities.

Main target of supervisors in the interview sessions work for ExxonMobil, American oil and gas company who established shared service center in Thailand over 12 years, have a number staff over 2,100 employees with approximate of 250 supervisors in the organization.

The proposed interview questions will be asked within 30 minutes' interview session.

Interview Questions

- [Warm-up Question] What was your first reaction when you are known that you were being promoted to a supervisor role?
 - What are the three most critical individual contributor to supervisor transition challenges you are currently facing?
 - Do you have any real experience or situation where you feel difficult to manage as a supervisor role?
 - What do you wish you had known or company could train you sooner about being a supervisor?

- [Closing Question] If you were onboarding a first time supervisor, what are your personal advices you would tell them?

- [Note] Once the interviewees run out of ideas, interviewer will show them the list with the 12 items to see if it prompts any additional ideas in them.

Interviewer will analyze and map the actual wording of each supervisor to 12 definitions of the leadership challenges first-time-supervisor, and project the result of what make Thai supervisors in shared service centers struggle in the role and also their opinion on how would company help them remove those obstacles and challenges in a transition.

3.2 Internet questionnaires 35 supervisors

On top of interview sessions with supervisors, this paper will gather additional information from supervisors who can provide their inputs to this study by internet surveys. This internet questionnaire will target to get inputs from supervisor who work in shared services centers only. The reason to use additional internet questionnaire is to get the inputs other shared services companies where the researcher cannot access to get the interview session.

The proposed survey questions will be sent to selected supervisors in shared service center.

Internet Questionnaires

3.2.1 General questions for demographic of interviewees

1. How long have you been in a supervisory role?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 2-3 years
- 3-5years
- over 5 years

2. How many subordinates do you have?

- Less than 3 subordinates
- 3-5 subordinates
- 5-10 subordinates
- 10-15 subordinates
- over 15 subordinates

3. What department do you work in?

- Accounting
- Administrative
- Customer Service
- Engineer
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Legal
- Manufacturing
- Marketing
- Operations
- Procurement
- Public Relations
- Research and Development
- Sales
- Other

4. Which of the following categories best describes the industry of your company?

- Automobiles
- Construction
- Computer and Electronics
- Fast-Moving Consumer Goods
- Finance Services & Banking
- Hotel and Food Services

- Information Technology Services
- Manufacturing
- Oil & Energy
- Real Estate, Rental and Leasing
- Scientific or Technical Services
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Telecommunications
- Other Industry

3.2.2 Specific questions for the study analysis

1. Rating - If you would rate your readiness to be appointed as a first-time supervisor from 1-10, how would you rate yourself on the 1st day of being supervisor?

2. Rating difficulty of these 12 challenges from 1-10 for each challenge in the table below? (Provide Table of Definition)

Challenge

- Adjustment to People Management/Displaying Authority
- Coaching, Developing, & Mentoring Others
- Communication
- Conflict Management
- Delegation & Micromanagement
- Developing Managerial & Personal Effectiveness
- Doing More With Less
- Leading Team Achievement
- Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics
- Motivation of Others
- Performance Management & Accountability Issues
- Working With a Range of Employees

3. What are the top three challenges you are currently facing from the table below?

4. What do you wish you had known or company could train you sooner about being a supervisor?

Data will be analyzed and mapped to 12 definitions of the leadership challenges first-time-supervisor together with the interview data, and will conclude the findings of challenges in transition of Thai supervisors and proposed the recommendation to the shared service center organizations according to the findings.



CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In conclude of research finding process, this paper gathered and analyzed data 2 sources of data. First one from semi-structure interview of 15 supervisors and second one from 35 internet questionnaires. Researcher found many interesting points of being supervisory role in the data collection process and would like to point those highlighted items in this document by synthesizing a conclusion data from both sources and interpret the responses to the finding by leverage both sources of information. The result of this study will be shown in a syntheses result of questionnaires and interview sessions.

Due to create a confidentiality interview, those 15 interviewees can select to provide their demographic information to the researcher depending on their comfortable to disclose their information. However, all 15 interviewees were reviewed their profiles as experienced supervisors range from 6 months to 8 years in the supervisory role who worked in a shared service center in Thailand.

