

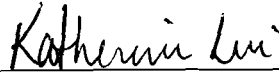
Needs Assessment for New Employee Orientation  
at UW-Stout

by

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katherine Lui", is written over a horizontal line.

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ABSTRACT

An employee orientation is designed to introduce new employees to the job, personnel, and the organization, and help the new employees to establish the relationships in the organization. University Wisconsin-Stout is currently offering decentralized employee orientation. A needs assessment was conducted to determine whether the current employees feel the need to have a centralized employee orientation. A six-question survey was created, and 50% of full-time teaching and non-teaching employees were asking to participate. Based on the results from the survey, the data analysis showed whether there is a need for an employee orientation, what important subjects should be cover, how the orientation should be delivered, and when the orientation should take place.

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## Chapter I: Introduction

Some employees get a little introduction before they start their new job, and some is learning the job while they are doing it. Without knowing the need of the employees, it will not as effective for them to complete the tasks. Based on the survey results, researcher will be able to determine whether there is a need for an employee orientation at UW-Stout.

Right now, the orientatoin program is decentralized at UW-Stout. Many faculties are introduced to their own department only with about 10 minutes training from their supervisor, especially for new part-time faculty. After searching the Stout Library Catalog, there is not a needs assessment done for an employee orienation at UW-Stout. Based on the experiences from the selected employees, who are full-time teaching and non-teaching faculties at UW-Stout, the results from the survey will determine that if a centralized orientation can help them have a better, more comfortable, and higher productive work environment. The analysis of the data will also provide suggetion and recommendation to Stout regarding the important topic, most effective time, and most appropriate method for an employee orientation if an orientation is needed.

This chapter will present the problem statement, objectives, signification of the study, limitations, assumptions, methodology, and definitions of terms of the study.

### *Statement of the Problem*

A six-question web survey will be used to determine whether there is a need for developing an employee orientation program for new teaching and non-teaching faculties at UW-Stout. A copy of the needs assessment, a copy of survey, and a final report will be available when the research is completed. Based on the analysis, the study will be able to determine what topics should be covered in the orientation, when the orientation should be delivered, and how the program should be presented.



### *Research Objectives*

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Determine if the full-time employees who participated in the survey feel the need for a new employee orientation at UW-Stout.
2. Compare the differences of the survey result between the employees who have been working at UW-Stout for less than five years and over 16 years.
3. Determine what topics should be covered in an orientation.
4. Determine when an orientation should be delivered.
5. Determine how an orientation program should be presented.
6. Provide suggestions and recommendations that allow the UW-Stout to organize a new employee orientation program.

### *Significance of the Study*

- 1 The UW-Stout will find this information useful when determining the need for developing an employee orientation program for new employees.
- 2 UW-Stout Human Resources Department will find this information useful when organizing a centralized orientation program for new employees.
- 3 UW-Stout faculties will find this information helpful when helping new employees be familiar with the work environment.

### *Limitations*

The limitations of this study are:

1. The results of this study are limited to the UW-Stout.
2. There is no guarantee that the survey will be returned by the participants, thus the rate of response is unknown.

3. The researcher produced the survey instrument.
4. Due to time constraints, only full-time teaching and non-teaching faculties of UW-Stout will be contacted to participate.

#### *Assumptions of the Study*

The assumptions of this study are:

1. Individuals surveyed will see the importance of participating in the study for the benefit of having a new employee orientation program.
2. Information acquired in the study will be used by the UW-Stout to evaluate the need of delivering a new employee orientation program.
3. Individuals surveyed will be truthful in their responses.
4. The researcher will effectively evaluate the information received and produce meaningful data.
5. The analyzed data will be used by the Human Resources Department at UW-Stout to plan a new employee orientation.

#### *Definitions*

*Centralized.* “Systems where decision making, flow of data or goods and services, or the beginning of activities are initiated at the same central point and disseminated to remote points in the chain or organization” (Bridgefield Group, 2005)

*Decentralized.* “A system or process that initiates action by end users or locations, rather than by a consolidated central organization that pushes data, goods or services to those points based on its own parameters” (Bridgefield Group, 2005).

*Employee orientation.* “A program that is designed to introduce new employees to the job, supervisor, coworkers, and the organization” (DeSimone, Werner & Harris 2002, p.661).

*Needs Assessment.* “A process by which an organization’s HRD needs are identified and articulated” (DeSimone & Harris, 1998, p.668).

*Socialization.* “The process whereby individuals learn to behave willingly in accordance with the prevailing standards of their culture” (University of Nebraska at Kearney).

*Subject Matter Expert.* “Individual who exhibits the highest level of expertise in performing a specialized job, task, or skill within the organization” (Six Sigma).

### *Methodology*

A six-question web survey will be created, and the responses will be kept confidential and only used for data collection. Fifty percent of both teaching and non-teaching full-time faculties from UW-Stout will be randomly selected to participate the survey. The survey will include two demographic questions (employment classification and years of service), and four main questions include what topics should be cover; what is the best way for receiving the orientation; when the orientation should take place; is there a need for a new employee orientation and why. The data will be collected and analyzed as a report with conclusions and recommendations.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

### *Introduction*

The key for a new employee to be successful in his or her new positions is to establish relationships in a new organization and understand new behaviors, facts, procedures, expectations, and values of the organization. The process new employees go through to adjust to a new organization is called organizational socialization. This process is a complex process and may take new employees weeks or months to understand the expectation from the job and learn how to behave before they are accepted by other organization members (DeSimone, Werner, and Harris, 2002). Employee orientation is one of the ways to help new employees be familiar and feel comfortable with the job and the work environment.

