# Learning the Ropes
On-the-Job Training Program for An Educator’s First Months in the County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day One - Date:</th>
<th>Day Two - Date:</th>
<th>Day Three - Date:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>County-based welcome</strong>&lt;br&gt;• County Extension Director responsibility to support new staff member&lt;br&gt;• Address necessary paperwork&lt;br&gt;• Become familiar with office and staff&lt;br&gt;• Socialize&lt;br&gt;• Orientation DVD (in briefcase)</td>
<td><strong>Meet with Regional Director and County Extension Director</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Philosophy of program and role&lt;br&gt;• Review briefcase&lt;br&gt;• Confirm that background check has been conducted&lt;br&gt;• Professional scheduling/balancing worklife&lt;br&gt;• Use of calendar-time management&lt;br&gt;• Bio-sketch for mentoring</td>
<td><strong>Local focus</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Self-study&lt;br&gt;• County tour&lt;br&gt;• Mentor Contact&lt;br&gt;• Watch Understanding Civil Rights Laws</td>
<td><strong>Shadow exp’d educator (1)</strong>&lt;br&gt;• People skills&lt;br&gt;• Committee management&lt;br&gt;• Conflict management&lt;br&gt;• Time management&lt;br&gt;• Public speaking/teaching</td>
<td><strong>Technology focus</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Regional rep (a.m.)&lt;br&gt;• How to access calendar on web,&lt;br&gt;• e-mail, county addresses, OhioLine, professional development site&lt;br&gt;• Practice (p.m.) - use of laptop if necessary</td>
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<td><strong>Day Six - Date:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Day Seven - Date:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Day Eight - Date:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Day Nine - Date:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Day Ten - Date:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mentor</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Explore resources avail.&lt;br&gt;• Within office, region&lt;br&gt;• Familiarize/sort files&lt;br&gt;• Support available</td>
<td><strong>Campus focus</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Meet admin. - welcome, mission, vision&lt;br&gt;• Specialists in program area&lt;br&gt;• Web site cards, reference cards (who’s who)&lt;br&gt;• Benefits, complete forms</td>
<td><strong>Campus focus</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Human Resources - time management, balancing&lt;br&gt;• Computers &amp; Technology&lt;br&gt;• Plant and Pest Diagnostic Clinic</td>
<td><strong>Shadow exp’d Educator (2)</strong>&lt;br&gt;• People skills&lt;br&gt;• Committee management&lt;br&gt;• Conflict management&lt;br&gt;• Time management&lt;br&gt;• Public speaking/teaching</td>
<td><strong>Regional Office/review, evaluate, questions</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Individual time with County Extension Director and Regional Director&lt;br&gt;• Center Specialists&lt;br&gt;• What’s next - development plan, core training, mentor assignment</td>
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Learning the Ropes is an on-the-job training program designed for County Extension Educators. It has been designed to provide training and support for new Educators during their first several weeks on the job. The elements of the “ROPES” program include opportunities for:

- Reflection
- Observation
- Performance
- Experience
- Support

Learning the Ropes was developed to address the need for increased expectations for job readiness, the need for bonding (i.e., first hours on the job, connections with employees), and the need for new Educators to experience a sense of belonging and confidence early in their career. The program provides opportunities for new employees to observe and reflect upon a variety of successful programming and management styles and approaches through mentoring and shadowing experiences.

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This booklet has been prepared to assist in supporting each newly hired County Extension Educator. The Extension support consists of an opportunity to meet with Regional Director, Specialists, County Director, county staff, and campus personnel.

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Learning the Ropes
On-the-job Training Program for
An Educator’s First Weeks in the County

COUNTY DIRECTOR WELCOME

Date:

1. Director’s responsibility to support new employee
   - Greetings, introductions throughout office
   - Familiarize new staff member with county and personal office space
   - Work hour policies, office hours, meal/coffee break arrangements
   - Address necessary paperwork
   - Discuss inter-office communications and operations procedures

2. References
   - An Orientation Self-Check Time-Line for new staff member
   - County Director Guide Sheet #8 - Orientation for New County Directors: Assisting New Employees

Notes/Plans

REGIONAL DIRECTOR AND COUNTY DIRECTOR WELCOME

Date:

1. Regional Directors / County Extension Director to support new employee
   - Discuss philosophy of program and role expectations
   - Review orientation briefcase materials
   - Address issues of professional scheduling/balancing worklife, use of calendar-time management techniques
   - Share personal philosophy, role as supervisor and colleague
   - Complete bio-sketch for mentoring process/fax to mentor
   - Review programming efforts within state
   - Explain probationary period (performance and salary issues)
   - Address affirmative action/equal opportunity issues
   - Identify peer mentor

2. References
   - An Orientation Self-Check Time-Line for new staff member
   - Annual review guidelines
   - Bio-sketch form

Notes/Plans
LOCAL FOCUS

Date:

1. County staff and volunteers
   - Review co-workers’ URS and identify potential for collaboration
   - Tour of community; visit with key leaders, volunteers
   - Discuss funding sources, budget
   - Self-study opportunity
   - Media interviews, press release, meet with commissioners
   - Contact by assigned mentor and shadow County Educators
   - View Understanding Civil Rights Laws Program and return form (found in Folder 10 of Orientation Briefcase) to Extension Human Resources

