How do I work with my supervisor?

Developing an effective working relationship with your supervisor will make a huge difference in your ability to deliver and get results. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) encourages supervisors and employees to establish a clear understanding of one another’s expectations and responsibilities.

Here are a number of conversations that employees have found beneficial in developing this working relationship:

1. Review your position description and discuss expectations and standards.

Your position description provides the framework and major job duties for your scope of responsibility. Review this along with your supervisor to understand your performance expectations. The position description provides clarity on priorities and helps you understand how you will be evaluated.

2. Establish a regular time to meet and discuss work, especially in the first six months.

Regular meetings provide an opportunity to clear up misunderstandings, obtain feedback, clarify priorities, and develop an effective working relationship.

3. Discuss giving and receiving feedback.

Supervisors and managers often report that giving feedback is a challenge. If a process for feedback is not established, people tend to avoid these conversations. Establish some guidelines together on how to best give and receive feedback to each other.

4. Discuss “Rules of the Road.”

The “Rules of the Road” cover the norms of “how things are done here.” A list of these items and questions is provided on the web at http://oregonstate.edu/admin/hr/dev/orient/rules.html.

Welcome to OSU!

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What are several centralized orientation activities provided at Oregon State University?

1. Benefits and Safety Orientation
   - This program is offered at least monthly and provides information to help you make choices that best meet your benefit needs. It is important to attend the sessions relevant to your job.
   - Environmental Health & Safety will discuss services available regarding key safety issues and requirements that are relevant to your job.
   - For a list of these meetings, visit the web page at http://oregonstate.edu/admin/hr/dev/orient/meetings.html. There is no need to schedule in advance. You may show up to the first available meeting after your hire date.

2. Inside OSU: Orientation Web Site
   - A web site entitled “Inside OSU” has been developed as a guide for new employees and supervisors. This site allows you to download information, access forms, and link to multiple sites both on- and off-campus. The advantage of the web site, http://insideosu.oregonstate.edu/, is that you can access the information pertinent to your needs.

3. Campus Tour
   - A campus tour is one of the best ways to discover the richness of activities and events that OSU has to offer. Campus tours are held throughout the day by the Campus Visitor Center. Please call 737-2626 for more information.

4. Miscellaneous Activities
   - University Days, held in September, invites the University community together to celebrate and kick-off the new academic year. Look for campus-wide announcements.
   - New Employee Social, held periodically, invites new employees to meet the OSU President and senior administrators, and get to know other new employees. Contact the Office of Community and Diversity at 737-4381 or the Office of Human Resources at 737-8300.

Other Opportunities

OSU Core Curriculum for Managers and Supervisors
- If your position includes supervising or managing, you are encouraged to enroll in the Core Curriculum for Managers and Supervisors training program. For more information about this course and a list of other training programs, visit the websites below or contact Training and Professional Development at 737-3207:
  - http://oregonstate.edu/admin/hr/training/core.htm
  - http://oregonstate.edu/admin/hr/training/course.htm

What are the activities that units/departments have done that make a difference for new employees?

1. Unit checklists
   - A number of units have developed tailored checklists for new employees. They ensure that the multiple tasks of joining a new organization are addressed and consistently covered.
   - In addition, a University checklist for classified employees is included in the hiring packet. This checklist can also be found at the Oregon State Central Administrative Resource (OSCAR) website at https://oscar.oregonstate.edu/under “Online Tasks,” “Supervisor,” and “Miscellaneous.”

2. Introductions and meetings with others
   - Being able to spend time getting to know co-workers and colleagues speeds up the learning curve. Consider setting up an 15-minute meeting with each member of the organization to introduce yourself and learn the roles and functions of others.

3. Develop a support network
   - New employees consistently report that it is the people, relationships and strength of a person’s network that determines his or her level of success. We encourage you to develop a strong network that at least includes your supervisor, coworkers and colleagues. Identify 5-10 people most critical to your success. Help establish meetings with each of these people.
   - An e-mail or call from your supervisor requesting an introduction may increase your success in initiating relationship building.

4. Tours of the unit/department
   - Tours can begin the process of introducing you to colleagues and familiarizing you with your new surroundings.

5. Request a mentor
   - Having a mentor who is not your supervisor, who understands your office and OSU, and can facilitate the integration process can be a valuable experience. It ensures that you have a second person who can answer questions and provide support during the adjustment to your new position and/or office.

"Life always organizes as networks of relationships, spinning dense webs that can't be disentangled… The more present and aware we are as individuals and as organizations, the more choices we create for ourselves."

--Meg Wheatley