THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

to Employee Onboarding

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Onboarding new employees may seem like a long and arduous task, but it doesn't have to be.

Having the right practices in place from DAY 1 will help you stay on track and motivate your new employee to bring their best foot forward and quickly adjust to their role.

From promoting a stronger company culture to improving employee retention and engagement, the benefits of having an optimized onboarding process are endless!

This employee onboarding guide will walk you through all the stages and actionable steps you need to take to better understand and optimize the onboarding process for your new employees.

What Exactly is Employee Onboarding?

**It's easy to confuse orientation with employee onboarding.**

ORIENTATION is a necessary one-day process to acclimate an employee on their first day. It involves lots of paperwork and preparation in planning their **first day** out.

EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING, is a comprehensive process involving employee management that can last up to **several months**.

Why Having a Stellar Employee Onboarding Process **Matters**
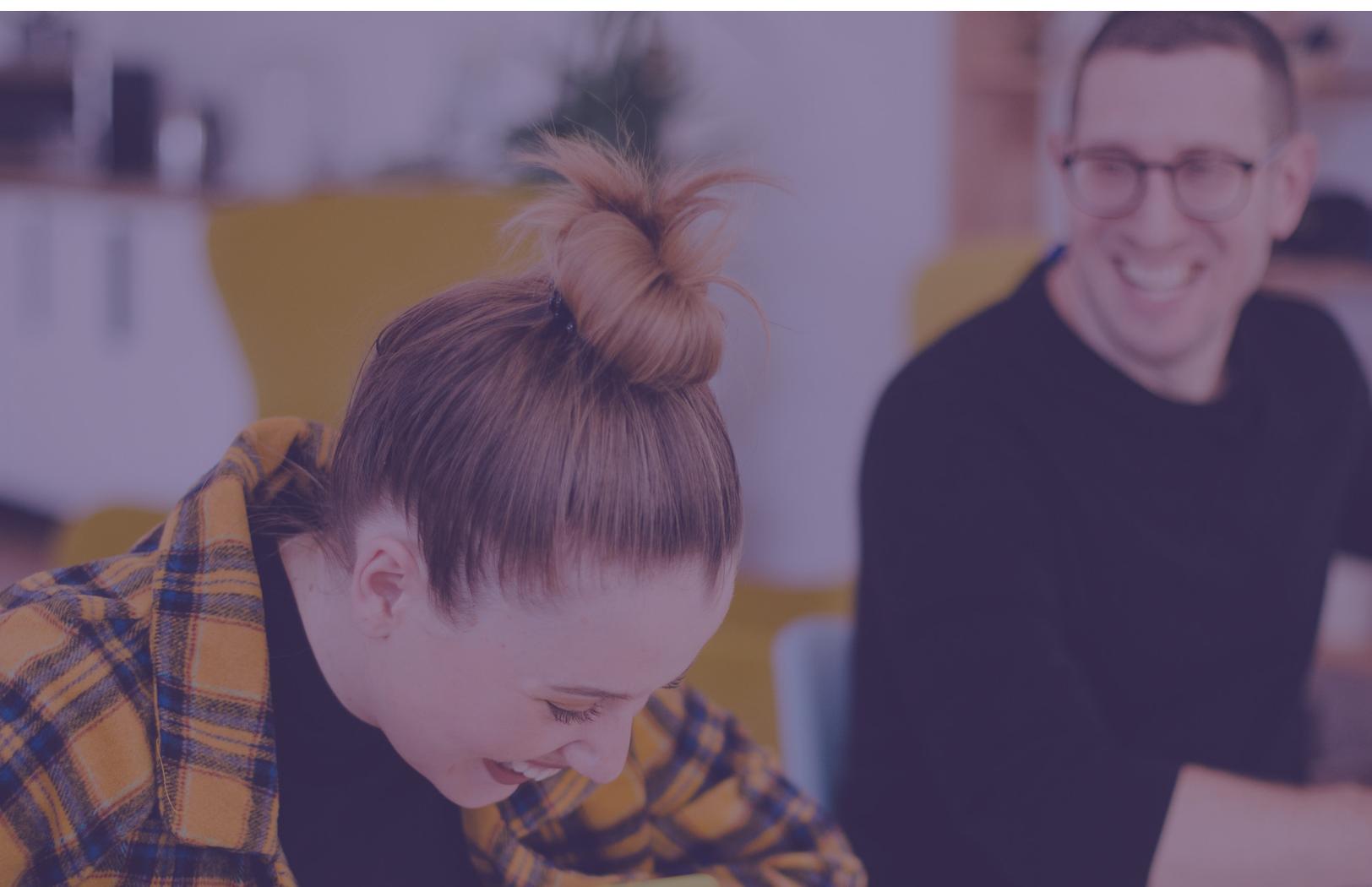
The goal behind employee onboarding is to — **attract**, **retain** and **engage** — your freshly hired employees.

Without a proper employee onboarding process in place, you're running the risk of experiencing a higher turnover rate and low employee engagement.

A study from SHRM found that **69% of employees are more likely to stay with a company for three years if they experienced great onboarding.**

After all the time you spent attracting a quality employee, wouldn't you want to invest in retaining them in the long term?

The Many Benefits of Having an Employee Onboarding Process

There are several benefits to having a proper onboarding process in place. Here are the ones we believe to be most important:

Benefits

01. SPEEDS UP PRODUCTIVITY
02. BOOSTS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
03. INCREASES EMPLOYEE RETENTION
04. PROMOTES COMPANY VALUES

01. SPEEDS UP PRODUCTIVITY

It takes some time for a new hire to settle into their new job. Let alone reach optimal productivity. Getting to know their teammates, understanding their tasks and adjusting to the company culture can take some time.

