

Supervisor Onboarding Framework

This guide supports new supervisors and employees transitioning into leadership roles. It is designed to help you build confidence, establish strong team relationships and successfully navigate your new responsibilities. You do not need to complete these steps in strict order. Use the phases as general milestones and adapt them to your team's needs and pace of transition.

Get the lay of the land

Build a strong understanding of your team, available resources and organizational priorities. Use this phase to gather information and understand how your team fits within the organization.

Learn HR systems and supervisor resources

- Meet with your [HR business partner](#) to learn how the Office of Human Resources supports supervisors and employees throughout the employee life cycle.
- Learn [Workday](#) basics, including how to access employee profiles, [view time-off balances](#) and [locate important documents](#).
- Become familiar with [important Workday processes](#) such as supervisor approvals and timekeeping for hourly staff.
- Explore CMU's [supervisor resources](#), including quick guides and in-depth explanations for every stage of the employee life cycle, links to important policies, available support resources and FAQs.
- Review the [Staff Handbook](#) for your location.

Understand team and organizational structure

- Review the organizational chart for your team, department and college or division, and identify important partners and decision-makers.
- Access position descriptions for your direct reports using the "Generate Job Description" report in Workday.

Learn your team's history and context

- Read past performance reviews and current goals for each team member in Workday.
- Become familiar with compensation for your direct reports to better understand equity and retention considerations.
- Consider inviting team members to share their resumes, bios or career highlights if they are comfortable doing so.
- Review the strategic framework for your organization and for the [university](#).

Build connections and trust

As you continue learning your role and the organizational context, focus on building relationships, trust and open communication with your new team.

Conduct introductory one-on-one meetings

- Have an introductory one-on-one meeting with each team member within the first few weeks.
- Ask about their role, what they enjoy about their work, their challenges and their professional goals.
- Share your leadership style, communication expectations and preferences for collaboration and feedback.

Facilitate a team introduction meeting

- Introduce yourself and share your leadership approach and discuss your initial goals for the team.
- Invite team members to provide brief overviews of their current priorities and responsibilities.

Observe team workflows and responsibilities

- Identify opportunities to observe or shadow team members to better understand workflows and challenges.
- Prioritize listening and learning before making significant changes to team processes or priorities.

Lead and develop

Focus on sustaining team success while continuing to develop your leadership skills.

Establish consistent communication and feedback routines

- Set and prioritize regular individual one-on-one meetings (for example, weekly or biweekly) and team meetings.
- Provide timely, actionable feedback instead of waiting for formal reviews.
- Connect with your [HR business partner](#) for guidance when preparing for difficult conversations or when you have concerns about a direct report's performance.

Set clear goals and performance expectations

- Work with each person to set clear, measurable goals that align with team and university objectives and update goals in Workday as needed.
- Become familiar with [CMU's performance management processes and resources](#).

Support professional development

- Discuss what professional development and growth means to each team member.

- Collaborate with team members on actionable development plans that support their growth and that align with organizational goals.
- Explore CMU [learning and development opportunities](#) that support skill growth and career advancement.

Strengthen team culture and engagement

- Review CMU's [team development resources](#) for tools to build rapport and collaboration on your new team.
- Partner with your [HR business partner](#) to support engagement, inclusion and team effectiveness.
- Learn about HR resources for [employee health and well-being](#) and provide referrals when appropriate.
- Stay informed about campus events and engagement opportunities to share with your team via the [Supervisors and Hiring Managers](#) page, including the [Academic Calendar](#) and [CMU Events Calendar](#).

Continue developing your leadership skills

- Build connections with other supervisors and participate in the [Staff Supervisory Awareness Program](#), which provides tools and strategies for supervising teams.
- Explore additional [learning and development resources](#) for supervisors.

Throughout your leadership journey, your [HR business partner](#) can provide guidance on employee relations, performance management, employee engagement, organizational design, policy interpretation and workforce planning.