A well-planned employee orientation provides new employees positive work experiences and helps them to meet their work expectation quicker. Wanous and Reichers (2000) found the following:

New employee orientation programs are commonplace in business, education, and the military. In the 1980s, two surveys reported that such programs were used in 64 percent and 70 percent of the organizations sampled. A 1994 survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management found that 87 percent of the respondents said their organizations provided orientation programs. A recent survey of British business organizations found that 93 percent had formal orientation programs. (p.435)

In the video, Welcome Aboard (1988), it shows the differences between having an employee orientation and without one. Also, managers, supervisors, and co-workers can help new employees make the most productive contribution as quickly as possible. Without an employee orientation, it can create a lot of frustration, confusion, and misdirected effort for new

employees. For an organization, it may have high employee turnover, absenteeism, and decreased productivity, and these results can be very costly. In contrast, a well-organized orientation increases productivity and higher profits, improves teamwork and work environment.

### *Organizational Socialization*

Van Maanen defined that organizational socialization is “the process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role” (p. 211). In other words, organizational socialization shows how new employees get permitted as members of an organization by learning the values, norms, and required behaviors, and it is a dynamic process as it develops over time (Tung Ling Hsiung, 2003). There are two types of socialization tactics: institutionalized and individualized socialization. According to Griffeth & Hom (2001), institutionalized and individualized socialization have different emphasis as follows:

Socialization tactics encourage newcomers to conform to preexisting definitions of the work role, whereas individualized tactics inspire newcomers to innovate and redefine their work role. Institutionalized tactics most enhance job loyalty and commitment by helping newcomers cope with the anxiety and uncertainty of the new job. By contrast, individualized tactics encourage newcomers to challenge the status quo, which increases creativity but not necessarily firm loyalty. (p.67)

By understanding both socialization tactics, organization can strengthen organizational commitment and job retention.

### *Stages in the Socialization Process.*

Most socialization occurs during the early period after organizational entry (Tung Ling Hsiung, 2003). Organization and individual both have different perspective during the four stages of entry – recruitment, selection, orientation, and socialization. During the socialization

process, the perspectives from an individual are moving through typical stages and detecting one's success. On the other hand, the perspectives from the organization being entered are influencing new employees by various tactics and using the psychology of persuasion (Furnham, 2005).

There are many models describing the stages in the socialization process. Wanous (1992) reviewed many different models and integrated them into a four-stage model - confronting and accepting organizational reality; achieving role clarity; locating oneself in the organizational context; and detecting signposts of successful socialization. The confronting and accepting stage refers to the socialization itself, and the detecting stage describes the transition from newcomer to insider. Furnham stated that "the rate at which newcomers proceed through the various stages is primarily determined by the amount of contact between newcomers and insiders" (p.148).

#### *Socialization Learning.*

The new employees must learn a variety of information and behaviors to be accepted as an organization insider. The content of socialization learning can be divided into five categories (Fisher, 1986):

1. Preliminary learning - the need for learning, what to learn, and whom to learn from
2. Learning about the organization - organizational goals, values, and policies
3. Learning to function in the work group - the values, norms, roles, and relationship within the group
4. Learning how to perform the job - the necessary or required skills and knowledge for a particular job
5. Personal learning - learning oneself (identity, expectations, image, and motivation) from the experiences within a job and organization

New employees are not only waiting to learn from what the organization offers; they can actively seek out information on their own. Information seeking has an impact on socialization outcomes. New employees tend to use different tactics and sources when seeking different types of information. Organization should encourage the new employees to observe and experience what works and what does not. It will minimize the risks new employees face for experimenting and increase new employees' motivation to learn. The encouragement can be done by training supervisors and peers to support new employees' attempts to gather information, and by creating orientation programs that include information-seeking activities and reinforcement for new employees who engage in them (DeSimone et al., 2002).

Both individual and organization have different requirements and tasks at a different stage. Furnham (2005) specified that an employee orientation appears to help a great deal such as:

- Give the person realistic information early on so that appropriate expectations are developed.
- Provide general support and reassurance, particularly at the beginning.
- Recruit models to help show the new employee what is appropriate.

### *Employee Orientation*

According to DeSimone et al. (2002), employee orientation is a “program that is designed to introduce new employees to the job, supervisor, coworkers, and the organization” (p.661). By being organized and having a planned orientation, the organization creates positive perceptions. Cadwell stated that “the goal of orientation is to capitalize on each new employee's enthusiasm and keep it alive once the work begins. When orientation is successful, a new employee will become a valued asset to the organization” (p.3). Robbins believes that “the more time and effort

spent in helping new employees feel welcome, the more likely they are to identify with the company and become valuable members of it” (p.8).

#### *Down Side.*

One of the reasons people choose to quit or switch jobs is that they never feel welcome or been taken in as part of the organization. When this happens, it may cost the organization anywhere from 5,000 dollars to 30,000 dollars per person for the need to hire, orient and train another employee. (Cadwell, 1988). Many studies show that replacing a values employee costs between 150 percent and 250 percent of their annual salary. Based on the result of a survey that was done by an executive search firm, almost half (44%) of employees polled in a survey felt they were not given the tools and resources they needed to succeed in the first few weeks on the job. Employees feel discouraged and insecure, and eventually it may lead to a resignation (Morris, 2005).

A poorly designed or organized employee orientation will lead to a negative result as well. A large percentage of employee turnovers are due to “bad chemistry” or poor orientation (Buffkin, 2002). Very often a poor orientation program contains too much information (Barbazette, 2001). A study from Garrison (n. d.) shows that the top four reasons that an employee orientation turns into weakness are no feedback conducted, program was too shallow, information lacked in some areas, and poorly organized. In turn, a poorly designed or organized orientation program will also increase employee turnover and decrease productivity.

#### *Benefits of an Orientation.*

In New Employee Orientation Programs Make Cents article, a “well thought out and effectively administered employee orientation results in lower attrition, increased productivity, and improved work quality. This translates into happier employees and a healthier bottom line”



(p. 6). In *Orientation Builds Employee Commitment* (2001), a study from Ohio State University, suggests the right program can be very beneficial for work and organizations. Researchers found that new employees who completed a three-hour orientation program showed a higher level of commitment to their employer than did those who skipped the program.

