

# Supporting New Workers: Evidence-Informed Strategies for Those in Supervisory Roles



**Penny Putnam Collins**



**Megan Paul, PhD**  
Workforce Team Lead



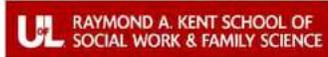
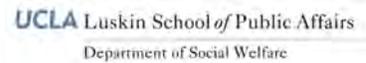
**Michelle Graef, PhD**  
Project Director



**Martin Hall, PhD**

**BUILDING KNOWLEDGE TO STRENGTHEN  
THE CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE**

# Quality Improvement Center for Workforce Development 2016 – 2023 Cooperative Agreement



Develop and  
test promising  
workforce  
interventions

Synthesize  
workforce  
research

Identify and  
publish  
workforce  
trends

Help sites  
adopt best  
practices in  
continuous  
workforce  
development

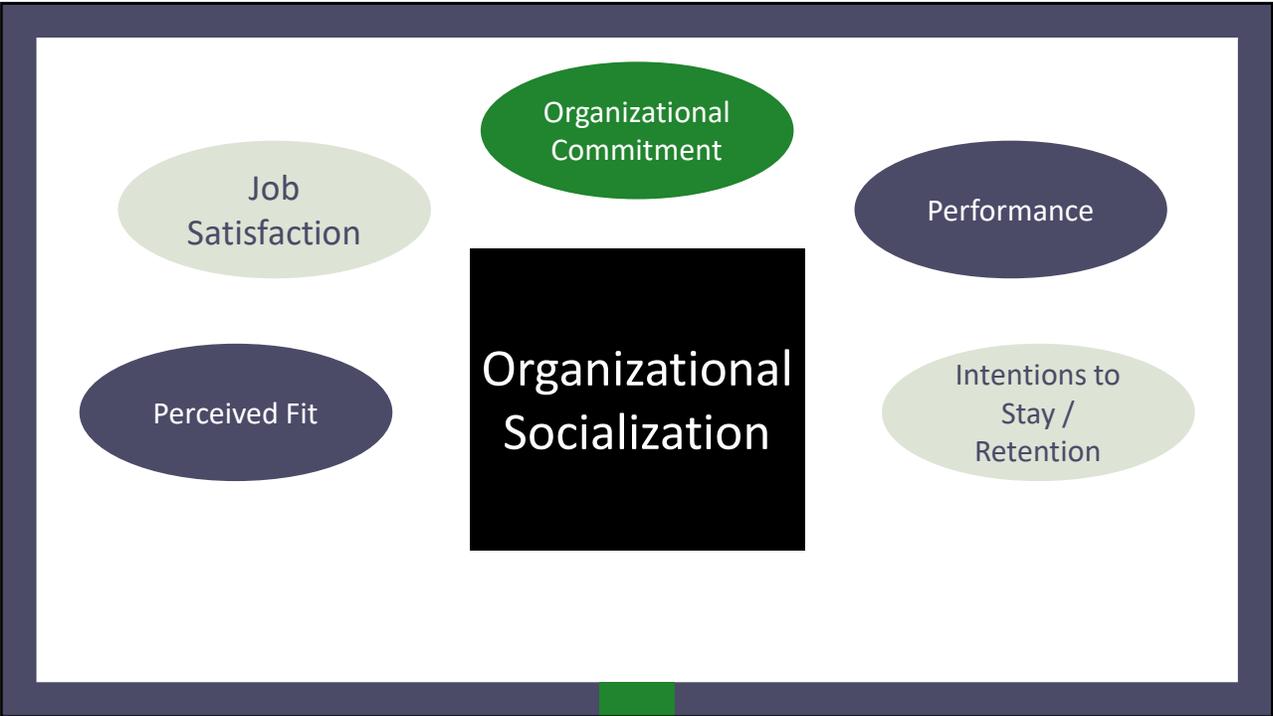
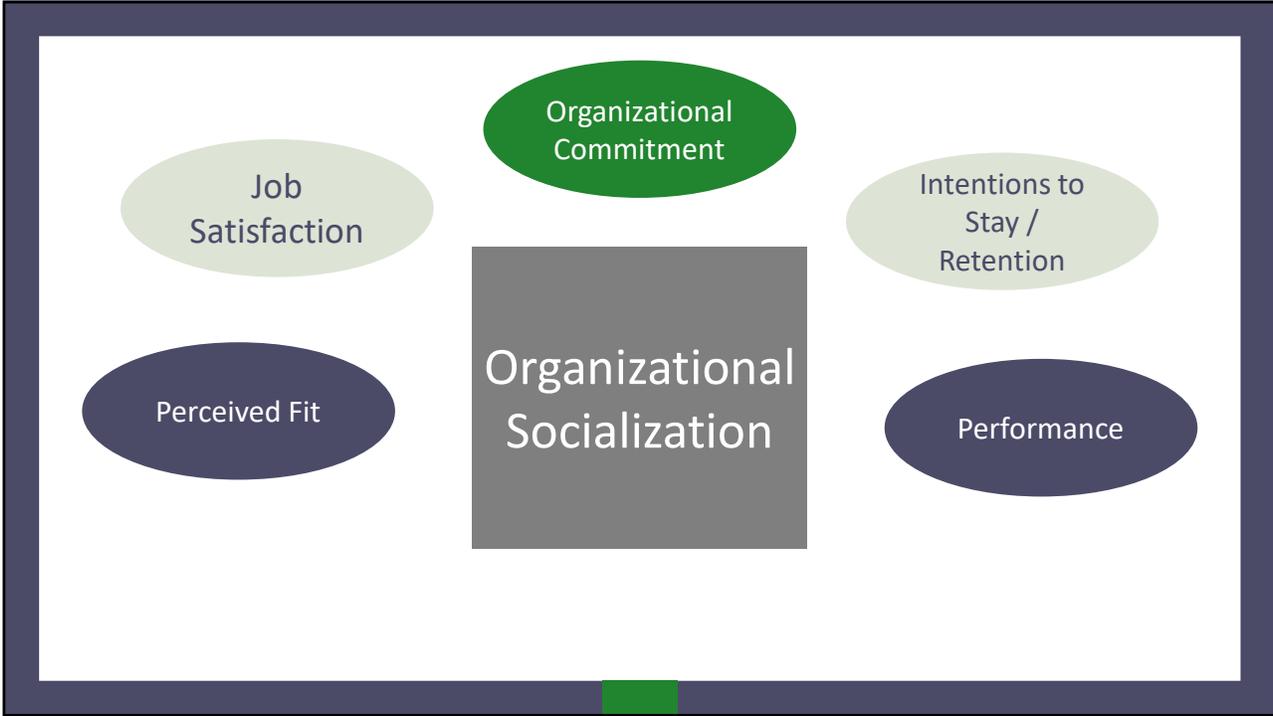
Improve  
outcomes for  
the children &  
families  
served  
through  
workforce



