



Thoughtful Foods Buddy System - February 2023

Background

Pigweed Food Co-operative, trading as Thoughtful Foods, relies on a smooth transition of Coordinators. The minimum period of time to serve as a Coordinator in Thoughtful Foods is a year (12 months). As most Coordinators are often students from UNSW, it is common for a Coordinator to be within the Coordinator Collective for a year, before stepping down or taking up another position.

Due to the high turnover rate of coordinators in Thoughtful Foods, it becomes imperative that there is a buddy system in place to allow for proper handover. This ensures a smooth transition of roles and daily running of Thoughtful Foods during handovers.

This document provides a general guideline for the buddy system. Individual circumstances should be considered when using this guide.

Who is involved?

As a general rule, the outgoing Coordinator will be responsible as the buddy of the incoming Coordinator. The outgoing Coordinator will be the most familiar with the responsibilities associated with the specific role and will provide the most accurate information.

Other experienced Coordinators can also play a role during this transition period (e.g. with general shop shift tasks and information about general Coordinator roles and responsibilities).

In the event where there is no outgoing Coordinator, the Coordinator Collective will arrange among themselves ways to help the incoming Coordinator. The Coordinator Liaison, if present, will delegate tasks fairly and equitably to prevent burnout from any one person in the Collective. If the Coordinator Liaison is

absent, the Coordinator Collective will ensure tasks are delegated fairly during Coordinator meetings, and with the help of the People Director, if needed.

How long will the buddy system be?

The buddy system is a minimum of 3 months up to a maximum of 5 months. The buddy system begins as soon as a new Coordinator is identified. The process will taper down as the outgoing Coordinator steps down completely. The retired Coordinator is encouraged to step into an advisory role with less involvement, if they are able.

If the new Coordinator is unable to perform expected tasks (as detailed in the Role Description) by the end of the buddy system, the People Director will contact the new Coordinator. The People Director will help to organise additional training and support if possible, and in rare circumstances, to re-assess their suitability as a Coordinator.

Buddy Guide

As a buddy, your role is pivotal in ensuring the new Coordinator feels supported in the first few months of their role. At the same time, you are not expected to be solely and fully responsible for this person.

Tips

Here are some tips to help you make the most of the buddy system

- Show the new Coordinator where to find how-to docs and other important information
- Build trust with your buddy
- Establish a communication style
- Establish meeting duration, times, and modes (e.g. in person, virtual platform) per week to check in with your buddy
- Give the new Coordinator space to establish their own system (within Thoughtful Foods policies), even though they are taking over the role that you have been working on
- Ensure the new Coordinator understands the context and running of the first few Coordinator meetings which both of you will be present at
- Explain jargon and acronyms
- Answer as many questions as you can to help the transition
- Space out important things that you would like to cover to allow time for the new Coordinator to adapt to the new environment
- Set goals for yourself and your buddy

Safety Net

As a buddy, you are not expected to be able to answer all questions.

It is also important to remind yourself to allow the new Coordinator to try the tasks you are so used to doing. Sometimes it can be easy to finish tasks yourself, hoping to alleviate some stresses off the new Coordinator.

If you feel overwhelmed as a buddy, you should let someone know immediately. Talk to someone you trust, or the People Director, to help with the transition.

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Signature Directors

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