A well planned new employee orientation program can reduce turnover and save lots of money for an organization. By following specific steps, organization can reduce both permanent and part-time employee turnover and at the same time quickly prepare new employees for their new jobs. In turn, this will improved customer service, higher productivity and improved relations (Cadwell, 1988). Other benefits for having an orientation are improved safety, reduced penalties, improved communications, and affirmation of having joined the right organization (Barbazette, 2001). In the video, *How to Develop and Implement a New Employee Orientation Program* (1995), it lists seven benefits for having an orientation program:

1. New employee need to be introduced to your organization.

An introduction and explanation of employees' position and responsibilities is the basic need. It will be hard for the new employees to make a solid impact if they do not understand the basic mission, function, and strategies of the organization. The employee orientation is also great chance to establish personal connection and working relationships.

2. An orientation program helps instill company values.

An employee orientation program help the new employees understand the culture of an organization. Orientation can be considered the best time to illustrate and encourage organizational values, such as customer service, quality, efficiency, and innovation.

3. New employee orientation helps reduce anxiety.

An orientation program helps new employees to adapt the new work environment faster, and the program allows them to calm their nerves and feel more comfortable with their new position and duties.

4. Employee orientation provides an efficient way of completing all necessary paperwork.

There are forms required from new employees when they are hired. It is easier for the Human Resources people to explain the forms and manage the paper flow during the orientation program.

5. It provides a global perspective.

An organization is a good time to show employees how their work fit into a big picture. This will not only help employees avoid getting lost, but also give them a better understanding of how the whole organization operates.

6. Orientation programs provide a forum for an interactive exchange of information.

An orientation provides a greater involvement and open communication for the employees. The new employees should be encouraged to ask lots questions.

7. An orientation program promotes teamwork.

An orientation is like the first day of a class – freshman meets each other. Providing an orientation is like creating an informal buddy system. New employees may feel more comfortable to share their experiences and ideas with each other. If the new employees are in different departments, they can also introduce their co-workers to their “buddy” and help answer the constant flow questions.

*Planning for Success.*

Barbazette determined that a “successful new employee orientation is an enthusiastic welcome, full of variety and timely information. Orientation needs to be a process... not just a one-day event” (p.1). A poorly planned or non-existent orientation can quickly turn a carefully recruited and selected employee into another turnover statistic. On the other hand, a well planned and executed orientation will result in fewer mistakes and a better understanding of what is expected. (Cadwell, 1988). To prepare an organized orientation, it is helpful to have a step-by-step procedure to follow. There are six steps, at a minimum, to create or update an orientation (Sims, 2002):

1. Defining or refining the new employee notification and setup process
2. Conduct a needs assessment to determine or review the topics and objectives of your orientation program
3. Identify your audience(s)
4. Determine the delivery method(s) for your program
5. Identify activities and games, and develop visual aids for your program
6. Continuously improve your orientation program

During the step-by-step learning progress, it is also important to keep in mind that an effective orientation should cover one major point at a time; move in small progressive steps from known to unknown, from simple to complex; and build learner’s confidence (Van Daele, 1995).

Many organizations planned the orientation primarily on imparting information. However, it is suggested that new employees require more than information. They are looking for help in establishing new relationships and in managing the anxiety and stress (Bourne, 1967). In How to

Develop and Implement a New Employee Orientation Program (1995), it talks about the 10 things to include in an orientation program:

1. A brief description of each department

Representatives of each department or someone who is able to provide details of each department should be available during the orientation program.

2. A tour of your facilities

By giving new employees a tour to help them understand where to find information if needed and how the organization is set-up.

3. Human resources information and routine forms to fill out

It is much more effective to provide explanation for organizational policies and procedures than ask the employees to read a manual themselves.

4. Systems and equipment instruction

It is necessary to train new employees how to operate any equipment they need, such as computers, phone system, fax machines, and copiers.

5. An overview of key skills and employee qualities

Organization can use an employee orientation to cover the concepts, skills, or anything that are valued and important to the organization.

6. A look at the organizational culture

It is suggested to take time and give an overview of the unique values, history, and culture of the organization. This can help the new employees understand the important characteristics of the organization.

7. A discussion of your organization's future and promising new developments

Senior managers can use the time during an orientation to get the new employees to think about the future and growing chance of the organization.

8. An introduction of key managers

Leaders from each department should introduce themselves because it gives the new employees an idea of who is in charge of each department.

9. A meeting with the president or CEO

It is an opportunity to motivate the new employees by having a talk with the top. It is also one more opportunity to let the new employees know what is required of them and what they can expect in return.

10. A question-and-answer session

By providing an open discussion in the middle or at the end of an orientation can give the employees the chance to get the answers they may need to do a better job. The new employees should feel encouraged to ask any question they have.

Besides what to include in an orientation, it is also important to consider when to offer an orientation. Mostly an orientation includes the first day and up to the first week after entry.

Starcke (1996) believes that "it is important to begin orientation immediately, so that new hires can become assimilated into the workforce as soon as possible; early assimilation makes it easier for new employees to be successful (p.107). In a British survey, two-third of the employee orientation lasted between one to five days, and 54 percent of the orientation program occurred within the first four weeks on the job (Wanous, 2000). Each position requires different skills, and every individual has different abilities and experiences. According to the How to Develop and

Implement a New Employee Orientation Program video, the answer for when to offer an employee program is “do what works best for you and your people.”

One last thing to consider of an orientation is an evaluation program and a follow-up section. An evaluation system will help develop a needs analysis for updating current orientation or creating a new orientation for the future (Tyler, 1998). Some questions both employers and new employees can think through are as following:

- What specific things can I do to ensure that new employees will begin to know their co-workers without feeling overwhelmed?
- What special things (desk, work area, equipment, and special instructions) can I provide to make new workers feel comfortable, welcome and secure?
- What positive experience can I provide for new employees that they could discuss with their families?
- How can I make the new employee feel valued by the organization?
- How can I provide personal attention and let new employees know that they are important to the work team?