2. Resources
   - An Orientation Self-Check Time-Line for new staff member
   - County budget, URS, annual report
   - Civil Rights Laws (http://clickvideo.ag.ohio-state.edu/vod.htm)

Notes/Plans

SHADOW EXPERIENCED EDUCATOR

Date:

1. Experienced County Educator
   - Observation of job role while in experienced educator’s county
   - Discussion of conflict management, people skills
   - Teaching methods, audiences
   - Time management practices
   - Needs assessment methods, program planning
   - Personal experiences

Notes/Plans

TECHNOLOGY FOCUS

Date:

1. Regional Systems Manager, Technology Education
   - Establish OSU e-mail account
   - How to access e-mail, websites, calendar, county addresses, Ohio-Line, professional development site
   - Introduction to use of word processing, data management software
   - Provide access to supply of Quick Guides for computer use
   - Loan use of laptop computer for practice if needed
2. Resources
   - Quick Guides
   - OhioLine - http://ohioline.osu.edu/

Notes/Plans

MENTOR

Date:

1. Mentor Visit
   - Explore resources available within office and state-wide
   - Become familiar with filing system; sort and organize
   - Discuss support available from specialists
   - Identify audience potential, program delivery methods
   - Outline reporting methods, accountability
   - Discuss core competencies for position and review available training opportunities with County Extension Director
   - Discuss role, specific job expectations and responsibilities
   - List major duties and/or responsibilities
   - Discuss areas of joint responsibilities with other staff members
   - Identify required reporting
   - Identify lines of accountability and evaluation
   - Discuss how evaluation of the duties and responsibilities will be conducted
   - Review program files, teaching materials available within county and regional offices

2. Resources
   - An Orientation Self-Check Time-Line for new staff member
   - Center resource materials

Notes/Plans

CAMPUS FOCUS

Date:

1. New Personnel Development
   - Orientation to organization and college, history of Extension
   - Discuss organizational culture, goals, mission and vision
   - Review programming emphasis with Assistant Directors, specialists
   - HR sessions (Professional Development, Teamwork, Diversity, Worklife)

2. Resources
   - Benefits materials
   - Orientation briefcase materials
   - Annual report, strategic plans

Notes/Plans
Task/Activity List for County Director

On the first day:

- Tour work facility to locate desk and files, meeting rooms, mail room, restrooms, vending machines, break room, emergency exits
- Explain work hour policies: office hours, work hours time document, flex time, comp. time, meal arrangements, and coffee breaks
- Discuss office policies, norms, expectations: (written as well as non-written,) specifics on dress, area of expertise of each person on staff
- Clarify safety and security issues: keys, phone numbers, parking arrangements, space and lighting, building information, scheduling, security systems and security codes
- Introduce co-workers and key individuals in unit
- Explain use of campus parking sticker and OSU ID card
- Provide schedule and dates of the next staff meeting/office conference.
- Schedule Learning the Ropes Orientation and appointments with Regional Director, Specialists, Systems Manger and Educators for shadowing and mentoring.

** Or other staff members as may be appropriate

Within the first week:

- Explain when and how first paycheck will be received
- Provide information on number of payroll periods
- Review the calendar of Extension programs to determine those events which will involve new employees
- Provide information needed to participate in necessary in-service training programs
- Discuss procedures for requesting, ordering, and purchasing program materials
- Provide a list of key people and offices, external and internal, to “home” unit/department/college
- Discuss computer network access (e.g. e-mail and role of Regional Systems Specialist)
- Review support staff responsibilities and procedures for getting work completed (typing, priorities, preparing letters, filing, newsletters, etc.)
- Discuss inter-office communication procedures (memo routing, keeping office informed of schedule, etc.)
- Address the operations of Extension: expense accounts, travel requests, reports and regulations, unit budget, weekly itinerary, monthly reports
- Explain any other procedures unique to your office
- Show how to schedule the use of unit’s facilities and equipment for program use
- Discuss use of office phone credit cards
- Provide in a tour of the geographic area for which new position is associated
Within the first month:

- Review co-workers URS and identify those areas where collaborative work efforts may relate
- Review program area’s previous year’s plan of work (URS) documentation and reporting system
- Review Extension policies
- Review work accountability issues
- Encourage visits with key leaders, volunteers and other professionals to learn more about the community and programs
- Review program area’s advisory committee’s roster

COMMUNITY
- Extension Advisory Committee (role, function, meeting dates, member’s names, addresses and phone numbers)
- Personnel in other offices and department (auditor, clerk of courts, social services, etc.)
- Funding sources (commissioners and state legislators)
- Elected officials (federal legislators, mayors, school board members)
- U. S. Government agencies (Chamber of Commerce, ministerial associations, etc.)

MEDIA
- Newspaper editors and reporters
- Radio station personnel
- TV station managers

CITIZEN LEADERS IN EXTENSION PROGRAMMING
- I.E. Ag Program Advisory Committee, Family & Consumer Sciences Council Officers, 4-H Advisory Committee, etc.
Resources:


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