Whereas researcher could ask for the demographic data of those who submitted their responses on the internet questionnaires and below tables show the demographics of supervisors who responded the questionnaire in this study.

Table 4.1 Demographic-1 of supervisors who responded in the internet questionnaires

Time in a supervisory role	Number of supervisor
Less than 1 year	5
1-2 years	6
2-3 years	4
3-5 years	6
Over 5 years	14

Over 60% of responses are supervisors who have experience in supervisory role less than 5 years, so the data has a good range of responses from junior to senior supervisors.

Table 4.2 Demographic-2 of supervisors who responded in the internet questionnaires

Number of subordinates supervisor has	Number of supervisor
Less than 3 subordinates	5
3-5 subordinates	10
5-10 subordinates	9
10-15 subordinates	2
Over 15 subordinates	9

68% of responses have subordinates less than 10 people, which is considered a good span of control, in terms of the role to supervise employees in a shared service center.

Table 4.3 Demographic-3 of supervisors who responded in the internet questionnaires

Department that supervisor works in	Number of supervisor
Research and Development	5
Sales	5
Marketing	5
Operations	4
Human Resources	4
Information Technology	4
Procurement	3
Manufacturing	2
Accounting	1
Administrative	1
Customer Service	1

Table 4.4 Demographic-4 of supervisors who responded in the internet questionnaires

Industries of supervisor's company	Number of supervisor
Oil & Energy	7
Fast-Moving Consumer Goods	6
Automobiles	5
Construction	4
Manufacturing	4
Finance Services & Banking	3
Hotel and Food Services	3
Information Technology Services	1
Scientific or Technical Services	1
Telecommunications	1

The responses show a good mix of supervisors in various departments and industries of shared service center, which benefit to the analysis as it's not specific to one or two department group of people, or specific industry.

4.1 Reaction and readiness of being a supervisor for the first time

Firstly, the reaction of each supervisor when they know that they were being promoted to a supervisory role. Many of them are worry about the role itself and reaction of team members. Some said they are not sure whether they will get a respect from their team members given they were colleagues of team members. One reaction that from the interviewee is "Oh my god! This is scary", and when researcher asked for the additional information, she said, she doesn't feel ready to be a supervisor at all and don't have any confidence to be in this role. As well as another few example where supervisors questionable themselves and surprised by the unexpected news. Researcher observed that a majority of supervisors were not confident to be promoted this role.

In consistent with the result from the internet questionnaires of 35 Thai supervisors who worked in the shared service center in Thailand.

According to the internet questionnaire result, the average score of readiness to be a first-time supervisor is 6.60 out of 10. It's obvious that most of supervisors felt that they don't feel very confident to be appointed in this position, given only 35 percent of responses rated their self-confidence to be in this role from 8 to 10 (very confident), but a big group of responses shows in range of 3 to 6 score (moderate to low).

However, those positive comments were also mentioned during the interview sessions as well. Some supervisors said that it was a moment that they felt recognized by their management and happy to know that management trust in them, or see their potential in their skills. Some told that they received good explanation from their management about why they were promoted and what management could see them contribute this role for the company's benefit.

There are various reactions from the interviewees, hence researcher analyzed data from both sources and concluded that approximate 40 percent of Thai supervisors in shared services center were not comfortable and confidence when he or she were told to be a supervisor for the first time, even they appreciated management support and feel recognized at the same time.

4.2 Top challenges of being a supervisor as the first time

Secondly, researcher would like to talk about the most difficult challenges of be supervisor as a first time and understand the areas where Thai supervisors struggle with their transition. This part could be considered as a key area of this study, given many organizations known that they have to develop their employees to be good supervisors and also known that supervisors need support from management to help them in a transition period of being supervisor. However, most of the company don't know where are the focus areas or what kind of training or support they should put as top priorities to tackle the issues.

In this part of analysis, the result from internet questionnaire can give a big picture of structural data based on "12 challenges where first-time supervisors have" of Center for Creative Leadership. Table 8 shows the score by each challenge order by alphabet and the graph shows the ordering of each challenges by difficulty score from highest score to the lowest one.