The responses from the new employees will help the organization know how employees feel about their work environment. This will give the organization an idea of whether the employees received the skills, information, and care they need for their job from the orientation. An ongoing evaluation not only improves employee performance, but also organization performance (Starcke, 1996).

A well-planned and organized employee orientation helps new employees adjust to a new organization faster. In turn, it will bring many benefits for an organization. An employee orientation is not only for profit organizations, but also the employees who work for state

government or state universities. In the memo of New Librarian Orientation (2006), if employees are not familiar with what they are doing, they fall into three types: the never here, the angry-to-be-here, or “waiting for retirement.” None of these results is what an organization wants to see, or what an employee wants to experience. If an organization can provide an employee orientation based on the understanding of the who (the target audience), what (the topics), when (the delivery time), and how (the delivery methods) of an orientation, it will increase employees’ motivation and production and decrease organizations’ turnover and training dollars.

### Chapter III: Methodology

The objectives were to determine whether there is a need for developing an employee orientation program, what topics should be covered in the orientation, when the orientation should be delivered, and how the program should be presented. Most employees only have about 10 minutes with their supervisors for employees training. This study helped the employer to know if an employee orientation could help the employees to do better in their job. A web survey was created, and the responses were kept confidential and used for data collection. Two demographic questions and four main questions were included. The data was collected and analyzed as a report with conclusions and recommendations. Discussed in this chapter is detailed outline of subject selection, instrumentation, data collection, analysis, and limitations.

#### *Subject Selection and Description*

Based on the population list from the Human Resources Department at UW-Stout, 50 percent of the entire teaching and non-teaching full-time faculty were randomly selected to participate the survey. The participation for this survey was entirely voluntary and anonymous. The participants could choose not to participate without any adverse consequences to them. There was no way to identify participants' anonymous document after it had been turned into the investigator. The participants could withdraw from the survey anytime they wish to. A statement of consent was on top of each survey for participants to read.

#### *Instrumentation*

The original questionnaires were conducted for the project, Needs Assessment for Employee Orientation at UW-Eau Claire UCP unit (Huang & Wilson, 2005). The questionnaires were taken as a guideline for the survey in this assessment. Based on the main points, who (the target audience), what (the topics), when (the delivery time), and how (the delivery methods) of



an orientation from the literatures reviews, the survey was edited to. The researcher consulted with the Subject Matter Expert (SME), so the questionnaires were more relevant to the present situation. The SMEs included Mr. Wayne Argo, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Raina Clark, Communications Specialist; Dr. Howard D. Lee, Director of Career and Technical Education; Ms. Christine Ness, Research and Statistical Consultant; and Ms. Donna Weber, Assistant to the Chancellor for Affirmative Action.

### *Data Collection Procedures*

For the survey instrument, a cover letter along with the six-question web survey was sent out (see Appendix A). The participants were given 48 hours from the time they received the survey to complete it. Two weeks later, a follow-up letter along with the six-question web survey was sent out, and the participants were given 12 hours from the time they receive the survey to complete it (see Appendix B). Every participant's email address was in the "bcc" line when the survey sent out. After the participants completed the survey, results went to the WebMaster center at UW-Stout directly. The investigator was the only person who could access the data. Also, the result of each surveyed question was the only data that the investigator could access through WebMaster center.

The chosen subjects participated in a web survey with six questions. The participants were asked to check the employment classification (teaching or non-teaching); check the years of their service; rate the important topics should be cover in the orientation; rate the helpful ways to receive the orientation; rate the convenient time for deliver the orientation. A suggestion box was also provided at the end of the survey. The results and comments from the survey were automatically entered into the computer system in the WebMaster center at UW-Stout. The data was downloaded into Excel spreadsheets for further analysis by the investigator.

### *Data Analysis*

Data from the survey were analyzed quantitatively. Descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, and percentages of the data were calculated. Bar charts and pie charts were used to show the frequencies of participants' responses. Responses to comments and suggestions questions on the survey were analyzed after organizing under similar subjects.

### *Limitations*

Time is the major factor of this study and the survey process. It was important to search and follow the schedule of the school. The closer to the end of a semester, the harder to get the survey back. It would be really hard if the survey were done during summer since most faculty members would be on vacation. Even during regular school days, it was necessary to give a week for a 48-hour response time. Some faculty were not in the office everyday, or they might not check email frequently, so the response time were stated 48-hour after receiving the survey, rather than 48-hour after the survey was sent. The same situation was applied to the follow-up reminder.

### *Summary*

Based on the who (the target audience), what (the topics), when (the delivery time), and how (the delivery methods) of an orientation, the survey included two demographic questions (employment classification and years of service), and four main questions including what topics should be covered; what is the best way for receiving the orientation; when the orientation should take place; is there a need for a new employee orientation and why. The data was collected and analyzed. Conclusions and recommendations follow in chapters four and five.

## Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of the study was to determine whether there is a need for an employee orientation at UW-Stout. Fifty percent of the entire teaching and non-teaching full-time faculty were randomly selected to participate the six-question web survey. One hundred ninety-seven out of 438 surveys were returned. The results in the survey showed if there is a need for an orientation, what topics should be covered in the orientation, when the orientation should be delivered, and how the program should be presented. The comparisons between the faculty who have been providing service at Stout for five years or less and 16 years or more were analyzed. The results from the survey would be used for conclusions and future recommendations in chapter five.

### *Item Analysis*

The respondents were 197 full-time faculty including 82 (42%) teaching and 115 (58%) non-teaching faculty at Stout. The majority of the respondents had been either at Stout for less than six years (35%) or more than 15 years (40%). Other respondents had been at Stout for six years to 10 years (17%) and 11 years to 15 years (9%). Based on the 197 returned surveys, 186 respondents (94%) indicated there is a need for an employee orientation, and 11 respondents (6%) did not think there is not a need for one.

