

# New Employee Orientation & Onboarding

A guide for new employees and their managers

## **Managers: Onboarding a New Hire**

### **What is a Buddy?**

A new employee's onboarding is greatly enhanced by assigning an office Buddy, a fellow employee (other than the manager) who provides advice and guidance on the different aspects of working at GSU. A Buddy is also a "sounding board" who offers encouragement as the new employee acclimates to GSU's culture and workplace.

### **Selection Criteria and Process**

The successful Buddy is an employee who fully understands the Institute's culture and environment (has been at GSU for at least one year) and wants to be a Buddy.

Additional criteria include:

- Time to be accessible and available to the employee.
- Familiar with employee's role and work unit.
- A solid performer.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Exemplifies GSU's values.
- Patience and empathy.
- Well regarded and trusted by others.

Individuals can volunteer to be considered as a Buddy or recommended by others. Local Human Resources and/or the hiring manager can make the final choice based on the selection criteria.

### **Buddy Responsibilities**

In assisting a new employee acclimating to GSU, a Buddy serves as a valuable resource by creating a trusting relationship and maintaining confidentiality.

Responsibilities include:

- Providing information on policies and procedures.
- Identifying resources in the workplace.
- Familiarizing the employee to GSU's culture, norms, and unwritten guidelines.
- Introducing the employee to others in the unit and throughout GSU.
- Taking the employee on an expanded tour of the workplace and campus.

## Manager's Onboarding Checklist

- Answering questions and referring the employee to the appropriate resources.

### Suggested Structure

Ideally, there is a formal, six-month relationship between the Buddy and the new employee. Toward the end of the six months, they can discuss if and how to continue their relationship outside of the structured Buddy role. On the employee's first or second day, introduce the Buddy and employee. This introduction can be facilitated by your local HR or the hiring manager. Discuss the Buddy's role and responsibilities as well as the employee's needs, and answer any questions. Ensure that the Buddy and employee meet during the first week (ideally for breakfast or lunch, if possible). Suggest and then allow the Buddy and employee to decide on the frequency, length, topics, and method of interaction between the two of them. The structure will vary. What's important is that the arrangement is clearly defined and works for both the employee and the Buddy. Here is one of many possible examples:

#### Week 1:

- Meet for an hour (over breakfast or lunch, if possible).
- Learn about each other's background, experience, interests, etc.
- Decide on the most important and relevant things to cover.
- Respond to any immediate questions employee may have.
- Agree on frequency, length and method of communication.

#### Months 1 and 2:

- Meet weekly for a half hour (in person).
- Be available for phone conversations and email.
- Take employee on a campus tour.
- Introduce employee to other GSU colleagues.

#### Months 3 and 4:

- Meet bi-weekly for a half hour (mix of in person and by phone).
- Be available for phone conversations and email.
- Have a check-in with employee, and local HR and hiring manager.
- Invite employee to relevant GSU business or social events, and introduce him/her to others.

#### Months 5 and 6:

- Meet monthly for an hour (in person).
- Continue introducing employee to colleagues and inviting employee to relevant business or social events.
- Decide if and how to continue the Buddy relationship. Have a wrap-up with employee, HR, and hiring manager.

*Note: HR and/or the hiring manager is responsible for having a mid-point check-in and a wrap-up conversation with the employee and Buddy.*