Table 4.5 Result of average the difficulty of these 12 challenges rated by 35 supervisors from (Not difficult at all) 1 – (Extremely difficult) 10 for each challenge

Challenge	Average Difficulty
1. Adjustment to People Management/Displaying Authority	5.86
2. Coaching, Developing, & Mentoring Others	6.07
3. Communication	5.03
4. Conflict Management	6.04
5. Delegation & Micromanagement	5.71
6. Developing Managerial & Personal Effectiveness	6.80
7. Doing More With Less	6.31
8. Leading Team Achievement	5.77
9. Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics	6.17
10. Motivation of Others	6.29
11. Performance Management & Accountability Issues	6.09
12. Working With a Range of Employees	6.43

The graph below showing the result of difficulty score in challenges where supervisors are facing in their supervisory role from highest to lowest

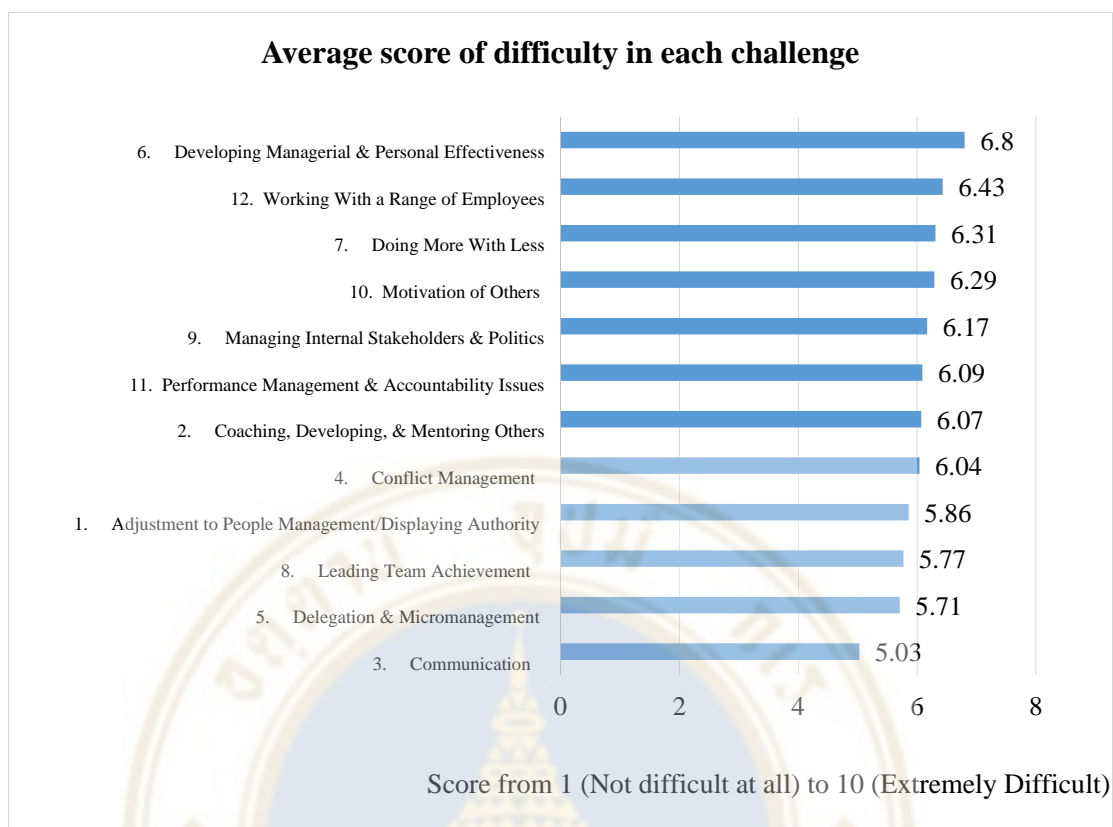


Figure 4.1 Average score of difficulty in each challenge

According to the result from the questionnaire, “Developing managerial & personal effectiveness” is rated 6.8 out of 10, which showing concerns with becoming a Thai supervisor while still being a productive employee like time management, stress management and acquiring leadership skills showed as the most difficulty area of challenge. Followed by “Working with a range of employees” is rated 6.43 out of 10, where. Thai supervisor feel difficulty to effectively work with and lead employees that have different opinions or personalities than oneself. The third and fourth challenges have a relatively close score in range of 6.29-6.31 out of 10 are “Doing More with Less” and “Motivation of Others” where supervisors feel that they have a difficulty to manage budgeting and staffing issues, and motivate others includes inspiring all subordinates in general to complete assigned works.

