

MANAGER'S INDUCTION TOOLKIT

New starter buddy guidelines



What is a buddy?

A buddy is someone who partners with and supports a new starter during their initial phase of onboarding, induction and learning the new role. Generally, a buddy would support the new person for between two and three months, but this may be longer depending on the complexity of the role.

The buddy has three main roles as part of the onboarding process:

1. To support with ad-hoc School, team and role contextual and day-to-day knowledge
2. To welcome and integrate them into the School and team culture
3. Provide a point of contact (outside of their line manager) in those first few months

The first three months are crucial in a new employee's journey. Everything is likely new to them and there is so much to learn, including cultural quirks and behaviours, procedural familiarity, and relationship building. It is these areas where a buddy is really of value, in supporting with the more intangible role-relevant knowledge that the buddy will have built up over an extended period of time.

A buddy gives the new person a single point-of-contact for their basic questions regarding their work at LSE. It also helps the new person understand that their induction is a process, rather than a single learning event. The buddy should build on the knowledge introduced as part of the School and the local induction to help the new person become knowledgeable about department/division practices and organisational culture in a shorter time frame. A buddy will also help with the new person's confidence around the new role.

The direct line manager will, of course have tasks to complete with the new hire, and these are all laid out within this manager's induction toolkit, but the line manager often won't have the time, or the relationship, to answer all of the nice-to-know questions. For example, a new starter may not wish to seemingly bombard their new manager with questions as they may feel that it reflects badly on them. Where a peer buddy is in place, a new starter is often far less reticent to ask the questions they really need answers to.

However, as a line manager, it's not just about assigning a buddy and stepping away. You will need to be there to support the buddy and make sure the buddying process is of real value in the new person's onboarding. A good place to start with this is thinking about what makes a good buddy.

What makes a great new starter buddy?

A buddy should be:

- A well-respected, experienced team member, who has a good performance track record
- Someone who exemplifies and role models LSE's behaviours
- Someone who understands the School and team culture and has functional awareness of the new person's role

- A good communicator with a desire to guide others with patience and who encourages two-way communication
- A skilled listener that will provide encouragement
- Someone who actively seeks opportunities to learn
- Someone who seeks out and understands different perspectives and works inclusively
- Someone who wants to be a buddy

However, be aware that a buddy is not expected to be a mentor or manager to the new person. A buddy is likely a peer, so expecting the buddy to carry out any mentoring or management functions would be inappropriate.

Things to consider when selecting a buddy

You can't just expect someone to pick up buddying responsibilities alongside doing their day-to-day role. The buddy must be given time to be accessible to the new person. You should discuss this with the potential buddy before agreeing the buddying role and you should also give the potential buddy the opportunity to decline the buddying role without explanation. The potential buddy may have personal reasons for declining the role.

Responsibilities of a buddy

Before day one	Day one
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read through these guidelines • Receive information about the new person • Check LinkedIn to familiarise with the new hire • Schedule a time for lunch on the first day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet new person and explain role as their buddy • Ensure new person has the contact details of relevant people • Tour the office/building/campus and share any tips about handy locations • Introduce new employee to other colleagues and explain roles • Clarify any safety procedures • Go over any technology used and system quirks • Go over any kitchen roster and etiquette
Month one	Month two-three
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include new person in social events, team lunches & networking • Help with any small provisioning or office supplies • Meet each week for half hour to connect • Identify the new person's personality and communication style and adapt accordingly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer feedback • Provide one-on-one assistance as needed • Support with 'on the ground' knowledge of how things are done and ways of working

Top buddying tips

- Don't worry about being perceived as the expert
- Focus your attention on the new employee
- Be patient: It takes time to develop a relationship, don't try to force a relationship
- Don't try to cover everything right away
- Be positive:
- Share quality work processes

What the buddy should expect from the new person

- The new person will receive constructive criticism in good spirit
- The new person will be open to feedback and learning
- The new person will ask if they need help and understand that the buddy has other things to do besides buddying them

Manager's induction toolkit

Organisational Learning, LSE Human Resources

London School of Economics and Political Science

Lionel Robbins Building (5th Floor), Houghton Street,

London, WC2A 2HD

Email: hr.learning@lse.ac.uk