**How do we support new  
employees?**  
- *Anonymous*

*Onboarding* (also called *organizational socialization*) is “the process by which newcomers make the transition from being organizational outsiders to being insiders”

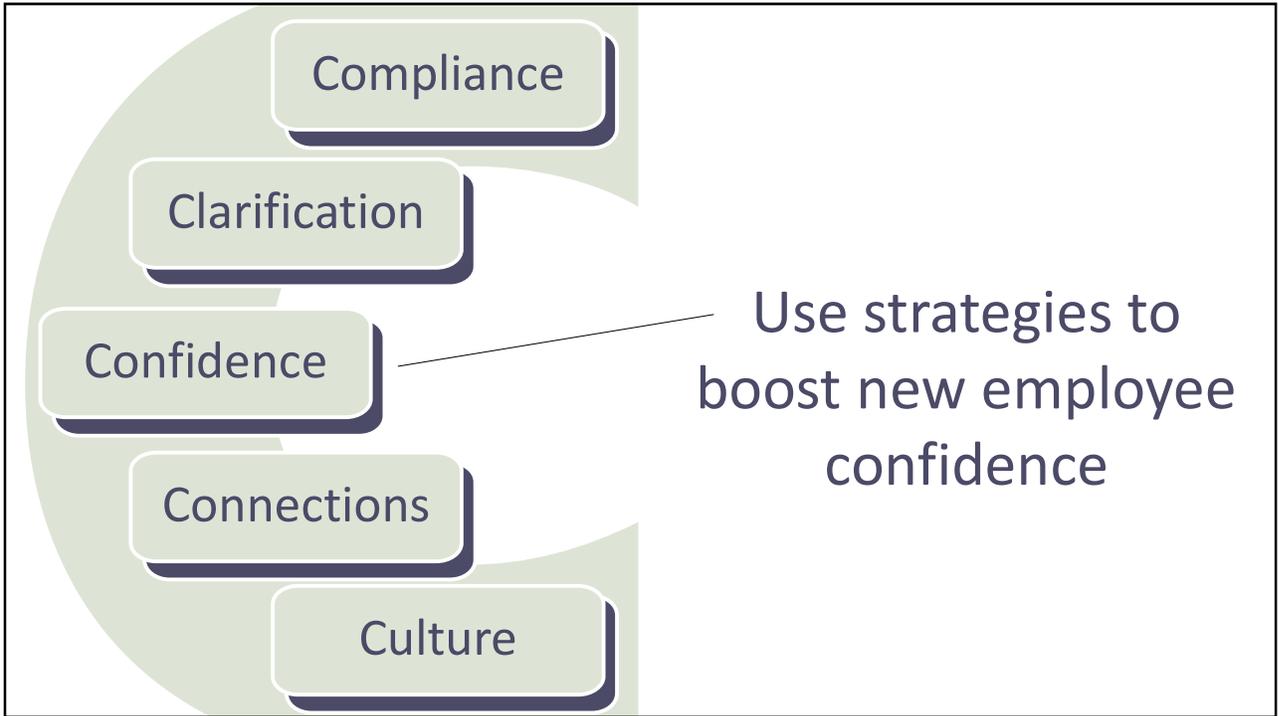
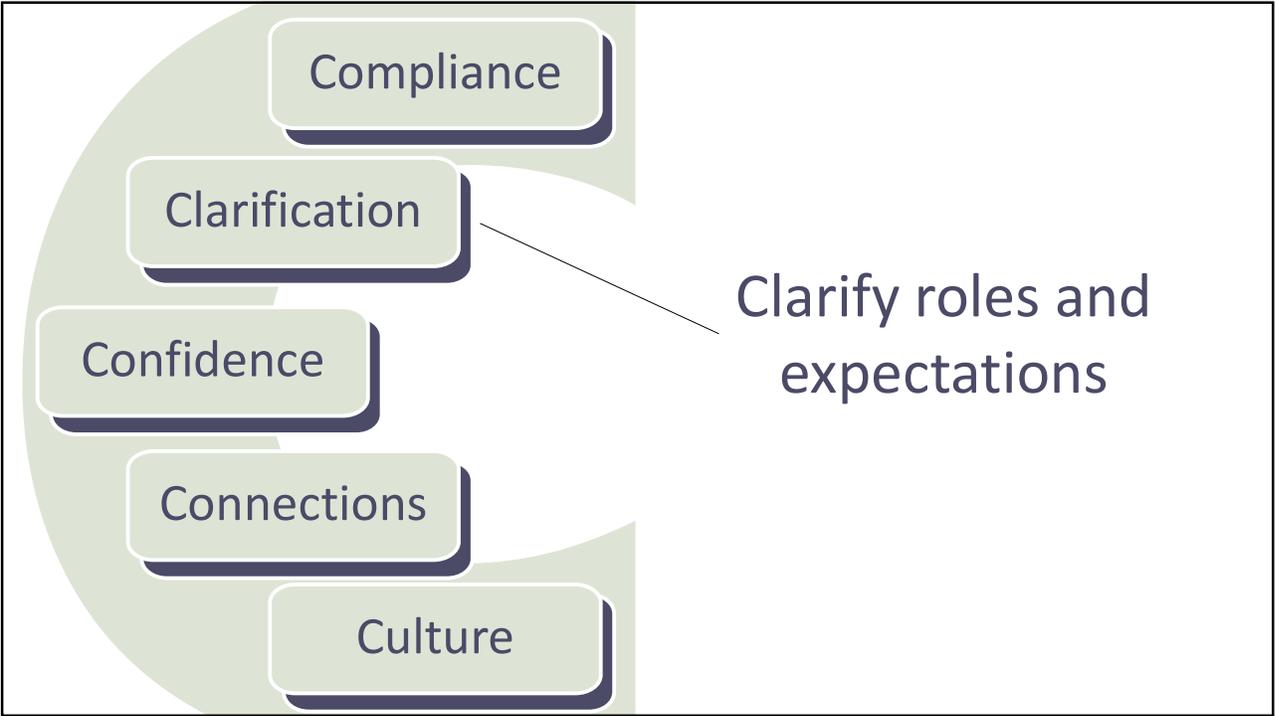
~ Bauer et al., 2007

