

Ismailia

Weekly Follow-up Helps Remove Work Stresses  
Arket Wood success story



The exceptional thing about this training is the weekly follow up. This makes the supervisors consistently self-reflect so the things they learn, they tend to adopt.

Mohamed Mostafa, Finance and HR manager



Arket Wood employs around 72 people to make wooden furniture. Arkets Wood's company culture is considered to have a positive impact on its employees. However, with the various economic crises that hit Egypt in the last years, the issues between supervisors and workers have gone from bad to worse in many companies.

Mohamed Mostafa, Finance and HR manager of Arket explains that the SST provided supervisors with the needed tools to resolve their conflicts with the workers without resorting to management. "The exceptional thing about this training is the weekly follow up. This makes the supervisor consistently self-reflect so the things they learn, they tend to adopt," he explains.

“During the weekly follow up, we talk about how we dealt with issues in our work through the course materials which helps us apply what we learned more efficiently,” Awad Hosny, Arket’s carpentry supervisor says. “It has had an impact on not only work, but my personal life as well. I’m newly married, and faced a lot of pressure, but now I’m able to better compromise with my wife and make more time for her.”

The Supervisory Skills Training is provided through KHATWA for improving job quality. KHATWA aims at raising the awareness about the importance of job quality and at paving the way for SMEs to do so. Its success lies in establishing close networks with SMEs nationwide, thereby significantly influencing employment potentials.

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Supervisors Transfer Positive Attitudes to Management and Workers

Atos Generators success story



The training opened up a new approach to thinking when it comes to dealing with either the management or the workers.

Ahmed Khalil, Supervisor



For Atos, which put together imported parts to make generators, their 100 workers are essentially technicians and their work depends largely on their own craftsmanship. Thus, they need to be in the best state of mind to get any work done.

“The training opened up a new approach to thinking when it comes to dealing with either the management or the workers,” Ahmed Khalil, a participant in the SST and the Production Assistant Supervisor at Atos says. “I used to yell at the workers if they did something wrong, and get very angry. The SST taught me how to think before acting, which kept the work flowing without interruption and our relationship got better,” he explains.

“The programme focuses on the supervisor, since they are the person between the management and the workers, they are able to affect both,” Khalil says. “After the training we started spreading the SST to the rest of the team at the company. The follow-up and coaching that happens weekly, really helps us continue to be motivated.”

For Abdelfattah Yehia, the quality manager the training was crucial to his family life. “I used to bring my work home. I would become stressed and not separate between my work and my life leading to further stresses I created at home with my family. After the SST I learned different ways to separate my mood between work and home.”

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Suez



## Beyond Micromanagement

EL-Lewaa for Plastics Co. success story



This training was a turning point in my life, it changed my perspective, I was going to close the factory because I couldn't manage people or deal with my employees.

Anwar EL-Lewaa, Owner of EL-Lewaa



The main challenge that faced Anwar EL-Lewaa, the owner of EL-Lewaa for Plastics Co, was his inability to delegate. A self-made businessman who spent his adolescence working in factories in Upper Egypt before establishing his own. Anwar found it hard to trust his workers with tasks. This meant that he was not only micromanaging every aspect of his plastics factory in Suez, but also sometimes doing small tasks himself.

“This training was a turning point in my life, it changed my perspective,” Anwar commented about the Supervisory Skills Training which aims at improving job quality in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Suez Canal region by tackling the intensive trainings and skills development of supervisors. “I was going to close the factory because I couldn't manage people or deal with my employees” he says.

For Anwar, the SST was where he learned to look at supervisors as his partners. Once he did that, he was able to assess his staff and allocate more responsibility to his most hard working staff. “Now I focus on getting business and equipment maintenance, before I was working on all aspects”.

Hoda, one of the supervisors at El-Lewaa in charge of a production line, further explains that once Anwar started trusting them and learned how to assess and manage his supervisors they were now able to take responsibility and collaborate better.

On a personal level Hoda, who also took part in the SST, learned a lot of skills such as planning, decision-making and developed the ability to assess the workers’ skills and better distribute the workload.

“At home, I applied all the things I learned at the training to my daughter's studies and helping her manage her time. This has really improved her grades,” she says.



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The positive work environment contributes to lowering the turnover rate of workers. When workers stay longer we can invest in training them, elevating their expertise or give them promotions.

Sameh Salama, Supervisor



EL Salam for readymade garments is a new company in Ismailia. While its founders were in the business of importing clothes, the newly added taxation and floatation of the Egyptian pound forced them into changing their practice.

The group of young owners decided to venture into the garment industry by establishing a factory in July 2016. With over 200 workers producing jeans for men and children, the founders had a rare opportunity to establish their own organisational culture - but it didn't come without its set of challenges.

Sameh Salama, one of the founders and manager of EL Salam, explains that they had trouble enforcing their own policy on their supervisors who had already been established and gained experience in other companies. The management wanted to ensure that the workers were being treated well, with respect, and that rules were followed and no favouritism took place. But the supervisors already had their own management style, and it wasn't based on that.

“We quickly saw differences in their attitudes with both the management and the workers,” Sameh commented on the SST. “The training helped them best utilise the experiences they have in their work. The positive work environment also contributes to lowering the turnover rate of workers. When workers stay longer we can invest in training them, elevating their expertise or give them promotions.”

