Orientation Partners

For a new employee, it may take a while to fully integrate into a new work unit. One way to assist the new employee through the initial adjustment period is to provide them with an "orientation partner." The orientation partner is an established colleague of the new employee who is knowledgeable about the job duties they will be asked to perform. The role of the partner is to serve as an informal point of contact for information about the new employee's position and department procedures and social norms. The orientation partner supplements, not substitutes, regular interaction with the employee's supervisor. The affiliation with the orientation partner helps the new employee to feel connected to the work team and to create a sense of inclusion, while providing them with support as they learn their new job.

Selection Criteria

- Has been employed more than one year
- Is compatible with the new employee in age, education, temperament, etc.
- Has time or is given time to be accessible to the new employee
- Has a good performance history
- Is skilled in the new employee’s job
- Is proud of the organization
- Is a peer of the new employee
- Has patience, good communication and interpersonal skills
- Is willing to be an orientation partner
- Is a positive role model and is liked/respected by other employees

Orientation Partner Functions

- Serve as an information source for the new employee on policies, procedures, expectations, norms
- Help the new employee clarify assignments
- Identify resources
- Provide opportunities for the new employee to socialize with others
- Be a lunch companion
- Be a tour guide
- Provide feedback and encouragement
- Provide introductions