

What's in Your Toolbox?

To help welcome and orient your preceptee, give them a folder or notebook with helpful resources and documents. Use the list below for ideas for your folders. The decision of which departmental policies, practice issues and other materials to include is yours. You are the expert!

- Orientation checklist
- Orientation calendar – write in the preceptee's schedule and include special classes and observation experiences
- Job description
- Weekly goals worksheets
- Organizational chart
- Nursing philosophy
- Nursing service standards
- Nursing theorist model
- Study guide and materials, such as BCLS guidelines
- Medication competency
- Dysrhythmia worksheet
- Age-specific care examples
- Nursing policies
- Departmental policies
- Journal articles
- Preceptor evaluation form for preceptee to complete
- JCAHO core measures
- List of key meetings that impact your unit (e.g., staff meetings, shared government, products)



Folder and Checklist Provide Orientation Roadmap

Be Prepared, the Boy Scout motto, is certainly appropriate for preceptors. It's a good idea to prepare a folder or a notebook for a preceptee and keep it in your locker, ready to go, in case you get assigned a preceptee without prior notice. Being organized and ready to precept sends the preceptee a very positive message. It tells them that they are important to you and to the department.

Select the content with care, giving priority to essential orientation material so that you don't create a jam-packed folder that overwhelms the preceptee. Put the preceptee's name on the folder to personalize it.

A key document to include is the orientation checklist, used to track and document progress throughout the orientation period. This checklist is useful if it's easily accessible. Tell preceptees it is their responsibility to have the checklist with them at all times. Remind them it is also their responsibility to keep this document confidential. Help them find a secure place to store it when not on duty and avoid leaving it lying around the nurses' station.

Most orientation folders/checklists also include a self-assessment for the preceptee. Completing the self-assessment at the beginning of orientation gives both the preceptor and preceptee an opportunity to identify the learning needs and competency levels of the preceptee.

Preceptees will appreciate the value of a comprehensive and efficient resource, created to assist them in experiencing a successful orientation. Think of it as a map for the preceptee's orientation.

Survival Kit Brightens New Nurses' First Days on Unit

To welcome nurses to your unit, consider this idea from Jan Knudsen, RN, MSN, Education Coordinator at Research Medical Center. Pack a daily survival kit in a decorative bag to give to new nurses. Below are items you may want to include. Tuck in a welcoming message that explains the symbolism. This is a nice touch in a busy nursing world.

- Toothpick — to remind you to pick out the good qualities in others.
- Rubber Band — to remind you to be flexible. Things might not always go the way you want, but it will work out.
- Band Aid — to remind you to heal hurt feelings, yours or another's.
- Pencil — to remind you to list your blessings everyday.
- Eraser — to remind you that everyone makes mistakes, and it's okay.
- Chewing Gum — to remind you to stick with it, and you can accomplish anything.
- Q-tip — to remind you to Quit Taking It Personally and to look for the opportunities in challenging situations.
- Mint — to remind you that you are worth a mint.
- Candy Kiss — to remind you that everyone needs a kiss or hug everyday.
- Tea Bag — to remind you to relax daily and to think of 3 positive happenings of the day.