

## 5 Great Tips for Lifeguarding Supervisors

**1. If you need to carry on a conversation with a guard on duty stand behind them.**

There are definitely times that you have to talk with a lifeguard just to pass on some information or offer support and encouragement. When this becomes necessary simply walk up behind the guard and place your hand on their shoulder and identify yourself and pass on the information. By walking up behind the guard you are preventing the natural tendency for them to turn and look at you as would happen should you walk up beside them. Go ahead and take this a step further include this into in-service training. By doing this you will notice better attention to the water of your guards, b/c they know that you are care about not interrupting their attention.

**2. If you are serious about improving customer service then make all guards wear shirts (tucked in), additionally require the females to wear shorts.**

Yes, I'm aware it is hot and stressful and that this is not always directly related to employee happiness, however, you will see an improvement in the customer service reports on lifeguards. Plain and simply this is based on public perception. If the guest perceives the employee as looking professional and attentive, they are much more likely to be treated professionally. Think about it as basic psychology at work and put this in place and you will see the results.

**3. Always, Always, Always, set the example in both work and personal environments.**

If you hang out with guards off duty you will confuse the roll between supervisor and lifeguard. This may be the hardest thing to do as in many cases you are friends with the very lifeguards you supervise. However, this is necessary to prevent crossing the line between employee/supervisor relationships. By taking this step you are less likely to be accused of playing favorites or only looking out for your friends. Additionally, if you want the lifeguard to tuck in their shirt tale then you must do so also. In other words lead the way through actions and not just words.

**4. Conduct daily 5 minute audits (see form below) and visual awareness test.**

Guards will then improve their performance because they know they are being constantly watched and tested. At the end of each shift you should have audited at least 3 people, 2 using the audit form and one by visual awareness test. Give the lifeguard the original copy of the record. You should consult your attorney before you begin keeping copies of this In-House Audit Form on record.

### In-House Audit Form

Lifeguard Name:	Chair:	Date:
Proactive Scanning:		
Uniform/Equipment		
5 Minute Move:		
Professional Approach:		
Exceeds / Meets Standard / Fails		

#### 5. **Work on lifeguard rotations.**

This is most glaring weak spot of most every lifeguard team and when it is a strength most every thing else is operating smoothly. Rotations are presented clearly in every lifeguard class. However, rarely are they consistently performed correctly. Stand and watch rotations, offer support and encouragement for improvement and make a big deal out of it when you see it done correctly.

Realizing that their will be busy days and times when you don't have the time to get everything done that is listed above is an understood. However, there are plenty of times when any one of these items could be conducted on the spur of the moment basis. Find times to work on the things above and I can assure you that your life will become easier as you will see lifeguards begin to do all the items above even on the busy days when you don't have the time to watch them closely.