### *What to Cover in the Orientation.*

The respondents rated each subjects with Very Important (VI), Important (I), Neutral, (N), Unimportant (UI), or Very Unimportant (VUI). The top four subjects that the respondents indicated as very important were Computers (68%), Organizational Information (60%), Payroll (50%), and Parking (46%) with a mean of 4.51, 4.60, 4.25, and 4.25. Although majority of the respondents did not think University Center's Services and Local Community were very

important, they were still important to cover in an orientation (see Figure 1). The majority of the responses were very consistent with a standard deviation (SD) less than 0.90 (see Table 1).

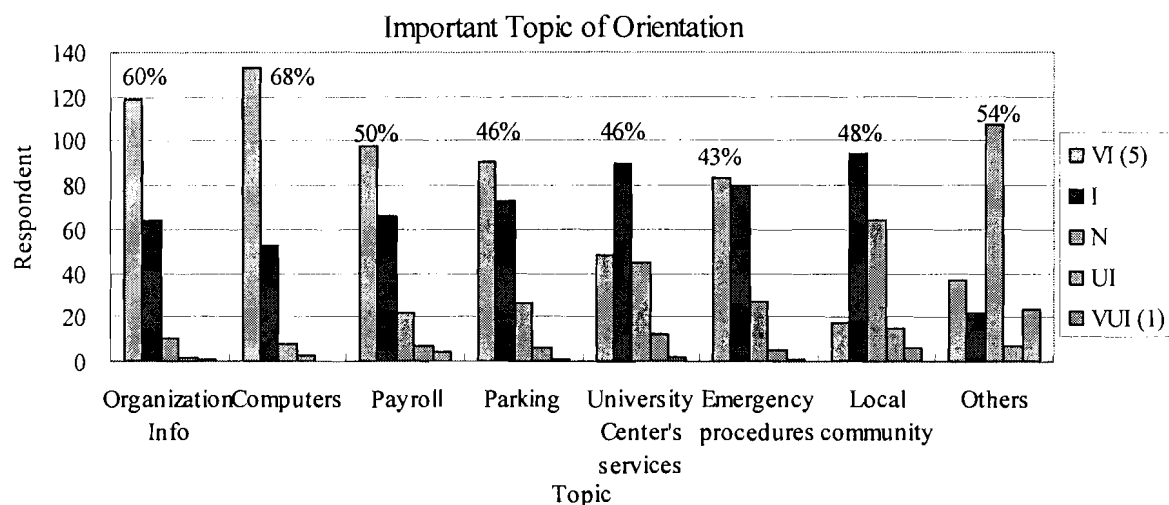


Figure 1

Table 1

*Importance Topic of Orientation*

Item response	VI (N=197)	I	N	UI	VUI	Mean	SD
Organization Info	119	64	11	2	1	4.51	0.70
Computers	133	53	8	3	0	4.60	0.64
Payroll	98	66	22	7	4	4.25	0.15
Parking	91	73	26	6	1	4.25	0.83
University Center's services	48	90	45	12	2	3.86	0.89
Emergency procedures	84	80	27	5	1	4.22	1.37
Local community	18	94	64	15	6	3.52	0.88
Others	37	22	10	7	24	--	--

### *How to Deliver the Orientation.*

The respondents rated each method with Very Useful (VU), Useful (U), Neutral (N), Useless (UL), and Very Useless (VUL). Seventy percent of the respondents indicated Face to Face with a Staff Mentor, with a mean of 4.62, was the most useful way to receive an orientation. Manual (48%), Campus Tour (47%), and Computer Tutorial (45%) were also indicated as useful ways with a mean of 3.89, 4.18, and 3.61 (see Figure 2). The majority of the responses were very consistent with a SD less than one. The delivery method of Video was the only method with a SD larger than one (1.02) (see Table 2).

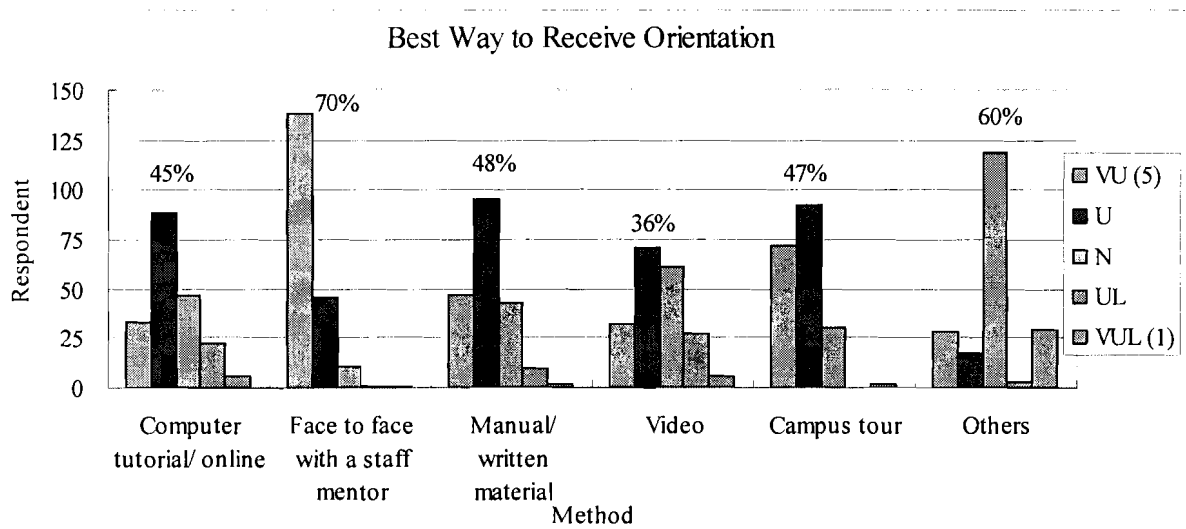


Figure 2

Table 2

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*Best Way to Receive Orientation*

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Item response	VU	U	N	UL	VUL	Mean	SD
	(N=197)						
Computer tutorial/ online	33	89	47	22	6	3.61	0.99
Face to face with a staff mentor	138	46	11	1	1	4.62	0.66
Manual/ written material	47	95	43	10	2	3.89	0.86
Video	32	71	61	27	6	3.49	1.02
Campus tour	72	93	30	0	2	4.18	0.76
Others	28	18	119	3	29	--	--

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### *When to Deliver the Orientation.*

The respondents were asked to choose when the orientation should take place. Thirty-nine percent of the respondents thought the orientation should take place within the first week and 24% of the respondents preferred prior to employment (see Figure 3).

