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|  | A Successful First Assignment |

Providing a new employee with the opportunity early on to successfully complete an assignment, can build confidence in their new role and help them to establish productive interactions with their manager and co-workers. It’s also a great way to gauge and mold your working styles into a productive relationship.

The project does not need to be complex, but should be relevant, with a clear connection between the importance of the employee’s work and the department’s or university’s mission/goals. To ensure that the first assignment(s) is successful, consider the following to help you set expectations and outcomes:

**Explain the expected outcome(s) of the assignment.**

* What will be the end result of the assignment? What will the desired outcome look like? (Provide examples, if possible.)
* How will success be measured?

**Clarify the importance of the outcome(s).**

This will help the employee connect the assignment to the overall organization.

* Where does the project and the results fit in the larger organizational picture? (Consider missions, goals, and priorities). This will help the employee understand the impact the(ir) job has on the organization.
* Who will benefit from the results (students, faculty, staff, or other stakeholders)?

**Describe the key features of the assignment.**

* What actions or steps are required?
* What resources or resource limitations may apply? If they need resources, who do they get them from?
* What are the deadlines? Are their milestones during the project? What is the priority of the assignment for the employee?
* Will the employee need to work with anyone else to complete the project?

**Define the level of authority the employee will exercise throughout the assignment.**

* Should the employee carry out exact instructions?
* Should the employee bring recommendations to be decided by the manager?
* If the new employee has the authority to make decisions, should he/she inform management before acting?

**Identify potential issues, and determine how they will be addressed.**

* What could possibly interrupt or stand in the way of success in this assignment?
* How should any potential issues be resolved?

As the employee works on the project, continue to check in with them to ensure expectations are understood. Make the employee feel comfortable in asking questions.

Upon completion of the assignment, debrief with the new employee to gain his/her perspective on what went well, and what may have been challenging. The conversation should also include the assignment’s outcomes, as well as how his/her interaction with other employees went and what could have been done differently.

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