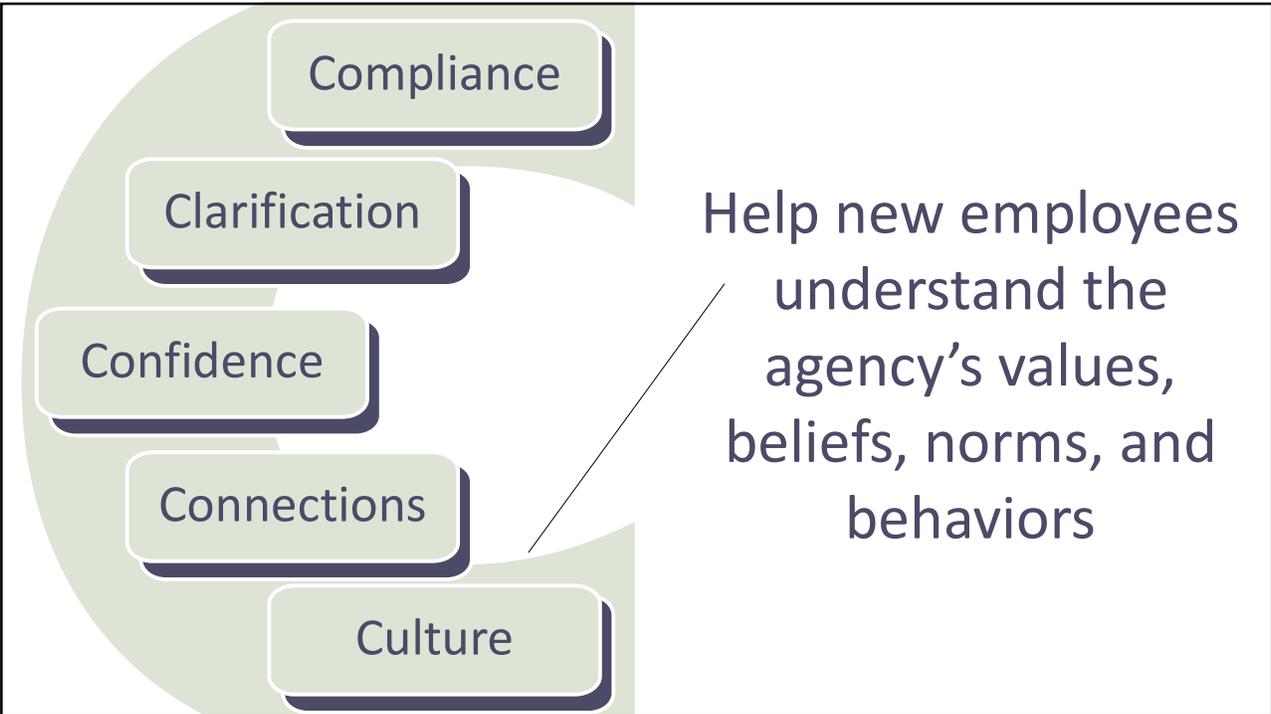
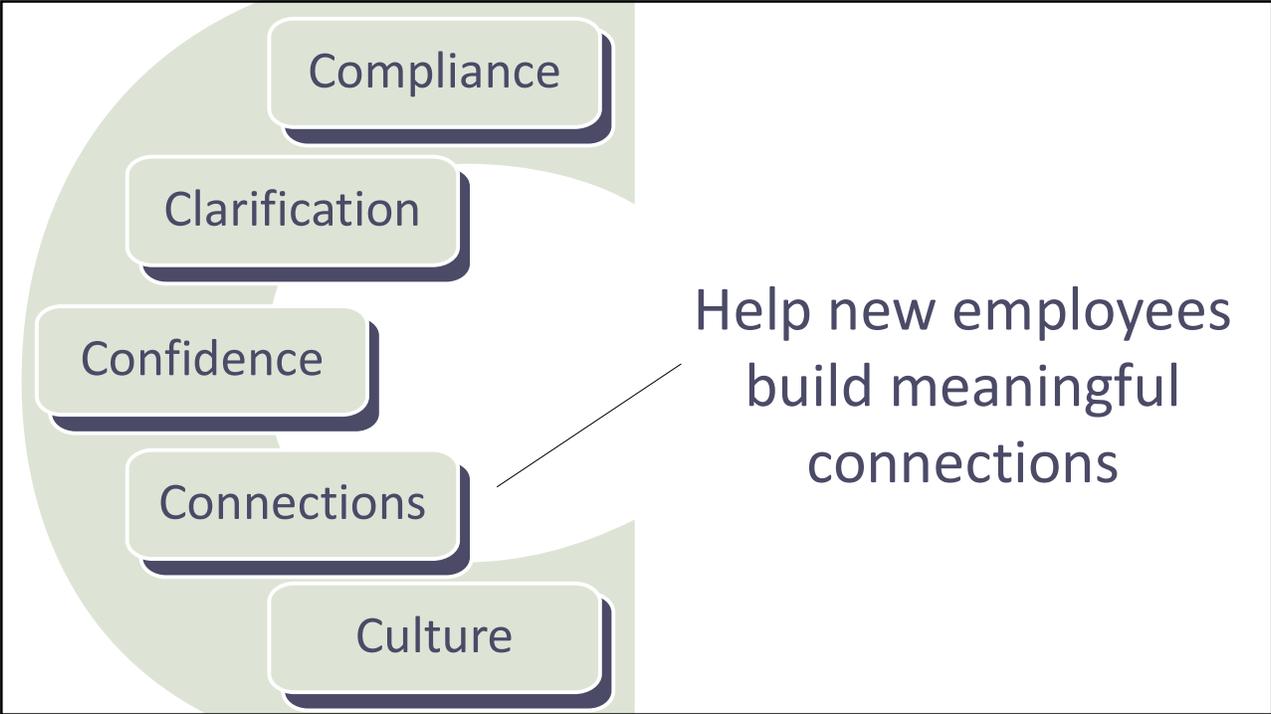


