

WESTERN HUMAN RESOURCES

New Employee Virtual Orientation Plan

This resource has been created to supplement new employee orientation in the virtual work environment. Be sure to consult the resources linked below when designing your orientation plan. When complete, please provide your new hire with a copy of this document in advance of your first meeting.

[Supervisor's Checklist for Orienting New Employees](#)

[New Employee Orientation Checklist](#)

[Welcome to Western – A Guide for New Employees](#)

Employee Name:

Employee Start Date:

First Virtual Check-In Meeting (1-on-1):

The first scheduled check-in meeting should be on the employee's first day.

First Virtual Team Meeting:

Key Contacts:

Tip: Schedule these meetings with key contacts within your team and in partner units ahead of your new employee's start date.

Name	Role	Email	Relationship/Reason for Meeting	Meeting Date (if applicable)

In some cases, a new employee may have the technology required to perform the duties of their role at home. If not, you will want to consider:

- Consulting with an administrator in your department/faculty to order needed equipment
- Providing the new employee with parameters for ordering their equipment and the process for reimbursement

Technology Requirements:

Hardware Required	Acquisition Plan

Software Required	Acquisition Plan

Supply Requirements:

Supplies Required	Acquisition Plan

Departmental Policies, Practices, Procedures to be Reviewed:

List and link (if applicable) departmental resources for the employee to read and review while working from home.

Tip: Resources are listed under “Guidelines for Decision Making” in the Job Description

Organizational Chart

Review the organizational chart in the role description and note any instruction/additional information below.

Ongoing Onboarding

During these uncertain times, it's more important than ever to extend your onboarding plan beyond the first day or first week. The tips below are to help you get started, but we recommend carrying these principles through your new hire's first several months in the role.

Face to Face Check-Ins

- Set up check ins to get to know the new hire and allow the new employee to learn more about the team and culture
 - Consider: virtual "coffee break" with a 20 minute "no work talk" rule
 - Resource: "Get to Know Your New Hire" Conversation Guide
- Plan a schedule of virtual meetings with individual team members and key contacts
 - These meetings will allow your employee to get to know key partners and colleagues, as well as their work, while also learning how their roles intersect.

Note: remember to add the employee to any existing virtual team meetings and share sites (like the department OWL site, Microsoft Teams or OneDrive).

Clear Expectations

- Clear deliverables, projects or tasks give the employee a sense of purpose
- Keep them engaged and productive
- Sets out structure for how work is prioritized, team's work culture, etc.
- Let them know who their key contact will be for questions (you as supervisor, or someone else)

Teamwork

A successful onboarding experience involves the whole team, not just the supervisor.

- Encourage them to reach out to welcome the employee ahead of their scheduled meeting times and to share tips and tricks they've learned during their time at Western
- Consider appointing a buddy or onboarding mentor – a peer who can answer questions and help the employee feel welcome as they come onto the team

The First Day

- Give the employee time to get set up/logged in
- First virtual check in
 - Go through onboarding checklist
 - Confirm they have everything they need
 - Provide them with their Employee ID (if you do not know this, contact your Administrative Officer or Human Resources) and instruct them to call the Computer Accounts Office to get their username and password (519 661-3800, Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm).
- Walk through organizational chart and introduce team members, reporting structure

- Share operating procedures, standard practices, other documentation that introduces the work of your team
- Have the employee log in to and review the unit OWL site, Microsoft Teams group, or other unit communication/information sharing locations

The First Month

- Schedule orientation sessions to discuss different aspects of your unit/the work – break these out into bite-size virtual sessions (e.g. one hour meetings) to avoid overload
- Use these regular meetings to build connections between the new hire and the team, and to enhance the employee's learning of processes

Work From Home Resources

In addition to a new role, your new hire may also be adjusting to working from home. Consider providing resources, like those below, to help them get settled.

- [Learning & Development at Western's Working from Home resources](#)

Sample Onboarding Schedule

(Adapted from [LinkedIn](#))

Day 1

Email Welcome:

- Welcome to the team!
- Confirmation of benefits orientation details (if applicable)
- Schedule for the week
- Introduction to key contact information

Review Western Onboarding Resources:

- [New Employee Orientation Checklist](#)
- [Welcome to Western – A Guide for New Employees](#)

First Video Check In with Manager

- Receive Employee ID and Instructions for username/password set up
- Introduction to the role and team, processes, documentation, etc.

Begin Western Required Training

Day 2

Email Check In:

- Confirm workstation set up + Western ID/email access
- Confirm daily video check in time

Access Unit/Team Resources:

- OWL site
- Teams Page
- OneDrive

Video Check in with Manager**First Video Check in with onboarding buddy**

Day 3

Video Check In with Manager**Video Check In with onboarding buddy****Virtual Meeting with the Team**

- Introductions
- “Get to Know You” conversation

Complete Required Training

Day 4

Video Check In with Manager**Video Check In with onboarding buddy****First Orientation Learning Session with Key Partner**

Day 5

Video Check In with Manager

- Discuss next week’s work assignments and schedule
- Onboarding feedback

Video Check In with onboarding buddy**Orientation Learning Session with Key Partner****Virtual “Happy Hour” Social Meeting with Team**

First impressions matter

Many new hires aren't fully invested when they start a new job. A 2009 study by the Aberdeen Group of senior executives and HR staffing and recruiting functions found that 86 percent of respondents felt that a new hire's decision to stay with a company long-term is made within the first six months of employment. (reference - <https://www.shrm.org>)

What makes a good conversation starter?

Open-ended: A broad question typically generates a far more engaging answer than a close-ended one.

Non-routine: Breaking out of the standard weather and job-related questions will jolt the person you're talking to out of autopilot. You'll also develop better connection with this new employee.

Professional: Some topics are more suited for your friends and family than work colleagues. Your questions should never make your conversational partner uncomfortable. Avoid topics and questions asking for overly personal information.

Relevant: If you can, start a conversation about something timely or specific, such as your location, an event, your industry or current interests. The other person will find it easier to contribute.

Not-So-Great Conversation Ideas

"Tell me all about you." This is vague and can make people clam up.

Negativity. Conversation starters like, "Can you believe how boring that show was?" or "I can't stop staring at this ugly picture on my wall" are off-putting.

Some initial sample questions to ask:

- What's keeping you busy lately?
- Do you have any interesting hobbies?
 - How did you get involved in that?
 - What's your favourite part about that?
- What's the most interesting thing you've read lately?
- What are your personal goals for the upcoming year?
- What have your previous onboarding experiences been like? How could they have been better?
- Is there anything specific you were hoping to learn about in your first 30 days with Western?
- If they have relocated - What has been your favorite part about living in London so far? Least favorite?
 - What have your first impressions of London/Western been?

Some sample questions to ask after the first 30 days:

- What have you learned so far?
- Is the job different so far from what you expected?
- Is there anything you need to be successful in this role that we haven't provided you with?
- What are you looking forward to in the next few months?