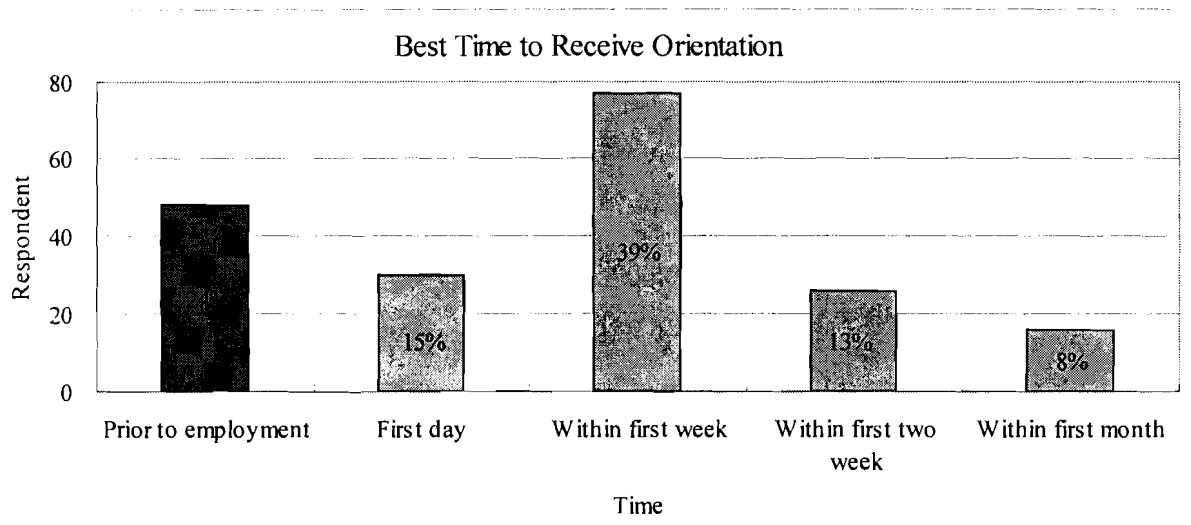


Figure 3

The respondents indicated there is more need to be done to make the new employees feel welcome. The respondents also thought it is important to know how each department fits into Stout and their role. Some other topics that the respondents thought was important to cover in an orientation were health insurance, Library Learning Center service, city parking, annuity, diversity awareness, policy on sexual harassment, sexual assault resources, and professional development opportunity. A respondent also suggested spreading out the orientation over several days or weeks to reduce overwhelming from information.

### *Comparison between Service for Five Years or Less and 16 Years or More*

The majority of the respondents were either just started working at Stout for no more than five years or had been working at Stout for more than 15 years. Among the respondents who had been at Stout for less than six years, 90% thought there is a need for an orientation. Ninety-seven

of the respondents who had been at Stout for more than 15 years indicated there is a need for an orientation. The respondents with different length of services at Stout might have different thoughts in what is the most important subject to cover in an orientation, what is the most useful way to deliver the orientation, and when is the best time to deliver the orientation.

*What to Cover in the Orientation.*

A total of 68 respondents (100%) who participated in the survey had been working at Stout for less than six years. The respondents were asking to rate each subject under the question. The top four subjects that most respondents indicated as very important were Computers (66%), Organization Information (53%), Payroll (46%), and Parking (46%). Only six respondents out of 68 thought Local Community was very important. A total of 78 respondents (100%) who participated in the survey had been working at Stout for more than 15 years. The top four subjects that most respondents indicated as very important were Computers (69%), Organization Information (64%), Payroll (56%), and Emergency Procedures (56%). Eight out of 78 respondents indicated Local Community is very important (see Figure 4).

