

WEBINAR

Supervision for Success

Helping young Tasmanians succeed in work — and what it means for workplaces across Australia

Webinar purpose: share the report findings and discuss how they can inform practical supervisor-support resources.

Prof. Swee-Hoon Chuah | 4th August 2026



Youth employment does not end at job entry



10.7%

national youth unemployment in June 2026 — more than double the ~4.4% headline rate (ABS)



60%+

of employers in SVA's Employer Innovation Labs rate their own manager training as 'average' or 'poor'



75%

of employers agree team leaders and supervisors need more skills to support young people (SVA/AEN/PwC, 2021)

The challenge is not only helping young people get work — it is also supporting them once they are in work.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

A practical focus on day-to-day supervision

- The purpose was practical: to generate insights to help Tasmanian employers better support young people in the early stages of employment.
- The specific lens was day-to-day supervision — not HR policy, recruitment, or formal training programs in the abstract.
- The focus was on everyday interactions: how expectations are explained, how tasks are taught, how feedback is given, how mistakes are handled, and whether support feels accessible.



Who this report is about — and who it isn't

WHO WE SPOKE TO

- Young workers aged 16–19 when they started their current job
- Already in paid, entry-level work — apprenticeships, traineeships, trades, hospitality, retail, health, public sector, media
- Recruited through employer and workforce-development networks
- Alongside 10 frontline supervisors — both sides of the same relationship

WHAT THIS SAMPLE IS NOT

- Not young people still looking for work, or currently disengaged from work and study
- Not a representative sample — workplaces already engaged in supporting young workers were more likely to take part
- Not prevalence data — read findings as practical enablers and risks, not "how common is poor supervision"

This picks up the story once someone already has the job. Other Tasmanian and national research — including SVA's own — looks earlier in the journey, at barriers to finding work.

CENTRAL FINDING



Supervision is a workplace capability — not only an individual supervisor skill.

Good supervision needs to be supported, resourced, and made easier to provide consistently — through clear expectations, gradual responsibility, safe questions and mistakes, visible support, and backing for supervisors themselves.

What young workers said helped them



Make the hidden parts of work visible

routines, communication norms, support pathways, “what good work looks like”



Practical task teaching

show the task, let them try, check understanding, give feedback



Permission to ask questions

without embarrassment or harsh criticism



Support from more than one person

supervisors, buddies, senior workers, teams



Work that felt worth staying in

worthwhile, manageable, respectful, developmental, sustainable



What supervisors said they needed



Juggling many roles at once

onboarding, teaching, feedback, wellbeing, retention — often all at once



Skills built informally

through experience and peer support, not structured preparation



Technical skill wasn't enough

didn't automatically prepare people to supervise well



What helped

time, systems, peer support, managerial backing, escalation paths



The workplace has to enable it

not something to leave to individual skill or goodwill



FROM FINDINGS TO ACTION

Turning evidence into practical priorities

WHAT WE HEARD

PRACTICAL PRIORITY

Hidden workplace expectations

Make expectations explicit early

Supervision worked best as everyday teaching

Demonstrate, check understanding, build responsibility gradually

Safety to ask questions & make mistakes

Normalise learning — without lowering standards

Support worked best when visible & relational

Make support pathways clear and easy to access

Supervisors central, but under-supported

Give supervisors time, resources, backing, escalation paths

Retention linked to meaningful, developmental work

Strengthen entry-level roles and progression pathways

A broader system priority sits across all of these: improving the quality of entry-level opportunities overall.

Possible starting points for resource development

First-week conversation guide

Buddy checklist

Staged task guide

Feedback prompts

Support map

Escalation pathway guide

Early turnover review template

DESIGN PRINCIPLE

Brief, role-specific, and easy to use within normal work routines.

AVOID RESOURCES THAT...

Add admin burden, assume dedicated HR capacity, or pull supervisors away from operational demands.

Not a fixed toolkit — starting points for discussion, piloting and adaptation.

Look at the conditions around the young worker

- When young workers struggle, individual factors may matter — confidence, skills, communication, judgement
- But workplaces should also ask: were expectations, task teaching, feedback and support pathways clear enough?
- And were supervisors given the time, tools and backing to support young workers well?
- The aim is not to blame young workers or supervisors — it is to improve the conditions that make good supervision possible

Supervision is a workplace capability.



Thank you

Supervision for Success | Tasmanian Behavioural Lab, University of Tasmania | Commissioned by Social Ventures Australia