



HOW TO
Onboard
AND *Integrate*
NEW EMPLOYEES
Effectively

Twenty-two percent of turnover takes place within the initial 45 days of employment, with 16% in the first week. The key reason for the turnover is bad onboarding and shifting expectations pertaining to the position. Follow these four key pointers to onboard more effectively.

1. CURTAIL EXPENSIVE TURNOVER BY INVESTING IN EMPLOYEES: Organizations in many industries lose as many as 15% of their employees each year. However, good onboarding programs ensure that current employees are valued and equipped with all the tools required to succeed. They reveal, in a tangible manner, how the organization is genuinely concerned about its employees, reducing the likelihood of the latter looking for a job elsewhere.

Proper orientation assists new hires with quickly getting up to speed, thereby bringing down expenses related to learning the job. Employees are an organization's key asset, and investing in employees benefits your company. Invest resources and time into keeping your employees creative, informed, loyal, and protective, and you reap the benefits.

2. BRING DOWN TIME-TO-PRODUCTIVITY: The metric "time-to-productivity" is quickly gaining acceptance as a vital measurement in talent management and hiring circles. For some, it means the time needed for new hires to accomplish the job expertise of an employee who has been at the company for two years. For others, it is the time needed for new hires to have the required equipment, skills, and information to carry out their tasks at optimum productivity. With the new hires getting up to speed faster, it would be hard to distinguish between the hires who have put in one or more years of service and the new entrants.

3. HELP THE EMPLOYEE ACQUIRE JOB-ASSOCIATED KNOWLEDGE: Proper onboarding educates employees about the mission, vision, culture, and values of the organization. It also makes certain that new hires fully comprehend what's required of them in a particular job role, and how their work is connected to the organization's operations

as a whole. New employees get to know how to deliver, and when and how they would be assessed.

4. SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: Employee onboarding preserves a positive organizational culture, so it is essential that fresh hires be immersed on Day One. Effective onboarding makes employees feel valued, helps them grow in knowledge and skills, and assists them with realizing their full potential. This leads to better employee engagement.

Other benefits of proper onboarding include a reduction in employee anxiety in their strange or new situation and time saved for the supervisor who has to spend less time teaching the new hire.

STAGES OF ONBOARDING AND INTEGRATION

To achieve a smooth and easy employee onboarding and integration, even before you put out the job ad or post the job vacancy, make sure you know exactly what role you're trying to fill as well as your expectations. Not defining what you expect as a company and your requirements from the employee is the worst mistake you can make when starting the recruitment process.

STAGE 1: Prior to Day One

Immediately after the hire accepts the offer, plan the paperwork and tell them such things as driving directions, public transportation, parking, dress code, expected arrival time, who to meet on arrival, and lunch plans on the first day. You can send a welcome packet or letter signed by one of the higher-ranking officials in your organization and possibly give the employee a small token as a welcome to the company.

You can use an employee onboarding technology in the form of a branded portal to deliver tailored information to new employees to speed up the paperwork process and provide them with the chance to work at the pace that suits them.

Your employee should feel that you were fully prepared and ready for their arrival, so make sure all the necessary access and identification cards, business cards, systems and email access, keys, office supplies, map of the building/office, internal phone directory and payroll information are ready. Many employees have started looking for a new job because of unpreparedness on the part of their new employer.

Make the new hire feel welcome and not uneasy or suffocated. Try to present serious and sensitive issues optimistically but effectively. Avoid imposing a lengthy list of rules.

STAGE 2: Day One

On the first day, make the organization's mission, vision, values and culture clear to the employee, and particularly how the employee's job relates to the company's mission. Entrust somebody with the task of meeting the fresh hire and providing a tour of the office, including the mail room, lunch room, restrooms, and employee mailboxes. Talk about the benefits package. If possible, get some staff members to treat the new hire to lunch or do it yourself. Complete security and paperwork requirements.

In the afternoon, set a meeting with the employee's supervisor to give the employee a picture of the responsibilities and what to expect in the initial 30 to 90 days.

Encourage your new hire to take notes and ask questions pertaining to the job.



STAGE 3: Week One

The new employee should learn their role and responsibilities. The supervisor and employee should discuss preferred management style and typical processes (e.g., the manner of decision making) and establish expectations pertaining to performance metrics, deliverables, and timelines.

Introduce the new hire to senior staff as well as other employees. If the hire is in a supervisory role, make sure they have group or one-on-one interactions with direct reports to assist in building a new team and enable the new employee to get an idea of each team member's work style.

If the role calls for it, schedule meetings of the new hire with board members, partners, funders, or others as necessary.

STAGE 4: Month One

Make it clear what you expect the employee to achieve and within what time frame. Also establish boundaries. This is also the stage for developing professional relationships with the manager and co-workers, cross-functional orientation, work group orientation, and familiarization with organizational procedures and practices. Help the new hire investigate the company's overall culture. Involve the fresh hire in bringing the company's vision and mission statement to life.

STAGE 5: Months One to Three

The manager or supervisor should be assessing performance and provide feedback early and frequently.

In the first month, you can anticipate modest deliverables as well as the new employee being on the path to confidence building and success. Toward the end of the first three months, the new hire must be close to getting up to speed and should expect to be assessed on a regular workload.