Mohamed Ahmed, a supervisor and one of the participants of the training explains that the SST provided them with what they lacked in interpersonal skills.

“This training really opened my mind beyond work, it wasn't just about work or production,” he says. “At home my family was affected by the training. If you look at the training from outside, it's about work but in essence it's about improving relationships between yourself and others.”

Mohamed Ibrahim, another supervisor and training participant says that the positive work environment has an impact on production. “Personal relationships create trust between us and the workers, it means that I support them and in return, they support me” he explains. “Even if sometimes I have to ask for overtime because we're late on a deadline or something, they will be willing to step in happily.”

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Port-Said



Replacing Psychological Stress with Positive Work Environments

Eurotex success story



After the training I learned how to better manage people and not let the stress make me difficult with the workers.

Tarek Ramadan, Supervisor



Eurotex employ 1800 workers and their primary target is to produce quality trousers to export for their customers in Europe. Their customers care highly for the consistency in quality. “When the turnover rate is really high this affects the company’s ability to provide consistent quality,” says Mohamed Shawky, Eurotex’s HR manager.

The main issue facing Eurotex was that their low-management were mostly workers who were promoted to supervisory roles. Thus, while they may have been exceptional at their roles, once they took on a new one they faced difficulties since they lacked managerial and leadership skills.

“This is a common issue in all factories in Egypt, generally the low-management lacks leadership, coaching and management skills,” Shakwy stresses explaining that their supervisors used to constantly yell at the workers and apply psychological stress on them to produce.

The SST helped fill that gap for Eurotex. Tarek Ramadan, a supervisor who took part in the training programme explained that his short temper was because he had to manage so many people and each of his team would come at the worst moments with issues.

“After the training I learned how to better manage all of this and not let the stress make me difficult with the workers,” Ramadan says. “This training had an impact on my personal life. I started talking to my wife and giving her compliments.”

Ahmed Gamal, another supervisor who took part in the training, echoed Ramadan’s statement on the effect it has on his personal life. He’d been having a hard time with his wife since she became pregnant as her mood changes, but now he’s learned how to better communicate with her.

Gamal had started his career at Eurotex as a worker then became a supervisor, he was having a hard time differentiating between when he’s friends with his team and when he needs to be their boss. “This SST helped me find that line and deal with workers in a positive way,” he says.

“Tarek from Eurotex company is a real success story,” Amira Nabil, one of the SST trainers and the one conducting Eurotex’s on the job coaching says. “He was very short tempered and used to solve all his problems with violence. Now he’s able to solve his own problems and those of other production lines. His workers are not asking to change their lines and keep asking me how he changed so much.”

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## Retaining Happy, Productive Workers

### Plaza for Ready-made Garments success story



In the training I learned how to control my anger, how to deal with the workers. The training gave me the tools to communicate with the managers and workers.  
Eman Galal, Supervisor



Plaza for Ready-made Garments, located in Suez, is a factory that specialises in outerwear and focuses on exporting its productions to Germany, the UK and the USA. Plaza had a major problem. Its worker retention rates were extremely low (between 90-100 workers were leaving every month) mainly due to bad relationships with superiors.

Such as the case with many factories, the prevailing culture is that a supervisor's job entailed shouting at their staff to keep their production line in check and to ensure their staff are producing at full capacity. However, this wasn't working neither in terms of production rates nor worker retention.

Some supervisors in Plaza attended the Supervisory Skills Training provided through KHATWA 'for improving job quality' which is implemented under the umbrella of the Federation for Economic Development Associations (FEDA) and supported by GIZ-Labour Market Access Project (LMAP) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

This is when they found some unexpected developments.

“These supervisors had workers from their line complaining every second day,” Nasser Khan, Plaza’s General Manager says. “After this training, I cannot believe they are the same supervisors. Before the training we were losing a lot of workers, but in the last four months we’ve had much fewer people leave.”

Safaa Attia, Plaza’s Human Resources Manager, confirms that in December, merely six months after the training, they had only 29 workers leave in comparison to more than 100 at the start.

Eman Galal, was one of the supervisors at Plaza who took part in the training. She’s responsible for a production line that follows steps from cutting materials to delivering the pieces ready for quality control, she supervises 75 female workers. “I’ve been a supervisor for ten years but I feel like I knew nothing about being a supervisor,” Eman says. “I used to have a really short temper. In the training I learned how to control my anger, how to deal with the workers. The training gave me the tools to communicate with the managers and workers. I even applied what I learned at home.” For her, the most valuable aspect was learning how to deal with different types of people and how to create a positive work environment. “The trainers would never tell us what is right and wrong, we were to understand that from the games and discussions,” she adds.

Kalthum, one of the workers who has been working at Plaza for four years confirms seeing a difference in Eman’s management skills. “Eman used to take decisions on a whim without consulting anyone. Now she consults the managers and us to solve problems in a positive way,” she says.

“If our relationships are good amongst ourselves, and with the supervisors and managers then we’ll all care more about work and want to achieve better results,” Kalthum adds.

And that they did.

“My line was collapsing, but now my line is stable and our production numbers grew from 1,050 pieces per day to 1,250,” Eman says. “The spirit in the team became better too. We’re all friends. We share our problems with each other and support one another.”

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