NEW EMPLOYEE BUDDY PROGRAM

What is the Buddy Program?

The Buddy Program is intended to be one component of the overall orientation program that the Chemistry Department offers new employees. The Program is voluntary and is designed to help new employees successfully build connections with colleagues and their jobs recognizing that employee turnover increases as employees feel they are not valued, or are put in positions where they can’t possibly do their jobs.

Program goals

- Provide a unit-specific welcome to the new employee
- Provide a ‘high touch’ resource for the new employee
- Enhance the connection and minimize the isolation for new employees
- Enable new employees to adjust to their jobs and work environment and to instill positive work attitude and motivation at the onset.
- Provide ‘just-in-time’ answers on what the new hire can expect from their work environment

While a Buddy is a vital resource for the new hire, s/he does not replace the important role the Supervisor plays in orienting his/her new employee.

Roles definition

- **Buddy**: A knowledgeable and friendly colleague.
- **Buddy Program Coordinator**: The individual who oversees the program in the department and provides ‘just-in-time’ support for the Buddy, new employee or the Supervisor. In smaller departments, the Buddy Program Coordinator role might be assumed by the Supervisor/Faculty.
- **Supervisor**: The person in the department responsible for ensuring that employee orientation is completed thoroughly and timely. In small departments, this individual may also have the dual role of being the Buddy Program Coordinator.
- **New employee**: An individual who is new to UBC and/or the department.

How do I sign up for a Buddy? How can I become a Buddy?

Speak with your Supervisor/Faculty to ensure that they are aware of your interest to assist in this manner.

Individuals with the following attributes are encouraged to consider the role:

- Has some working knowledge of the department
- Demonstrates positive attitude, patience, and strong interpersonal skills
- Can encourage others to become involved
• Maintains confidentiality

Selection and pairing of Buddy with a New Employee

Buddies are encouraged to self-select into the position based on the above mentioned criteria. The Supervisor, if appropriate, may also approach employees to become buddies. The Supervisor will coordinate a first meeting between Buddy and new employee. Participation is completely voluntary. Participation in the program is for a maximum of three months from the start date of the new employee or as designated by Supervisor.

Why would I consider becoming a Buddy?

Being a buddy is one way to:

• Share your accumulated knowledge and experience with others
• Gain a better understanding of yourself through helping others
• Expand your skills, abilities and knowledge

What would I have to do as a Buddy?

• Support the Supervisor in providing a department-specific welcome to the new employee
• Support the completion of orientation activities and basic to do’s such as getting a library card, keys, etc. by the employee in a timely manner.
• Develop a positive relationship with the new employee by being accessible, patient, positive and non-judgmental.
• Help the employee integrate with the unit.
• If appropriate, provide ‘just-in-time’ answers relating to the job

What are some examples of what I can do as a Buddy?

• Show your new Buddy around campus, such as a 30-minute tour
• Have a coffee break at an on-campus coffee shop
• Introduce your buddy to group colleagues

How do I initiate the process?

Once the Supervisor notifies you of the name and relevant information (start date, position, etc) regarding the new employee, the Buddy is responsible for introducing herself/himself and meeting up with the employee at the earliest available opportunity. This is typically on the employee’s first day. The first meeting with the new employee should be introductory in nature by showing the employee around the department, introducing the employee to colleagues, and providing a general overview of the department.
You will be provided an Orientation checklist by the Supervisor which will guide you in planning your activities with the new employee.

As the new employee becomes more comfortable with his/her role, the frequency of meetings should diminish. If after the first month, the frequency and complexity of questions has not started to diminish, you should speak to the Supervisor for advice.

**What would be the benefits of a Buddy Program for my Unit?**

A few of the benefits of starting a Buddy Program within your unit include:

- Consistency in orienting new employees
- Reduced overwhelm for new employee thereby increasing his/her ability to focus on the job
- Satisfied and productive employee, thereby increasing your chances of retention
- Getting a sense of the unit’s work culture (unspoken norms, traditions, etc).