Not only the difficulty rating in the internet questionnaires, the questionnaire also asked supervisors to select the top three challenges they facing in their supervisory

role to recognize the top pick up challenges without considering the difficulty on each challenge.

This paper would like to understand what the most frequency challenges that first-time-supervisor mentioned are, then we can understand that these top challenges mentioned by those supervisor would be a top focus areas that shared service centers in Thailand should have these awareness and able to support them as top priorities.

The graph below showing the result of the most selected top three challenges where supervisors are facing in their supervisory role from the questionnaire.

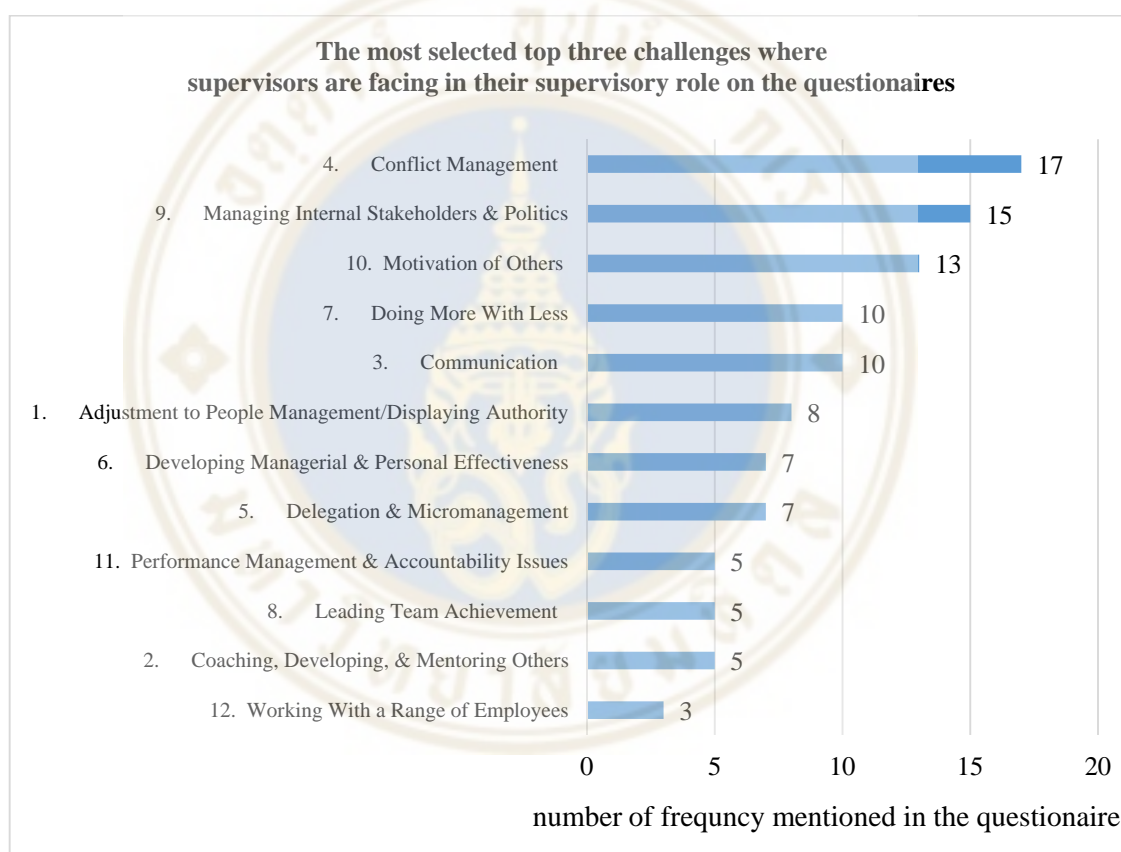


Figure 4.2 The most selected top three challenges where supervisors are facing in their supervisory role on the questionnaires

Regardless of difficulty in each challenge, the top three most frequently mentioned by supervisor are difference than the rating of difficulty to handle each challenges. The top three challenges mentioned by them are conflict management, managing internal stakeholders & politics and motivation of others.

