

Onboarding Buddy Program Guide

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PREFACE FOR CURRENT BUDDIES

Thank you for your commitment to serve as a new hire buddy and choosing to make a positive transformation in Brookhaven Laboratory's onboarding process for your future team members! This guide is designed to provide you with additional information and recommendations to help you begin and navigate your relationships with the new hires that you will be interacting with.

INTRODUCING THE BUDDY PROGRAM

The buddy program is a single component of the overall new hire onboarding process that is designed to provide an inspiring onboarding experience by making new employees feel welcomed and achieve a sense of acceptance and belonging. Through additional guidance, new hires will successfully build connections and swiftly acclimate to Brookhaven Laboratory's work environment. A well-executed onboarding process positions new employees for long-term success here at the lab. They will be able to add value to their role sooner by acquiring a deeper understanding of how things work both within and outside of their immediate department and putting their expertise to use. The primary goal of this program is to excite Brookhaven new hires and reaffirm their decision to join BNL.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ONBOARDING BUDDIES

New Hire

Personalized onboarding

Smoother acclimation

Ability to add value sooner

Enhance network

Gain knowledge of the department's inner workings

Greater exposure of lab's culture

Buddy

Opportunity to make a difference

Opportunity to expand own organizational knowledge

Exposure to new perspectives

Enhanced leadership skills

Expanded network

Recognition

BNL

Attract and retain new talent

Increased productivity, job satisfaction

Foster collaboration and employee communication

Greater efficiency in work processes

Enhance onboarding process for continued success

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Prior to first day	Buddy to become familiar with a new employee
First day	Buddy introduction, provide contact information and invite the new employee to lunch or an informal meeting
First Week	Buddy to support introductions between new employee and other team members, further learn about their work experiences and interests, buddy to describe their role and office culture, explain the organizational structure and technology to be used, provide tour
First 2 weeks	Guide new employee on “how things are done”
First 90 days	Schedule casual check-in as needed, continue to facilitate new introductions, include new employee in work or social events

THE ROLE OF THE ONBOARDING BUDDY

An onboarding buddy is a current employee who serves as a new hire’s support system through assisting them in navigating their questions or concerns and getting comfortable within a new position. Buddies can hold any position at the lab, from senior leaders to early career professionals and they are not limited to just the new hire’s immediate department or someone of a similar role. Buddies may also be located within the directorate or from other areas at the lab that somehow relates or supports the responsibilities assigned to the new hire.



Key Characteristics

- Displays a strong reflection of BNL culture and values
- Friendly and respected
- Experienced success in their role
- Has a passion to help others succeed
- Willing and able to be accessible
- Patient and understanding
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to connect the new hire with other employees and/or resources

A BUDDY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR....

The role of the buddy does not replace the role of the hiring manager. Hiring managers remain responsible for the entire onboarding process of their new hire, this includes acclimation and transition into the lab as well as ensuring all onboarding tasks, including training requirements, are completed in a timely manner. Additionally, buddies are not responsible for the new hire's job performance, which includes establishing expectations around performance and deliverables. Lastly, buddies are not considered a formal mentor, as mentoring involves an aspect of employee development by helping to guide an employee with short and long-term goals. Buddies are not responsible for employee development. Ultimately, the hiring manager is accountable for all above stated activities and tasks.

SO, WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A BUDDY?

PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY

Onboarding buddies should connect with the new hire's hiring manager to learn more about the role responsibilities. During this time, buddies may also review the new hire's resume or ask the hiring manager questions regarding the new hire's prior experience and educational background. With this awareness, buddies will be able to prepare themselves with topics of discussion for the first meeting.

MEET THE NEW HIRE ON THEIR FIRST DAY

The first day at a new organization can be accompanied with uncertainty, causing a stressful experience. Some thoughts that may enter a new hire's mind leading up to their first day include:

- "I hope I make a great first-impression."
- "Will I find the location of General Employee Training with ease?" If remote, "will my internet connection hold up?"
- "Who will I be meeting with on my first day?"
- "What is expected of me?"
- "I hope I am able to find where I need to go after orientation."
- "Where will I be sitting?"
- "Where can I have lunch and with who?"

Following the General Employee Training, buddies should be prepared to greet the new hire as they enter the area, they will be working in. If virtual, buddies should arrange a welcome meeting via Teams, Zoom or another virtual platform. Regardless of on-site or virtual environment, it is encouraged that buddies invite the new hire to have lunch with them. This time will allow buddies to have casual conversation, getting to know the new hire and begin to establish a rapport where the new hire will feel psychologically safe and comfortable.