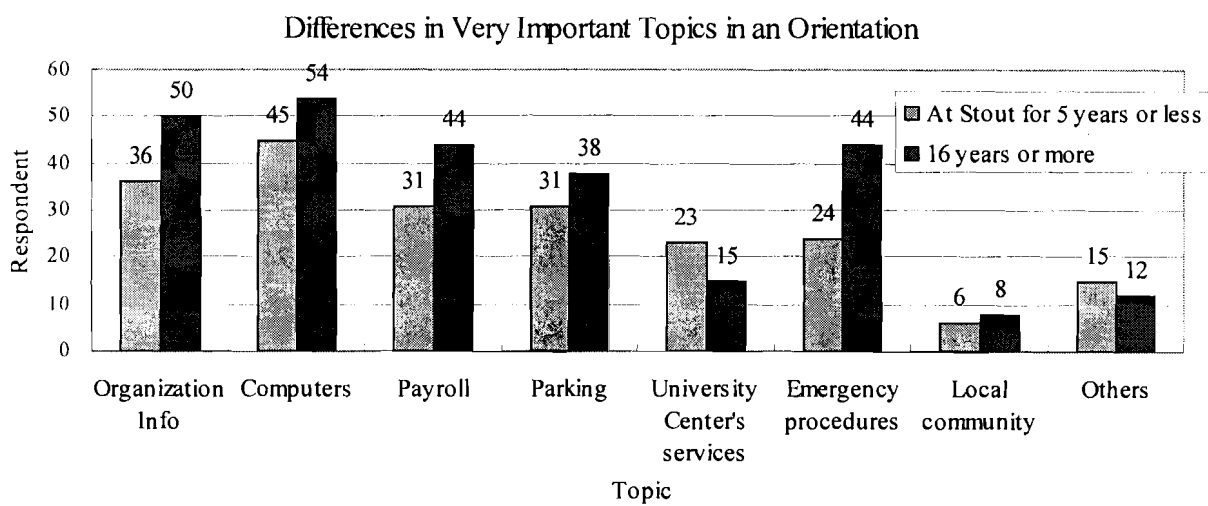


Figure 4



The largest difference between the two groups was in the subject of Emergency Procedures. The respondents who had been at Stout for more than 15 years had 21% higher rate than the respondents who had been at Stout for less than six years indicated Emergency Procedures was very important.

#### *How to Deliver the Orientation.*

A total of 68 respondents who had been working at Stout for less than six years and a total of 78 respondents who had been working at Stout for more than 15 years participated in the survey. The respondents were asking to rate each method for receiving the orientation. Both groups indicated Face to Face with a Staff Mentor was the first very useful way to receive an orientation (see Figure 5). The second very useful way to receive the orientation for both groups was Campus Tour, and the third very useful way was Manual. A slight difference showed between two groups in the methods of Computer Tutorial and Video. The fourth very useful method for the respondent who had been at Stout for less than six years was the method of Video. On the other hand, the method of Computer Tutorial was the fourth very useful way to receive an orientation for the respondents who had been at Stout for more than 15 years.

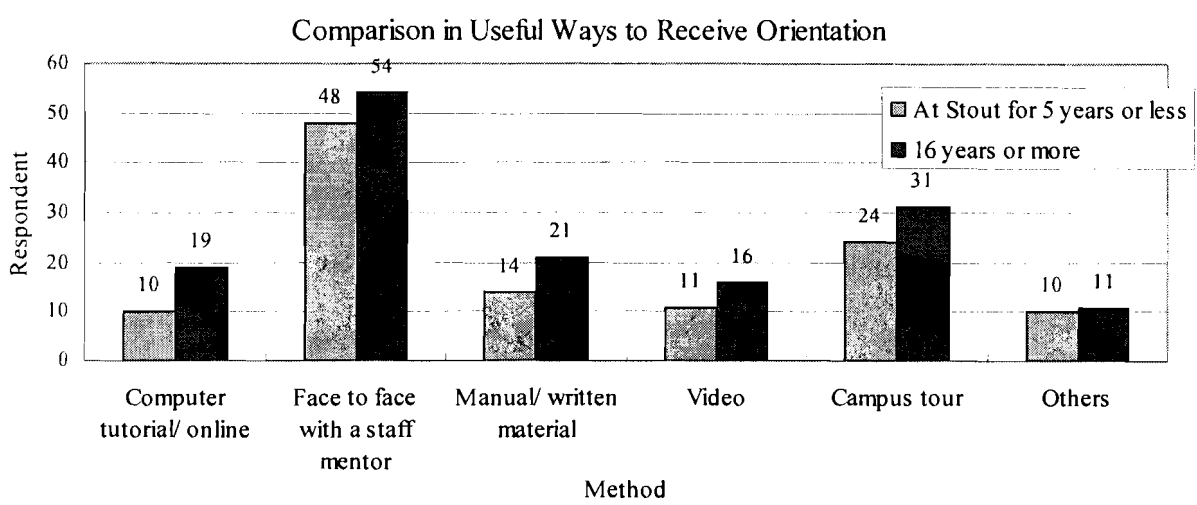


Figure 5

### *When to Deliver the Orientation.*

There was a slight difference between having the orientation prior to employment and within first week for the respondents who had been at Stout for less than six years. Twenty-one out of 68 respondents chose to have the orientation prior to employment, and 24 out of 68 preferred to have it within the first week. The majority of respondents who had been working at Stout for more than 15 years indicated that within first week would be the best time (see Figure 6).

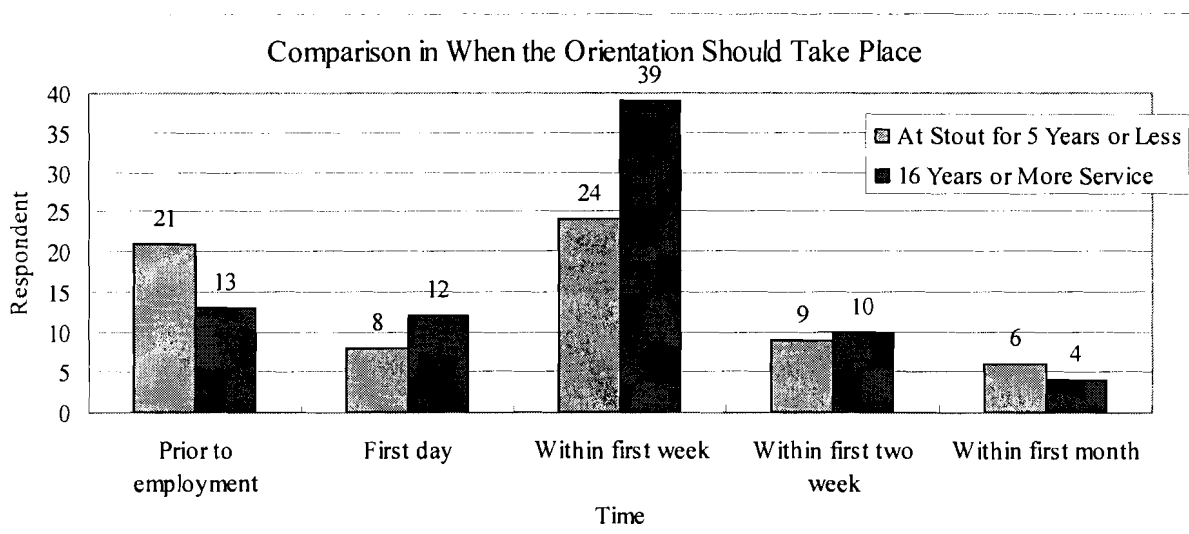


Figure 6

For the respondents who had been at Stout for less than six years, some other information that they would like to receive are database training, Access Stout, E-Scholar, police, Ask 5000, benefits, minority faculty, staff network, and recreational opportunities. For the respondents who had been at Stout for more than 15 years, some other topics they would suggest to cover are critical goals or objectives of Stout, recreational opportunities, library services, internet connectivity at home, and a mentor contact on campus if needed. For both group, many respondents indicated the most important thing was to make the new employees feel welcome