The statistic result on the internet questionnaires consistent with the analysis from the interview result of 15 supervisors, which this paper could elaborate more in details of each top three frequency challenge by quoting some conversations with supervisors following:

4.2.1 Conflict Management - (5 out of 15 supervisors mentioned during the interview sessions)

One supervisor shared her experience about the difficulty to manage conflict among her team member, which create an uncomfortable situation and bad work environment in her team, where she cannot take side to one of her two employees, and it ended up by asking her boss to move one of her staff to other position outside her team. She admitted that she doesn't have any knowledge or ability to solve this conflict within her team, at the same time it creates a big stress in this role and she almost give up with supervisory role.

Another good example is about one supervisor expressed his difficulty to build a good relationship with his one of subordinates because the subordinate doesn't like his boss (manager of subordinate), so the conflict among upper and lower level appear in his reporting line. It's quite difficult for him to gain trust and ask his subordinate to perform the tasks according to his manager's vision given a personal bias among them. He told me that he cannot solve this issue himself and he has to live with it for many years until his boss moved to another role in the organization.

The last example about conflict management would be the situation after performance appraisal conversation, an employee surprised with her result of annual performance, then she shut the door to her supervisor and told her supervisor that she will not care about her work anymore and will deliver only at the minimum level. The supervisor shared that she cannot assign any additional work item to her anymore, given it will not be completed on time, moreover supervisor told that she cannot provide any coaching or feedback to this employee after breaking of a relationship between supervisor and subordinate. She said this is beyond her scope and she expected her manager to resolve this situation.

With the scoring from the internet and interview content, it's no doubt that conflict is everywhere, and not able to manage conflict effectively could lead to unsolvable situation where the management need to manage a position appointment by moving someone out of the team. Many supervisors are afraid to confront with conflict in the organization given they don't have any knowledge or capability to handle it effectively, or even understand them and dare to confront with them.

4.2.2 Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics - (4 out of 15 supervisors mentioned during the interview sessions)

One of the key change in transition from individual contributor to first-time supervisor is your stakeholder in the role multiple more than twice. When you work as an individual contributor, only one key person you have to manage in organization structure is your supervisor. In the other way around, a supervisor have people surround them 360 degree in the organization chart and many of them are not familiar to manage many of stakeholders in their new supervisory role at the same time. This kind of issues have been mentioned during the interview sessions from a few supervisors.

One supervisor worked in American company, hence she mentioned that she doesn't feel that her company shows American values or culture in Thailand, but she felt that Thai culture and value has a strong influence over American culture. She said she's confident to challenge status quo with her boss, and some of her direct conversations were surprisingly mentioned during her 101 meeting with her boss. "You should soften your way of commenting during the meeting, it shows people that you don't respect my idea and make me embarrass in front of people". She thought that her direct style could fit with American company, but it disappoint her to hear this comment from her direct boss.

Another clear example would be one of new supervisor just appointed to a supervisory role where team members are senior and have more experienced than her. She said that it's difficult for her to coach or advise people in her team and not make them feel uncomfortable. She had a tough argument with one of her senior member, who has a big influence and strong connection with her team members. The next day other team members expressed some kind of indirect behaviors showing that they are not appreciate with her action. It take time a while until she understand that this senior

member is a key person that she need to bring him to her side, so other members will appreciate and listen to her more if she can build a good relationship with him.

In one of interview session, a supervisor shared that they got an extra jobs from management, which the job itself should be managed and handle by the neighborhood team, however he cannot manage the expectation of management as good as another supervisor of neighborhood team. Hence, management thought that her team has more room to take this kind of work over another. This kind of politic situation thought her about setting expectation to management is one of politic tool in the organization.

