The orientation process begins with your first phone call to the new employee and follows with your meeting on their first day. But a new employee’s initial impression of their job extends far beyond that first contact. What transpires after the first day is referred to as the onboarding experience. The onboarding experience offers a better strategic approach for your new employee’s success and provides them with a better sense of the University and its culture.

### Six Guiding Principles of Onboarding

1. **Engage New Employees Early and Often**
2. **Provide Structure for Year-Long Onboarding**
3. **Establish and Support the Leaders' Critical Role**
4. **Deliver the Most Important Information First**
5. **Facilitate the Process of Socialization**
6. **Provide Early Exposure to Leadership**

### Orientation vs. Onboarding

Orientation is an event; onboarding is a process.

Orientation is a structured event that focuses on the information the new employee needs to know to get started, such as an introduction to the organizational structure, policies, and procedures. It is one piece of the onboarding process.

Onboarding can last anywhere from 3 months to a year, depending on the responsibilities of the position and the amount of organizational understanding necessary to be successful in the role. The goal is to align new employees with UWM’s culture, mission, and values, and focuses on strengthening the employees’ connection to the University, Division, and the people. It provides a more strategic plan for employee success than orientation alone.

### Onboarding Stages

**Preparation**
- Pre-arrival and acclimation to work environment.

**Orientation**
- Benefits and other campus orientation activities.

**Integration**
- Gaining job knowledge and connecting Campus & Departmental goals.

**Engagement**
- Connecting to Division and University; Building relationships and establishing goals; Governance understanding and involvement.

**Monitoring**
- Measuring the effectiveness of the Onboarding Program and the progress of new employees.