# The 5 Cs: An Onboarding Framework

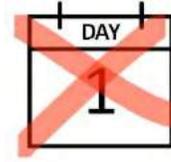
Created by  
Talya Bauer, PhD  
[talyabauer.com](http://talyabauer.com)

Comply with agency rules and requirements for new employees





## Compliance



- ✓ HR paperwork
- ✓ Identification card/badge
- ✓ Keys
- ✓ Office space
- ✓ Clean desk
- ✓ Chair
- ✓ Name plate
- ✓ Office supplies
- ✓ Computer & other hardware
- ✓ Software
- ✓ Printer set-up
- ✓ Accounts/logins
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Cell/desk phone

**How can we best prepare the workforce to expect what they will experience in CWS?**  
*- Kim, San Diego Health and Human Services*

## Clarification

- Job announcement—clear description of role, duties, and responsibilities in plain language
- Realistic job preview—representative depiction of duties, challenges, rewards, and preparation
- Training preview—overview of content, structure, methods, duration

## Clarification

- Policies and procedures are clearly written, well organized, and easily accessible
- Supervisor Expectations
  - What do I expect from you? What can you expect from me?
  - General (e.g., communication, schedule, leave, work style)
  - Specific (e.g., tasks, daily)

## COLLABORATIVELY: Personalized Case Consultation Guide

Workers are expected to consult their supervisors for direction and guidance when important decisions need to be made. This is to assure consistent application of Department policy and the consideration of as many factors and ramifications as possible. The intent of this worksheet is to help you clarify when and how case consultation is to be carried out. Please collaborate with your supervisor in completing it.

### When should I get consultation?

#### Mandatory consultation points

These are situations in which consultation with your supervisor must occur.

#### Recommended (but not mandatory) consultation

- The supervisor or team should be contacted for case consultation whenever you:
  - are unclear about how to make the proper case decision in light of statute or policy guidelines;
  - believe that more expertise or a different perspective would improve the quality and/or timeliness of a case decision;
  - need to update the supervisor on case progress, lack of progress, or other significant issues.
- If you are unclear about whether to seek case consultation, you should plan to err on the side of caution (i.e., by seeking consultation), especially during the early stages of employment.

### How do I arrange consultation?

- Mandatory consultation often will require impromptu contact with the supervisor.
- Non-mandatory case consultation often can be done on a pre-scheduled basis (e.g., through weekly meetings with the supervisor).
- To pre-arrange for case consultation, my supervisor would like me to \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

### What should I do if my supervisor is unavailable for consultation?

- If my supervisor is temporarily out of the office, I can contact him or her via \_\_\_\_\_
- If my supervisor is not available and I need consultation, I should consult with \_\_\_\_\_

---

### How should I prepare for case consultation?

- Become familiar with the facts of the case.
- Read relevant statute, policy, and policy memos.
- Prepare questions to be addressed during consultation.
- To further prepare for case consultation, my supervisor would also like me to \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

To pre-arrange for case consultation, my supervisor would like me to \_\_\_\_\_

If my supervisor is temporarily out of the office, I can contact him or her via \_\_\_\_\_

If my supervisor is not available and I need consultation, I should consult with \_\_\_\_\_

To further prepare for case consultation, my supervisor would also like me to \_\_\_\_\_

## Clarification

- Evidence-based training practices
- Constructive feedback
- Ongoing coaching

## Confidence

- More specifically...**Self-Efficacy**
- People's beliefs about their ability to accomplish something specific, to succeed in a particular situation

## Development of Self-Efficacy

### Physiological and Affective States

Our perceptions and interpretations of our own emotional and physical reactions shape how we feel about our personal abilities in a particular situation

### Social Persuasion

Verbal encouragement from others that we have the skills and capabilities necessary to succeed

Self-Efficacy

### Mastery Experiences

Performing a task successfully is the most effective means of developing self-efficacy

### Social Modeling

Witnessing other people similar to oneself successfully completing a task

~ Bandura, 1986

## Confidence

### Mastery Experiences

- Simulations and role plays in training
- Early on-the-job task assignments

### Social Modeling

- Demonstrations by experienced workers or trainers
- Job shadowing

## Confidence

### Social Persuasion

- Verbal encouragement from supervisor – you have the skills and I have tools to support your success
- Teaming structures – coworkers available to provide supports (e.g., CWTS position in LA)

### Psychological Responses

- Learn how to interpret emotional and physical reactions to the work (e.g., Resilience Alliance)

## Connection

**Support from existing employees** is a strong predictor of *positive work outcomes* among new employees (Saks et al., 2007)

**The more connections employees have in the organization,** the more likely they are to have *positive work outcomes* (Jiang et al., 2012)

## Connection



- **People need to feel like accepted members of the organization**
  - Certain personality characteristics help (e.g., proactive personality; extraversion)
- Organizations should foster connections between new and experienced employees

