



## OVERVIEW

SP Industries has decided to implement a Buddy Program to assist new employees in the early months of their employment with us.

This document is primarily designed help new employees, and the managers of both, understand more fully what the Buddy Program is, and what is expected of each party involved in the buddy relationship.

## OUTLINE OF THE BUDDY PROGRAM

The Buddy Program matches new employees with employees who have been with the company for some time (typically 6 - 12 months), for a period of six months, with two goals:

1. To provide the new employee with a point of contact for general queries and advice on how to navigate the organization.
2. To help the new employee integrate with the company by providing access to someone who is familiar with our culture, attitude and expectations.

The program is coordinated by the HR team and supported by the line managers.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

By providing such a relationship, it is intended that:

- The new employee will feel more at home with the company, in a quicker period;
- Relatively straightforward queries regarding basic operational issues are dealt with in a timely and non-bureaucratic manner;
- The initial confusion and uncertainty faced by all new employees is lessened;
- Other orientation activities, such as classroom and on-the-job training can be related to actual real-world activities, and resulting basic queries can be resolved;
- Our new employees find out how best to "manage" us, the company, in a supportive and risk-reduced environment;
- The new employee begins to add value more quickly, leading to increased confidence and self-esteem;
- You, the buddy, are actively involved in make this a better place to work, and our new employees more productive.

## SELECTION AND PAIRING OF BUDDIES

Employees are nominated by departmental managers on the basis of two criteria:

1. The employee's interpersonal skills; and
2. Their understanding and commitment to the Company's vision and values.

Additionally, at the end of the buddy relationship, you will get the opportunity to nominate as a buddy the new employee with whom you have been working, if you feel he or she fulfills these criteria.





HR will allocate nominate buddies to new employees. Where at all possible, buddies will be matched with new employees in their own department.

### **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BUDDY**

The role of a buddy must be distinguished from that of a *manager*, *mentor* or *coach*:

A MENTOR is someone, typically more experienced, who is involved with the all-round development of an individual in their business, personally, or both.

You are **not** being asked to act as the new employee's mentor - you are not responsible for their growth or development as an individual, and it is not part of the role of a buddy to take on such a responsibility. You will not be assessed on your success as a buddy by whether or not the new employee you work with develops as an individual during the six-month period.

A COACH is someone tasked with developing an individual's job-specific skills. You are **not** being asked to act as the new employee's coach. Although your role as buddy may involve you explaining some simple job-related issues, or explaining straightforward procedures, it is not your job to replace formal training processes. If you feel your new employee queries are too detailed or specialized for you to answer, direct them to their supervisor or manager.

You are not the new employee's manager or supervisor. Your role as buddy does not mean you will be held responsible for your new employee's **performance**. If queries arise regarding performance, disciplinary or policy matters, while you are free to give your **opinion**, and advice on how to approach the matter, you are **not** in a position to adjudicate or resolve the matter. The new employee must be directed to their manager or supervisor for resolution of the relevant issue(s).

### **MEETING YOUR BUDDY**

After you have been notified of the name and other relevant information regarding the new employee you will be working with, it is up to you to make contact with them at the earliest available opportunity.

### **CONTENT OF MEETINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Your first meeting with your new employee should be introductory in nature. Show them around your department, introduce them to their colleagues, and direct them to where they will be working if applicable if you are co-located. If located in a different facility, it expected contact be made over the phone to do introductions and talk about how you might meet and topics to cover

Explain to the new employee how they can contact you during the day, and make it clear that you are available to them as when required, but that they should use their discretion at all times. Explain that you will be meeting regularly (see below), and that non-urgent issues should be left until those times, but that anything that is materially hindering their work or performance can be discussed with you immediately.

Explain the difference between a mentor, coach and manager (see above), and clear any ground rules regarding contact outside working hours (see below). Ask if they have any initial queries or issues, and deal with them.

Then leave the new employee to get on with their assignment! Remember, your role is to help the new employee get assimilated to the company.





## **FREQUENCY AND TIMING OF MEETINGS**

You should aim to meet regularly for at least 30 minutes, once a week during their first month and at least once a month thereafter. This meeting (often best held over lunch or in an informal setting), should be used to discuss any non-urgent issues the new employee may have. Phone is okay if you are not co-located. Meeting times can vary as appropriate for roles.

During the working day, it may be reasonable to expect as many as 4 or 5 brief queries a day from the new employee in the first few days, tapering down to one or two a day thereafter. Although all new employees are different, after 2-3 months, you may hear little or nothing from them on a daily basis. THIS IS A GOOD SIGN. If you are still getting a large number of "urgent" queries after the first month, then the buddy program is not working, and you should speak to the program coordinator.

Within the parameters above, it is expected that you and the new employee meet within working hours. Some buddies and new employees agree to meet on a social basis, outside working hours. This is an entirely discretionary matter between you and the new employee. It is up to you to indicate to the new employee how you feel about being contacted regarding work-related issues outside of working hours.

## **EXPECTATIONS FROM THE RELATIONSHIP**

Your relationship with the new employee should be open, confidential, positive and supportive. We simply ask that you are supportive of the company and your co-workers. We discourage gossip and speculation within a buddy relationship, particularly as many new employees are not in a position to form an opinion on most issues during their early months with us.

### **Available Support**

If you are having any trouble with the interpretation of these guidelines, or with any aspect of the buddy relationship, contact the HR team, who will be happy to give you guidance.

### **Termination of Relationship**

The buddy relationship between you and the new employee will be terminated if either:  
Six months expires, or either party requests it.

The buddy relationship operates under a "no-fault" termination mechanism. This means that if either the buddy or the new employee so requests, the buddy relationship immediately ends and a new buddy is put in place.

**NO REASONS WILL BE SOUGHT OR PROFFERED, NO DISCUSSION WILL ENSUE. NO BLAME WILL BE APPORTIONED.**

Contact HR if you wish to trigger this process.