There are many multi-national companies set up their shared service centers in Thailand, once majority of people of organization are Thai, researcher observed that some Thai values and culture play important roles in the organization like valuing relationship over contribution, networking with senior people, take side from bureaucratic within their group. It's another big challenge how could new supervisor able to read the context of organization and understand who they should gain trust and connection, or who they should closely aware of managing the relationship with each stakeholder in the organization, to avoid a difficult politic situation that could impact to supervisor themselves or team's performance.

4.2.3 Motivation of Others - (9 out of 15 supervisors mentioned during the interview sessions)

Surprisingly from the interview sessions, motivating employee is the challenge that has been raised the most during 15 interview sessions. Majority of supervisors in the interview mentioned this in some part of their conversations with researcher. It also reflect to the researcher that many supervisors in Thailand need to work a lot in motivation skills to raise up a bar of their employee and unlock employees to their fullest potential. The ability to motivate others and inspiring all subordinates to complete assigned work is one of biggest art of management. Many of supervisors have to translate management's message to their subordinates in an easy to digest messages, plus motivate them to work on those messages above and beyond expectations or put in more effort than the minimum requirement.

One situation where supervisor was asked from his management to nominate one of his team member to join a cross-functional activity committee to support company's event. He knows that his employees are still overwhelmed with their operation, hence he felt it's a good opportunity to one of his member who has not exposed to other functions. He could see a real benefit to this team member to join the committee and create a presence to leadership. All is good for his team member, but he knows that he has to craft the message to this team member carefully, otherwise it could demotivate him by adding additional work on top of his current workload.

Another example where one of supervisor in the interview expressed her difficulty to motivate her team member during a peak season of year-end financial closing. Her team member work=life balance during this month period went down to zero score and the work environment is very quiet and not fun like usual, everyone focus on their owned tasks and she could observed some angriness voice of her team members when they received calls. She said it's very tough for her to keep employee engaged and be motivated with work, she tried to use some recognition tools to support this period of time, but not all of them she could exercise that way.

The last example that researcher like the most is one of supervisor wants to develop one of her employee to fill her position, so she tried very hard to change this subordinated mindset to open for the supervisory position and accepted to be developed the skills to be ready to backfill her within a year. She told that mindset is not easy to change and she need to put a lot of effort to plant the seeds, slowly motivate and groom her subordinate to be competent and has a right mindset like herself.

It's pretty interesting in a way that motivating other is the top challenge that was brought to a table, why Thai employees cannot and self-motivate and why new supervisors feel so common that this is the area that most of them are currently facing. If researcher combine the frequency challenge were mentioned by the interviewee together with the top 3 internet questionnaire result. The top challenge will be "Motivation of Others" and "Conflict management"

The graph below showing the result of the most selected top three challenges where supervisors are facing in their supervisory role in this study.