INTRODUCE THE NEW HIRE TO OTHER EMPLOYEES

Throughout the first week, the buddy should prioritize facilitating introductions with direct team members that the new hire will be working with on a regular basis. These introductions will carry over throughout the first few weeks of employment.

- Buddies may introduce their new hire to other key collaborators to further help them understand how their role fits in or impacts processes in other areas.
- Buddies may invite the new hire to attend a meeting hosted by an Employee Resource Group (ERG), DE&I Council or Special Lens program that they belong to. Buddies may also connect new employees directly with the president of the group that they express interest in.
- In collaboration with the hiring manager and/or department administrator, buddies can provide support in arranging meetings with the broader directorate departments to learn more about the function of their specific area.

ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, CULTURE, TECHNOLOGY USE AND/OR POSITION

One of the most significant responsibilities of an onboarding buddy is to answer questions about the lab and possibly the position if the new hire and buddy support similar roles. Buddies should share personal experiences that can help answer questions and ease concerns. Additionally, buddies serve as a support system that can help inform new hires about the culture and prepare them for any unwritten rules that apply at the lab and in the department.

- Review BNL organizational chart, along with directorate
- Discuss your own experience working at a national lab versus a company
- Discuss what technology is typically used within your organization
- Provide a tutorial on how to navigate specific technologies that are needed to perform the work.
- Walk-through the BNL Intranet page, SBMS, PeopleSoft, Timecards, or anything else that may be relevant.

HOLD WEEKLY TOUCH-BASE MEETINGS'

It is recommended that onboarding buddies should hold weekly 15-minute touch-base meetings with their new hire. This can be facilitated through a calendar hold in a conference room, a virtual room or via an informal lunch/coffee meeting in the lobby, cafeteria, or outdoor picnic area.

In these meetings, buddies should be monitoring how comfortable new employees are in the organization and with their role. They should be sure to answer any remaining questions until the new employee feels completely acclimated to the lab. As the new hire becomes more confident and comfortable, meeting frequency may decrease.

INVITE JOB-SHADOWING

Some new hires will not be prepared to dive into their day-to-day responsibilities on the first day, or possibly within the first few weeks. Buddies can have their new hire shadow them to gain an understanding of how their job operates which will allow them to expand upon their organizational knowledge.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

PROGRAM ADVISOR

This role is responsible for the oversight of the program throughout the laboratory.

- Develop and implement the program processes.
- Establish the logistics of how the program will be managed.
- Ensure all new hires have the opportunity to receive a buddy.
- Liaison with Dept. Onboarding Contact & Hiring Manager to provide resources and guidance, as needed.
- Evaluate and debrief the 1:1 relationship, as well as the program elements with buddy and new employee.

HIRING MANAGER

Ensure that all new hires are assigned to a buddy.

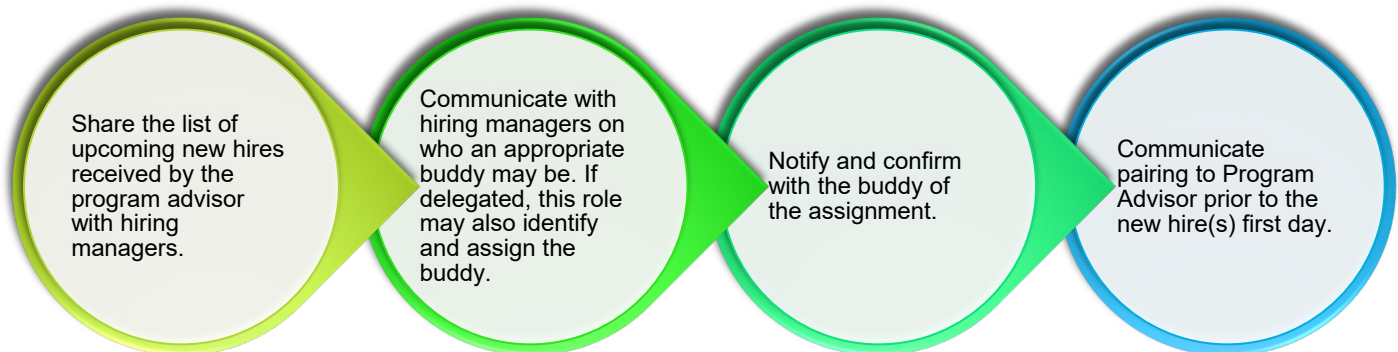
- Hiring managers will facilitate the matching process or delegate to the dept. onboarding contact and/or dept. administrator.
- Ensure the matching process is completed and communicated to the program advisor in advance of the new hire's first day.

