



Role of the Buddy in the Induction Process

What is a buddy?

A buddy provides informal guidance to the new starter on the culture and social norms of the area or team.

Typical tasks assigned to a buddy might include:

- showing the new starter around the building
- explain how to gain entry/exit to the building
- pointing out catering or other facilities
- accompanying the new starter to lunch on their first day
- introducing the new starter to people that they might not come into contact with as part of their role, but who they are likely to meet around the office.

A buddy should not tackle issues relating to the new starter's appointment or formal arrangements within the area (for example performance expectations and standards, training, or the arrangements for personal appointments during working hours).

The buddy should be made aware that they should refer any serious pastoral or welfare issues relating to the new employee's role to the line manager in the first instance.

If the buddy works in the same team as the new starter, it may be that they deliver some sessions of role-related training. If so, this should be clearly indicated as training in the new starter's induction plan.

Why have a buddy?

A well-briefed and enthusiastic buddy can help the new employee to feel welcomed and will allay some of the nerves that accompany a new job.

Use of the buddy system should provide the new employee with an informal support and social network and a starting point for general queries.

Although it is not expected that the buddy will be able to answer all the new employee's questions, use of the system will encourage communication and prevent feelings of isolation.

In turn, the system gives the buddy an opportunity to develop their skills in communication and the opportunity to share the benefits of their experience.

Who is best placed to be a 'buddy'?

A buddy is usually an experienced employee on the same or similar grade as the new starter, preferably in a similar type of role.

They should ideally be in the same team or department as the new starter, though in the case of small departments, this may not necessarily be the case.



When should I organise this?

A buddy should be assigned before the new employee's start date, and should be briefed on their responsibilities and the boundaries of those responsibilities.

Although the role of the buddy mainly comes into play during the first few weeks of employment, it is a relationship that can exist throughout the new starter's employment and should not be time limited.

It is important that the prospective buddy's line-manager is approached prior to the confirmation of the role, and that the line-manager is happy for the prospective buddy to devote some of their working time to the role.

Where should the buddy be located?

The buddy should work in fairly close physical proximity to the new starter (i.e. definitely in the same building, preferably on the same floor). The new employee and their buddy should be allowed the space and time to meet in private if necessary.