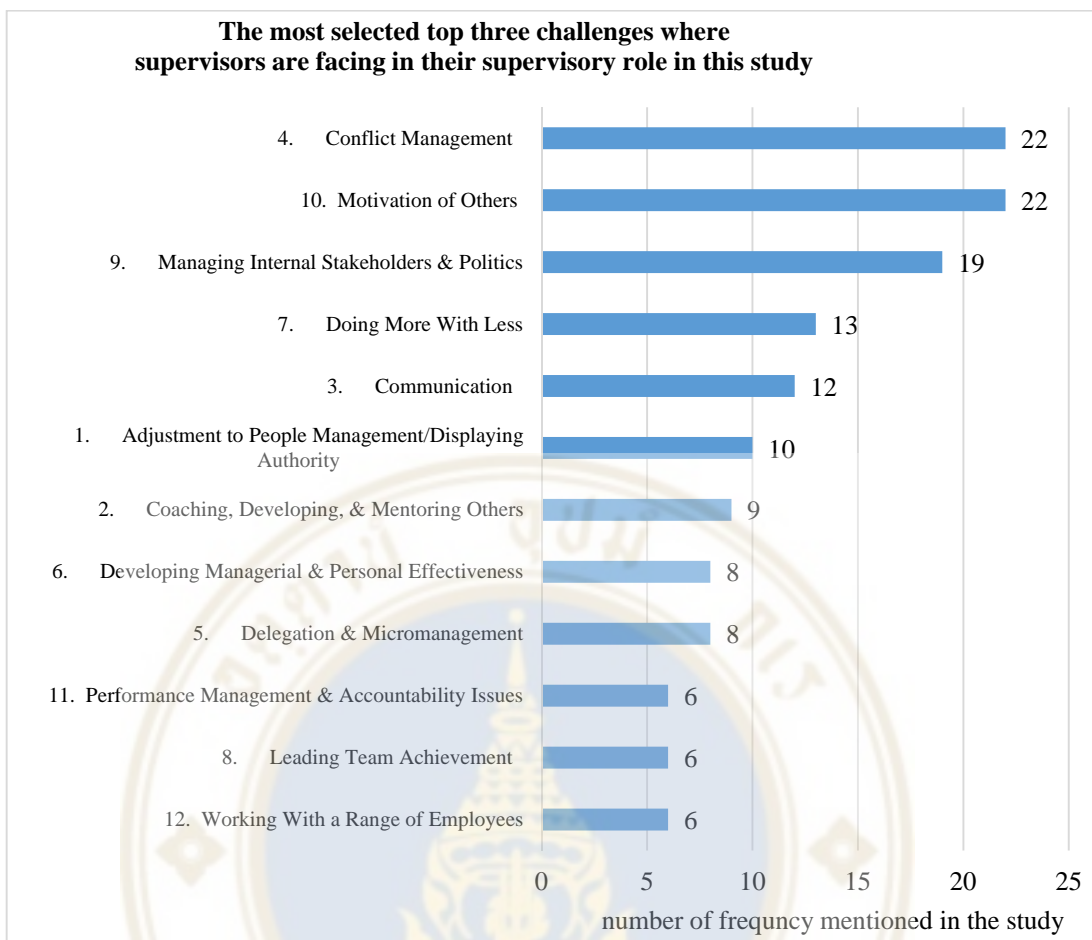


Figure 4.3 The most selected top three challenges where supervisors are facing in their supervisory role in this study

Researcher put difficulty score as an additional criterion to weigh on the most frequency challenge mentioned by supervisors, in order to find the most frequency mentioned together with most difficulty challenge to manage in the role, and able to conclude that “Motivation of Others” can be considered as a top priority challenge.

Table 4.6 Result of top 12 challenges ordered by frequency that mentioned by supervisors with weigh on the average difficulty

Challenge	Frequency that Mentioned	Average Difficulty
10. Motivation of Others	22	6.29
4. Conflict Management	22	6.04
9. Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics	19	6.17
7. Doing More With Less	13	6.31
3. Communication	12	5.03
1. Adjustment to People Management/ Displaying Authority	10	5.86
2. Coaching, Developing, & Mentoring Others	9	6.07
5. Delegation & Micromanagement	8	5.71
6. Developing Managerial & Personal Effectiveness	8	6.80
8. Leading Team Achievement	6	5.77
11. Performance Management & Accountability Issues	6	6.09
12. Working With a Range of Employees	6	6.43

It's also quite interesting that the result from internet questionnaires showed that top 3 frequency of challenges of Thai supervisors are not the same as top 3 areas mentioned by the result from Center for Creative Leadership.

Table 4.7 Result of top 12 challenges ordered by frequency that mentioned from Center for Creative Leadership compare with this research study

Ranked	Center for Creative Leadership	This Research Study
1	Adjustment to People Management/Displaying Authority	Motivation of Others
2	Developing Managerial & Personal Effectiveness	Conflict Management
3	Leading Team Achievement	Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics
4	Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics	Doing More With Less
5	Motivation of Others	Communication
6	Performance Management & Accountability Issues	Adjustment to People Management/Displaying Authority
7	Coaching, Developing, & Mentoring Others	Coaching, Developing, & Mentoring Others
8	Communication	Delegation & Micromanagement
9	Delegation & Micromanagement	Developing Managerial & Personal Effectiveness
10	Conflict Management	Leading Team Achievement
11	Working With a Range of Employees	Performance Management & Accountability Issues
12	Doing More With Less	Working With a Range of Employees

This paper also found that Thai supervisors in shared service centers have a difference challenges from a global research under Center for Creative Leadership, the difference result could be driven by many factors like demographic of supervisors in Thailand in terms of age, education level and experiences, also if cultural dimension is included in the consideration, Thai supervisors work in multi-national companies in

Thailand could have differences priorities of challenge in terms of transitioning to a new role.