When entering the two-month mark, brainstorm the methods by which the employee's strengths can step up company growth. Continue to communicate expectations in a lucid manner. Encourage the hire to get a broader perspective of the company and its objectives and encourage contributions to presentations and conversations.

Look out for opportunities to merge new employees into their workgroups as well as into the organization as a whole. Regularly check with new hires to make certain that they are continuing to digest and develop.

STAGE 6: Months Three to Twelve

After three months, your new hire should have a strong idea about their role and how it contributes to the company's overall success. If all is going well, their confidence has increased and they are looking to put his leadership qualities to good use. The new hire should be aware and attentive of new projects and be prepared with possible solutions. Set aside time to notice your new hire's progress and to reward them for contributions and advancement. Help them avoid minor mistakes and correct errors and refocus accordingly. The employee should be proactive with their responsibilities.

STAGE 7: Year One

Carry out a fresh employee survey. Provide the employee with training to fill skill gaps and develop competencies. Encourage the fresh hire to make a note of ideas for enhancing the operations, culture, or the strategy of the organization. Though the new hire may feel uncomfortable about sharing their views on these aspects, it is essential that the organization be open to the views of newcomers.

On the day the employee completes one year of service, send a congratulatory letter or email.



BEST PRACTICES

1. INVOLVE THE MANAGER: The relationship between manager and employee is important to an employee's career and essential in onboarding. The manager must meet with new hires as early as possible after the start date to fix performance expectations, set goals, and make development plans, over one year, 90 days, 60 days, or 30 days. Fixing clear expectations in advance paves the way for the employee to develop a feeling of ownership and an understanding of how to succeed. Involving the manager is particularly crucial for the Generation Y workforce, with their high need for personal connections.

2. ENGAGE IN IT OVER A LONGER TIME FRAME: Onboarding should not only start prior to Day One, but should also continue beyond Week One. Onboarding processes that goes on for at least three months or over one year lead to improved employee retention. They enable you to deal with certain topics (e.g., product training) in detail and make it possible for managers, buddies, and mentors to be continually engaged and involved, and to provide feedback and lucid expectations clearly and on a continuing basis.

3. INVITE QUESTIONS AND MEASURE SUCCESS: An open door is not enough. You need to encourage your new hires to ask questions because they are generally reluctant to do so. Ask them what's working, what's challenging, and what's just plain confusing. Make it clear that asking questions will help them learn and they don't have to avoid the practice for fear of looking dumb.

Set up a system to measure the success of your program. Get feedback from new hires about the program at intervals (90 days, 60 days, 30 days, or one week). Invite each of them to a focus group or a one-on-one interview to measure qualitative responses. You can use the one-on-one environment to put across open-ended questions, such as "How do you feel about your workspace?" Reflect on questions that look into such aspects as whether they can fully tap into their capabilities and skills, or whether they are getting suitable assignments.

4. PROVIDE LUCID EXPLANATIONS FOR SPECIFIC WORK PROJECTS: Give clear information about not only your company's objectives and their work in general but also new hires' work assignments, including what you expect them to do on their own, what resources are available, where they are required to work in collaboration with others, and the deliverables, and the deadline by which they are expected.

5. ASSIMILATE: Consider establishing a personal touch like taking the newbies for lunch outside the workplace on the first day. Note that assimilation may not be the right approach for all organizations.

6. IMMEDIATELY INVOLVE THEM IN TRAINING OR ACTUAL WORK: An onboarding survey found that 76% of the respondents concur that on-the-job training is the most essential element for a new hire to get up to speed and start contributing as quickly as possible.

7. INCORPORATE MENTORS: Having a coach or mentor for new hires increases both the effectiveness of onboarding and employee retention. Assign a team member or other employee with the task of mentorship or else have a group of mentors to provide help for various departments of the organization. Mentors can help build morale, improve retention, build teams, better time to productivity, enable learning, provide continuing career development, and provide network and culture assimilation.

8. USE AUTOMATION: Automation considerably reduces the hassles associated with onboarding new employees while increasing their productivity as well as that of the HR staff. Automation also helps save money in terms of time, paper, printing, and shipping.

9. USE A SINGLE SYSTEM FOR HIRING AND ONBOARDING: A dashboard-style system with portals to access various onboarding material, whether manuals, paperwork, or other material from a single place, is a great way to reduce the labour associated with onboarding. This reduces the quantity of work needed by both the company's HR department and new employees.

10. USE TECHNOLOGY: Consider incorporating social tools into your everyday work practices.

Storing information, sharing expertise, and developing communities on the internal social network encourage employees to use social tools to progress in their projects and accomplish tasks. Conventional one-on-one conversations can be transformed into dynamic social discussions across lines and teams of businesses to achieve competitive value.

Take the step today to improve your onboarding and integration practices and you'll be able to retain your employees for longer. It's definitely worth the effort.

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Drake's Onboarding and Orientation solutions reduce the number of days it takes your new employees to become fully productive and provide a quicker return to your bottom line. To increase your employees' productivity and retention rates, contact the Drake Management Solutions Team to learn how our onboarding solutions can be tailored to your needs.

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