## Connection



### Strategies:

- Use established organization members to guide and nurture new employees
- Provide positive, consistent feedback on new employees' performance
- Create opportunities for informal social interactions
- Job shadowing



## What's Working?

---

### Self-Assessment



### Employee Feedback



### Formal Assessment



## What's Working?

---

### *Newcomer Socialization Questionnaire* Haueter et al., 2003

- I know the structure of the organization
- I understand the internal politics within this organization
- I understand which job tasks and responsibilities have priority
- I know when to inform my supervisor about my work

### Formal Assessment



# What's Working?

## Organizational Socialization Questionnaire Chao et al., 1994

- I believe most of my coworkers like me
- I do not consider any of my coworkers as my friends (R)
- I believe I fit in well with my organization
- I support the goals of my organization

### Formal Assessment



 **Umbrella Summary** QIC-WD Quality Improvement Center for Workforce Development  
September 2, 2021

## Organizational Socialization

A Summary of Workforce Research Evidence Relevant to the Child Welfare Field

### What is organizational socialization?

Organizational socialization—also referred to as onboarding—is “...the process by which newcomers make the transition from being organizational outsiders to being insiders” (Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007, p. 707). The overall goal of organizational socialization is to facilitate newcomer adjustment (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011). Specifically, adjustment means that new employees understand the key tasks of their job (i.e., role clarity), have confidence in their ability to perform the key tasks of their job (i.e., self-efficacy), feel like they are an accepted member of the organization (i.e., social acceptance), and understand the organization’s culture (e.g., goals, values, norms).

Both individual-level characteristics and behaviors and organizational-level efforts are related to newcomer adjustment (Bauer et al., 2007). At the individual level, employee characteristics (e.g., proactive personality, extraversion) and behaviors (e.g., information seeking, relationship building) are both associated with adjustment (see Bauer & Erdogan, 2011 for a review). However, since many individual-level characteristics and behaviors may not be malleable, they represent less promising intervention targets overall; thus, this summary will focus on organizational-level efforts.

Organizational socialization tactics can be characterized in six dimensions (van Maanen & Schein, 1979):

- ▶ **Collective or individual:** the degree to which newcomers share common group experiences versus individual ones
- ▶ **Formal or informal:** formal tactics involve giving newcomers a set of officially prescribed and customized experiences apart from experienced employees, such as through an academy or internship, whereas informal tactics involve unplanned learning through trial and error while working amongst experienced employees
- ▶ **Sequential or random:** the degree to which newcomers progress through distinct phases
- ▶ **Fixed or variable sequencing:** the degree to which the socialization process has a stated timetable
- ▶ **Serial or disjunctive:** the degree to which existing workers help socialize and mentor newcomers
- ▶ **Investiture or divestiture:** the degree to which a newcomer’s identity is affirmed versus stripped away

Hall, M., & Paul, M. (2020, September 2). Umbrella summary: Organizational socialization. Quality Improvement Center for Workforce Development. <https://www.qic-wd.org/umbrella/organizational-socialization>



[www.qic-wd.org](http://www.qic-wd.org)



@QICWD

Sign up for our newsletter!



## References

- Bandura, A. (1986). Self-Efficacy. In *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory* (pp.390-453). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Chao, G. T., O’Leary-Kelly, A., Wolf, S., Klein, H., & Gardner, P. (1994). Organizational socialization: Its content and consequences. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79, 730–743.
- Haueter, J. A., Macan, T. H., & Winter, J. (2003). Measurement of newcomer socialization: Construct validation of a multidimensional scale. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 63, 20–39.
- Jiang, K., Lu, D., McKay, P. F., Lee, T. W., & Mitchell, T. R. (2012). When and how is job embeddedness predictive of turnover? A meta-analytic investigation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97, 1077–1096.
- Saks, A., Uggerslev, K., & Fassina, N. (2007). Socialization tactics and newcomer adjustment: A meta-analytic review and test of a model. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 70, 413–446.