However, it's very important to shared service center in Thailand to ensure that the organization will put some priorities to support new supervisor's challenges in their organization regardless of priorities, given each supervisor might have some different priorities of their challenges. Hence, the top 3 challenges which been raised by Thai supervisors are "Motivation of Others", "Conflict Management" and "Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics" would be a good common theme and starting point for the organization to drive some initiatives to support their supervisors in the organization.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

In the interview sessions, the researcher asked those supervisors to share the areas where they wish they had known, or company could train them sooner about being supervisors.

Many good comments also support the ranking or challenge in this study like following items: Anger management and basic of psychology, Art of leadership skill, Coaching & Conflict management, Managing crucial or difficult conversation, Guideline to handle difficult people and conflict management, How to be a good supervisor while having humanity, Internal stakeholders management and politics, Managing difficult staffs, Psychology, What subordinates expect to supervisor, Goals and objective setting, how to say it right, understanding roles, connect to the network and how to encourage others.

In this study, researcher realized that being a first-time supervisor is not easy job, but it's a challenging job for people to want to step up themselves from the comfort areas to encounter many difficulties and another level of experiences where they cannot get from the individual contributor role. The difficulties could be start from their own mindset and readiness to take this role trough many challenges which been shared in this study. However, those new supervisors should not forget that they also have supervisor whom could support them in this transition period and help them pass thought the difficulties or challenges they currently facing. A new supervisor should ask and seek for the feedback to adjust themselves to this new role. Researcher observed many of good supervisors have belief. They believe in their own capabilities to develop themselves and become a great supervisor one day, and no matter "Motivation of Others", "Conflict Management" and "Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics" are considered as top challenges, those supervisors who believe in themselves will be able to manage it effectively. They will find resources and knowledge, to develop their competencies to work on those challenges.

On company perspectives, to put someone in supervisory role is like another bet of losing good individual contributor and get one bad supervisor in the organization. If company, especially shared service center in Thailand well-manage and support those individual contributors in the right transition to the first-time supervisor. If the organization could set them for success, not only a great supervisor they will get to manage their operations, those supervisors could create another great supervisor as their successors on and on as a leadership pipeline for the organization.

To close this study, researcher would like to share some interesting personal advices from various supervisors in the interviews on what are the tips they would tell a new supervisor if they were onboarding them. Starting from “Don’t take the problem homes”, “Prepare your mind to be ready for all problems”, “Being a good supervisor is not just about the result, but also about the work environment, team member, feeling and empathy”, “Observing and listening”, “Trying to find talent in the others”, “Your jobs is to take care and develop your people to deliver the business not to run business only”, “Coach your team member as if he or she will replace you tomorrow”, “Treat your team the way you want to be treated” and the last one is “It’s another chapter of your life, have fun and enjoy the whole great new experience”

As mentioned, this paper intends to study challenge factors preventing a successful transition of first-time supervisor of shared services center in Thailand, and now we know what the top key challenges are like “Motivation of Others”, “Conflict Management” and “Managing Internal Stakeholders & Politics”. Researcher might not know what shared services center in Thailand will take the learning from this paper and then do something and create good supporting resources to help their first-time supervisors be success in their role. With hope in our Thai supervisors to be success in the organization, the researcher would just want see something in Thai organization better, no matter it’s about supervisors, people, system, process, tools. If something gets better, it’s worth.

In conclusion, all company wants to set supervisors up for success. Both supervisors and company should aware of top 3 priorities, company closely engage supervisor by providing them the right training programs and help address supervisor challenges, while supervisor themselves need to embrace with the transition, proactively seek for support, and believe in their capabilities.

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