Oversee the entire onboarding process for all new hires. Below includes a summary of tasks, however, may not encompass all responsibilities. Please refer to the Resources section for additional information.

- Ensure that a workspace is organized, and equipment and supplies are arranged for.
- Welcome the new hire on their first day and meet to discuss performance expectations and job responsibilities.
- Review the process for completing the timecard.
- Facilitate and support introductions.
- Ensure new hire training is completed within established timeframe.
- Continuous monitoring of employee performance and provide constructive feedback when necessary.

DEPARTMENT ONBOARDING CONTACT

This person will provide additional support the program within the department.



BUDDY ENROLLMENT AND ASSIGNMENT

1. Anyone interested in enrolling will need to complete a brief buddy profile on the SharePoint site.
2. Hiring managers or Dept. Onboarding Contact will access the enrollment list to view available buddies across the lab.
 - If someone's name is not on the list, however, think they will serve as a valuable buddy, the hiring manager or Dept. Onboarding Contact may have a conversation with that individual and their supervisor to determine their interest and availability.
3. Once the pair has been established, the Dept. Onboarding Contact will notify the Program Advisor prior to the new hire's first day.

EVALUATION

The Program Advisor will complete periodic check-ins with all participants to ensure interactions are going smoothly and to address any possible questions/concerns. Additionally, discussion circles will be held with buddies where all attending will have the opportunity to hear from and share best practices and opportunities for enhancement. At the end of the 90-day period, a program evaluation will be distributed to buddies and new hires for completion to identify continuous improvement for future success.

RESOURCES

ONBOARDING BUDDY CHECKLIST

Before the New Hire Starts

- Become familiar with new hire by reviewing their resume and/or a discussion with the hiring manager about what their role is at BNL.
- If needed, support the department administrator to ensure there is a clean workspace stocked with appropriate supplies/equipment.
- Prepare schedule for your first week based on the information below.

Day 1: Getting Acquainted

- Introduce yourself to the new hire after General Employee Training. Perhaps organize a lunch meet and greet whether on-site or virtual.
- Provide phone distribution list and review department organizational chart.
- Review dress code for the area.
- If **in-person**, show the new hire:
 - Where their desk/office is located
 - Where the restrooms are located.
 - Where to eat meals, location of food trucks, vending machines, breakroom, or kitchen.
 - How to navigate the department and/or building in which the new hire will be working.
 - Where the office supplies are located.
 - Where department files are kept (electronic and physical copies)

Days 2-5: Settling In

Continue to build the relationship with the new hire by engaging in conversation that will allow you to learn more about their background and experience.

Support introductions with department members that the new hire will be working closely with.

If needed, organize meet and greet meetings with other key staff across the organization with whom the new hire may be interacting with.

Familiarize the new hire with the technology and software programs that are being utilized within the department.

Provide tutorials on programs, when necessary.

Assist in navigating the Intranet site and SBMS.

Discuss the department's culture, how and why things are done.

Review BNL Organizational Chart- explaining the structure with directorates, departments, offices, etc.

Assist in new hire training, when needed.

Explain/address questions on training requirements, as appropriate.

Review list of acronyms that are typically used within your department.

Schedule week 2 check-in meeting. (Minimum 15 minutes, however, may be longer if desired).

The Remainder of Month 1

Hold weekly check-in meeting once a week to see how things are going.

Mention upcoming events such as (ERG, Learning & Development, Onboarding Activities), that the new hire may be interested in attending.

Review what has already been covered in the checklist and determine if there is additional need for clarification.

Month 2

- Hold weekly meetings, reviewing any old or new topics as needed.
- Remind new hire of BNL events.
- At the end of month 2, have a conversation with the new hire about comfortability and frequency of meetings. They may be moved to a bi-weekly occurrence if both you and the new hire agree.

Month 3

- Meetings should be held at least every other week to ensure there are no new topics or questions for discussion.
- At the end of the 90-day period, buddy relationship may continue if needed or desired.
- Complete the program assessment requested by the Program Advi