and introduce them to the departments and personnel. A respondent also suggested to have semi-new employees to share their story and experiences during the orientation would be helpful.

## Chapter V: Discussion

A six-question web survey was created to determine whether there is a need for an employee orientation at UW-Stout. Fifty percent of the entire teaching and non-teaching full-time faculty were randomly selected to participate, and 197 out of 438 surveys were returned. The results in the survey showed if there is a need for an orientation, what topics should be covered in the orientation, when the orientation should be delivered, and how the program should be presented. The comparisons between the faculty who have been providing service at Stout for five years or less and 16 years or more were also discussed. In this chapter, conclusions and suggestions were provided.

### *Limitations*

Time was the most important factor for this study and the survey process. The closer to the end of a semester, the harder to get the survey back, especially during summer. Even during regular school days, school schedule needed to be put into consideration as well. A 48-hour response time after receiving the survey was necessary since some faculty are not in office everyday or might not check email frequently. The same situation was applied to the follow-up reminder.

### *Conclusions*

The respondents' service range at Stout was from few months to over 16 years, and some respondents indicated they did not receive any orientation since they were hired. From the result of the survey, the majority of the respondents (94%) indicate there is a need for employee orientation. Some respondents said they would not mind to have an orientation even they had been at Stout for more than 10 years. Computers, Organization information, and Payroll were the top three subjects that the respondents rated as very important. Other subjects that the

respondents would like to receive were benefit, culture, diversity, and campus services. Many respondents also indicated they would like to be introduced to each department. The video, *How to Develop and Implement a New Employee Orientation Program* (1995), suggested “new employee need to be introduced to your organization.” By introducing new employees to each other and the department help establish personal connection and working relationships.

Face to face with a staff mentor was the most preferred way to receive the orientation for most respondents, and many respondents also thought campus tour would be helpful to include in an orientation. Everyone has different learning style, so people seek for different sources. In *Human Resource Development* (2002), the author mentioned new employees tend to use different tactics and sources when seeking different types of information. A respondent suggested that Organization Charts would be helpful to understand the relationship of each department, and how each role fits into each other.

Thirty-nine percent of the respondents indicated they would prefer to receive the orientation within the first week of employment. Although 39% preferred within the first week, other respondents preferred to receive one at other time. Some respondents thought it would be easier to fit in the work environment and position if they could have all the information they needed right away. On the other hand, some respondents thought they needed some digestion time first before the orientation. As the video, *How to Develop and implement a New Employee Orientation Program* (1995), stated, “do what works best for you and your people.”

### *Recommendations*

An employee orientation is not wasting time or money but helping new employees to be part of the organization better and sooner. New employees want to feel welcomed. If they feel welcomed, they tend to open their mind more and feel more comfortable to ask questions. There

is not only a single answer to what subject should be covered, how orientation should be delivered, or when the orientation should take place. The best answer is to find out what the employees need and how to help them do better. Multiple materials and resources can be combined to make the orientation more interesting. A small group can be created to be in charged of organizing an employee orientation. For further research, a more detailed survey can be conducted, and an interview or a focus group can also be organized. A check list and a follow-up checklist should be provided to employees who attended the orientation to make sure they receive everything they need. Asking for recommendation and listening to the employees will help improve the orientation and the school performance.

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## Appendix A: Cover Letter

Dear UW-Stout Faculty:

In an effort to help the new employees at UW-Stout have a better, more comfortable, and higher productive work environment, UW-Stout has selected you to participate in a brief six-question online survey. The responses to this survey will determine future needs for a new employee orientation.

The survey has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin-Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this survey meets the ethical obligations required by federal law and University policies. Please see the attachment for the IRB approval letter.

The survey will take less than 5 minutes and consists of 6 short questions. Your responses are confidential and anonymity is assured; data will be analyzed by classification group.

To complete the survey, please navigate to:

<http://www2.uwstout.edu/generalsurveys/TakeSurvey.asp?PageNumber=1&SurveyID=30M9m36L8520I>

Please fill out the survey within 48 hours of receiving this message. Your time and consideration is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about this survey, please e-mail me at the address below.

Thank you,

Chuo-Ta Huang  
Employee Orientation Research Assistant  
MS in Training and Development  
[huangc@uwstout.edu](mailto:huangc@uwstout.edu)

## Appendix B: Follow-up Letter

Dear UW-Stout Faculty:

### **We are depending on your participation!!**

A New Employee Orientation Program Survey was sent to you two weeks ago. If you have participated in this survey, thank you very much for your cooperation. If you are not yet participated, please take a few minutes to complete this brief 6-question survey by navigating to:

<http://www2.uwstout.edu/generalsurveys/TakeSurvey.asp?PageNumber=1&SurveyID=3JL3936L29451>

The responses to this survey will determine the future needs for a new employee orientation. The survey has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin-Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Please see the attachment for the IRB approval letter.

Your responses are confidential and anonymity is assured. Please fill out the survey within 24 hours of receiving this message. Your time and consideration is greatly appreciated. If you have any question about this survey, please email me at the address below.

Thank you very much,

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MS in Training and Development  
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