

New Hire Success

Onboarding Process

Your search is finally complete and you've hired the perfect fit for that hard to fill position. Next, make sure your company is utilizing onboarding practices that are designed with long-term employee retention in mind. Make it an easy and satisfying transition for a new employee to come on board and you are more likely to have a productive team member for years to come.

Immediate Welcome

Successful onboarding programs welcome new employees from the moment they say, "I accept your offer." Receiving a call of welcome from the new manager within 24 hours of acceptance reaffirms to a new employee that they made the right decision and immediately establishes identity with your organization. New employees who begin to see themselves as an important part of the company before they ever walk in the door are less likely to accept a buy-back attempt from their current company. By the same token, if one of your competitors with whom your new employee may have recently interviewed extend an offer, they are more likely to hear, "I've already accepted a position". Effective onboarding has been shown to dramatically reduce the new employee's likelihood of departure within the first three years by as much as 85%!

Before Start Date

Basic orientation programs inform new hires of company benefits, vacation policies, dress code, safety, and other important information. Waiting until their first day at work to cover these items bogs down the time it takes a new employee to become productive. Much of the orientation process and filling out necessary forms can be accomplished ahead of time. Be sure to also provide an organizational chart, clear and specific job description, and concise information about departmental goals. This enables the new hire to clearly understand their new role and how their department contributes to the company's success. This aspect of onboarding can be especially beneficial to executives entering a complex new role. Additionally they can benefit by being provided clear job descriptions and goals of the key employees under their management.

First Week

Early onboarding should also facilitate socialization to help new hires meet and get to know other employees to quickly assimilate into the corporate culture. Let everyone in the office know ahead of time about the new employee and encourage them to take a moment to welcome new employees. If a new employee's immediate manager cannot be present during the first day(s) on the job it is essential that someone else fills in as a mentor. During the first week, arrange a lunch or informal meeting with the team or closest co-workers or allow a different member of the team to take your new employee to lunch each day. Have a well-stocked workspace with everything from keys, business cards, passwords, phone and company e-mail list, and other items needed. It is the execution of an effective on-boarding process that determines an employee's level of comfort, efficiency, and productivity during the transition period.

Long Term

So, you've managed to reduce new employee anxiety, decrease the learning curve, accomplish quick assimilation into the company, and establish clear performance expectations. But, remember, this isn't old-school orientation that's done within a day or a week. The most effective onboarding programs are those that extend over the longest period, at least 90 days; some programs continue for the first 12 months. Involving managers in goal setting and regularly meeting with the new employee for the first 90 days to give specific feedback and ask for the same will help catch any problems early on. Solicit and give feedback and address issues promptly and early. Investing the extra time and attention to a defined onboarding process greatly increases your odds of having a satisfied and productive employee for the long term.