Onboarding Teammate Guidelines

What is an Onboarding Teammate?
An onboarding teammate is a team/department member who partners with a new 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 UWM. They may also offer encouragement and suggestions as they introduce the new employee to the UWM culture.

Why have an Onboarding Teammate?
Assigning new employees an onboarding teammate provides them with a trusted and motivated person who will help them feel welcome and affirm their decision to join the department and UWM. A teammate helps to reduce the initial confusion and uncertainty faced by all new employees. A teammate 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 university, the teammate helps increase their self-confidence.

Hiring Managers
You are responsible for selecting a teammate for your new employee. Selection should be based on the following characteristics:
- Demonstrates 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 UWM and the department
- Is a peer of the new employee
- Has patience, and good communication and interpersonal skills
- Wants to be a “teammate”
- Is a role model and well regarded and respected by team members
- Has been selected in advance and trained in their responsibilities

Teammates
- 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 UWM culture, norms, 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 or transferring 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 or transferring employee on their first day.
  • Weekly meetings – 5 – 15 minutes in duration, or longer as needed
  • Call/email questions as needed. Teammate to set acceptable parameters.

• Informal Relationship – Open
  • The teammate can provide continued support beyond the initial 3 months if desired by both the teammate and the employee.

WHAT A TEAMMATE IS NOT
A teammate 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.

TIPS FOR TEAMMATES:
• Don’t worry about being perceived as the expert. Focus your attention on the new employee
• Be patient: It takes time to develop a relationship. Don’t try to cover everything right away
• Be positive: New employees will grow into their roles if given proper reinforcement
• Don’t try to force a relationship
• Try to identify the new employee’s personality and communication style and adapt accordingly
• Don’t be judgmental. Simply offer feedback
• Maintain a good attitude and a teaching spirit
Having a Teammate is Win/Win/Win

This offers significant benefits to the new employee, the teammate, and UWM:

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