

Peer Mentoring

Often it is helpful for new employees to have a Peer Mentor. The purpose of this relationship is to provide the new employee with additional assistance and support in the orientation process. The Peer Mentor is not the supervisor and should not assume such a role with new employees.

The basic expectations of the mentor are to:

- Be a guide and resource on where to obtain information e.g. on-line resources, written materials, contacts at Lewis & Clark, etc.
- Be a referral source. Assist the employee in identifying whom to contact for what.
- Be available to answer employee questions.
- Introduce the employee to other staff members.
- Introduce the employee to the Lewis & Clark culture to understand the unwritten ways of doing things.
- Provide support and build the employee's confidence.
- Help the new employee overcome the stresses and strains of a new job.
- Assist the employee in problem solving as concerns arise.
- Serve as a sounding board for the employee.
- Encourage the employee.
- Help the employee get excited about Lewis & Clark.
- Encourage attendance at Lewis & Clark events.

Being a Peer Mentor can be a rewarding and exciting experience. Thinking about who would be an appropriate mentor is an important step in the success of the peer mentoring relationship.

When selecting a Peer Mentor consider the following:

- Are they interested in being a Peer Mentor?
- Do they have the time and capacity to take on this role?
- Do they have a positive attitude about their job and working at Lewis & Clark?
- Do they have a firm foundation of knowledge about your department and Lewis & Clark?
- Are they a good listener and easy to talk to?
- Are they patient and allow room for others to learn without taking over?
- Are they respectful to others and respected by their peers?

Tips for success:

- Talk to the Peer Mentor about the responsibilities of being a Peer Mentor.
- Talk to the new employee about the purpose of Peer Mentoring and what to expect.
- Determine a time frame for the Peer Mentoring partnership e.g. 90 days or 6 months.
- Check in regularly with both the Peer Mentor and the new employee to find out how this partnership is working and to answer any questions.
- Thank the Peer Mentor and acknowledge them for their role.

Creating a Peer Mentoring partnership is a positive way to assist new employees transition into their new roles. Peer Mentors most often find their role rewarding while gaining responsibility and helping a co-worker. If you have any questions about Peer Mentoring please feel free to contact Kari Uhlman, Employee Training & Development Manager at kuhlman@lclark.edu.