



New Employee Onboarding

Peer Partner Expectations

WHAT IS A PEER PARTNER?

A peer partner is a fellow employee (other than the manager/supervisor) who supports a new employee during their first months on the job. Your role is to offer advice and guidance regarding the day-to-day aspects of working at UW-Madison. You contribute to the successful onboarding experience by offering encouragement and assistance as the new employee acclimates to the culture and workplace.

WHY ASSIGN A PEER PARTNER?

The purpose of a peer partner is to help welcome the new employee and affirm their decision to join UW-Madison. A peer partner helps to reduce the initial confusion and uncertainty a new employee may experience by being available to answer basic questions, facilitate connections, and assist in explaining and navigating the culture.

EXPECTATIONS

Every peer partner relationship will be unique based on the needs and style of each person, however, a general understanding of your responsibilities and commitment is important to success. The time commitment will differ based on the relationship and specific program structure. Typically your time commitment will not exceed 1-2 hours per week during the first few weeks, and less thereafter. Expectations will vary according to specific onboarding programs and unique unit needs, but general responsibilities include:

- Welcome the new employee (on or before the first day), introduce yourself and describe your role
- Assist with introductions and connections to others
- Act as an informational resource on general procedures, norms, day-to-day operations
- Help the new employee integrate and understand the culture
- Provide opportunities to experience new things (both within the unit as well as the campus community)
- Check in often with the new employee during the first weeks/months
- Answer questions and refer to appropriate resources

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

- You are not expected to be the expert. Refer questions to the appropriate resource or work together to find the answer
- Be patient and don't try to cover everything right away
- Be positive and respectful. Remember, you represent your team and the university
- Don't force a relationship. If it is not working out, inform your manager/supervisor immediately
- Don't wait for the new employee to come to you. Make an effort to check in and initiate conversation
- Maintain a positive attitude and a teaching spirit
- Take this opportunity to learn some new things along with the new employee
- Enjoy the experience