

New Employee Onboarding: Buddy Program and Guidelines

What is a Buddy?

A buddy is a team member who partners with a new or transferring employee during their first 3-6 months on the job. They offer advice, resources, and guidance regarding the day-to-day aspects of working in the department and at Stockton. They may also offer encouragement and suggestions as they introduce the new employee to the Stockton culture.

Why have a Buddy?

Assigning new employees, a buddy provides them with a trusted and motivated person who will help them feel welcome and affirm their decision to join the department and Stockton. A buddy helps to reduce the initial confusion and uncertainty faced by all new or transferring employees. A buddy also supports the manager by allowing them to focus on job-specific issues. By increasing the new employee's ability to contribute to the department and organization, the buddy helps increase their self-confidence.

Hiring Managers

You are responsible for selecting a buddy for your new employee. Selection should be based on the following characteristics:

- Demonstration of high performance
- Is willing and able to be accessible to the new employee
- Is skilled or knowledgeable about the new employee's job
- Is proud of Stockton University and the department
- Is a peer of the new employee
- Has patience, and good communication and interpersonal skills
- Wants to be a "buddy"
- Is a role model and well regarded and respected by team members
- Has been selected in advance and trained in their responsibilities

Buddies

- Responsibilities
 - Be a contact for general information on policies, procedures, work rules, norms, day-to-day operational issues, etc.
 - Help the new employee integrate with the department and organization regarding Stockton University Mission, Vision, Values, and expectations.
 - Make introductions and help establish networks
 - Assist in training
 - Establish rapport and provide open, positive communication, respecting confidentiality
 - Follow up with the new employee on a weekly basis. This can include meeting for lunch, brief chats, accompanying them to a meeting, etc.
- Formal Relationship – 3 months
 - Day One – meet your new employee on their first day.

- Weekly meetings – 5 – 15 minutes in duration, or longer as needed
- Call/email questions as needed. Buddy to set acceptable parameters.
- Informal Relationship – 3-6 months, or longer
 - The buddy can provide continued support beyond the initial 3 months if desired by both the buddy and the employee.

What a Buddy is Not

A buddy is not a mentor or a manager.

- **Mentor:** Someone, typically more experienced, who is involved with the overall development of an individual (personal and professional).
- **Manager:** Someone responsible for the employee’s job performance and development. The manager resolves work-related issues.

Having a Buddy is a Win/Win/Win Solution

This offers significant benefits to the new employee, the buddy, and Stockton:

Buddy Benefits	New Employee Benefits	Stockton Benefits
Recognition as a strong performer	One-on-one assistance	Increased employee satisfaction and retention
Expanded network	Jump-start on networking	Increased employee communication
Opportunity to encourage and engage others	Single point-of-contact	Enhanced employee development
A fresh perspective	Knowledge of “how things really get done.”	Enhanced quality work processes
Enhanced leadership and communication skills	Smoother acclimation and onboarding period	Increased employee productivity