Having the right onboarding process in place can work wonders in facilitating your new hire's growth. Offering weekly manager check-ins, monthly goal settings and developmental training are all things you can include.

Put it simply: The more prepared you are, the faster your employee will be bringing their A-game to the team.

02. BOOSTS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Studies reveal how **engaged employees** go above and beyond for their work. Having a proper onboarding practice in place helps new hires feel more connected to their role and team. From day one, you can have a co-worker or onboarding buddy happily show them around and learn about the company culture from the get-go.

Offering daily feedback on their work and taking part in activities like team lunches are other effective ways to connect with your new hire and build engagement in the long haul.

" Engaged employees go above and beyond for their work. "

03. INCREASES EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Did you know that **30% of job seekers** leave a job within 90 days of starting?

On the other hand, an employee **turnover can cost employers 33 percent of an employee's annual salary.**

Yes, you read that correctly: 33%!

To put things into perspective: If an employee is making an annual salary of 45k a year, it'll cost your company 15k to replace them. The overhead costs associated with having to fill the vacant position on top of training, hiring costs and reference checks can add up pretty quickly.

With a solid onboarding process, employers can improve **new hire retention by 82%.** Having an optimal onboarding process in place for at least 3 months helps prepare your new hire in their role, ensuring a smooth long-term transition for them.

04. PROMOTES COMPANY VALUES

As much as it's important to attract quality hires, it's equally if not more important to attract the right fit.

Establishing your company's values and sharing them throughout your recruitment and onboarding process can help attract and retain the right people.

Sharing your company values and mission early on in the employee's lifecycle helps new hires assimilate the company culture. Using onboarding materials to showcase employee wins and share your company's early beginnings also goes a long way in **reinforcing your company values and ensuring cultural alignment.** More importantly, embodying your company's values ensures you can truly walk the talk. For example, if one of your company's values is about embracing uniqueness, having a themed day like colourful socks Fridays can showcase this. Better yet, if personal growth is a major value, offering an employee allowance for online courses speaks volumes.

Now that you have a better overview of the benefits that come from setting a proper employee onboarding practice in place, here are all the main stages and key points to consider for each.

" With a solid onboarding process, employers can improve new hire retention by **82%.** "

Make a Lasting First impression

Pre-Onboarding Stage

Before a prospect submits their job application, they'll be in "discovery mode," looking for the right job fit and company culture. During this stage, it's important to make a strong first impression.

Having an engaging job description that showcases your company's culture & core values, the expectations in the job role and the skills required goes a long way in attracting the right candidates. Selling your company as the optimal place to work should be at the forefront.

As part of the final stages of pre-onboarding, prioritizing the post-recruitment phase is crucial. It's an under looked period that can easily alter a new hire's decision in accepting your offer. By keeping them engaged from the moment they accept your offer to their very first day, you'll win them over and prevent them from going yay to nay.

PRE-ONBOARDING GOALS

01.
Attract relevant and high-quality candidates

You want to reach people who share your company's values and have the necessary skills you're looking for. It's important not to set your sights too high with "wishlists" but rather create realistic expectations that prospective employees can meet.

02.
Be crystal clear about what you're looking for in the job description

Prospective employees want to envision what it would be like to work at your company. Be sure to go into detail about the job role, including the main responsibilities, skill set and knowledge they should have so they have a clear picture if it's a good fit or not.

03.
### Showcase your company's culture and values

When it comes to values, actions speak louder than words. While many companies list out their values on their website, it's important to "walk the talk" by illustrating them through photos, video or simply through day-to-day action. This can range anywhere from company initiatives, weekly lunches, on-site training and mentorship opportunities on your company's culture page.

04.
Avoid going dark

An all-too-common experience is recruiters going dark on new employees. Despite the variety of reasons, it's better to avoid "ghosting" because let's face it: it's a little rude. One way to avoid going dark is by setting a calendar to communicate information regularly to your new hire prior to their first day.

Remember: Recruitment ends after the first week of work, so it's best you showcase your best efforts by getting an accepted offer.
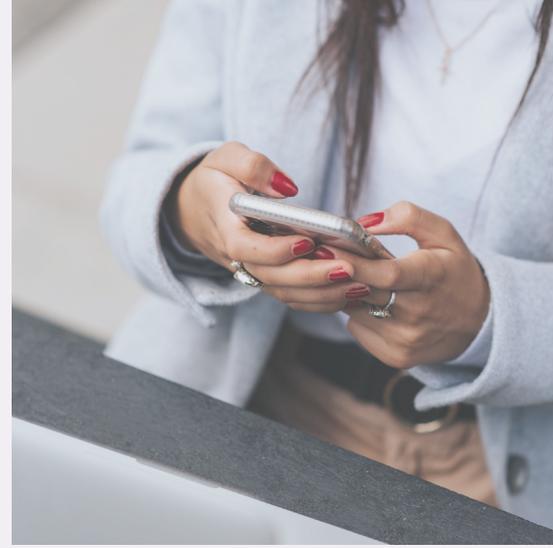
05.
Build up excitement

Make sure your new hire only has eyes for you and doesn't look for other appealing opportunities after accepting your offer. To do so, make sure to continuously keep in contact, by sharing useful company information that showcases your values and the perks of joining your team.

> **Now that you have the goals in mind, here are some best practices to follow to optimize your new hire's pre-onboarding experience.**
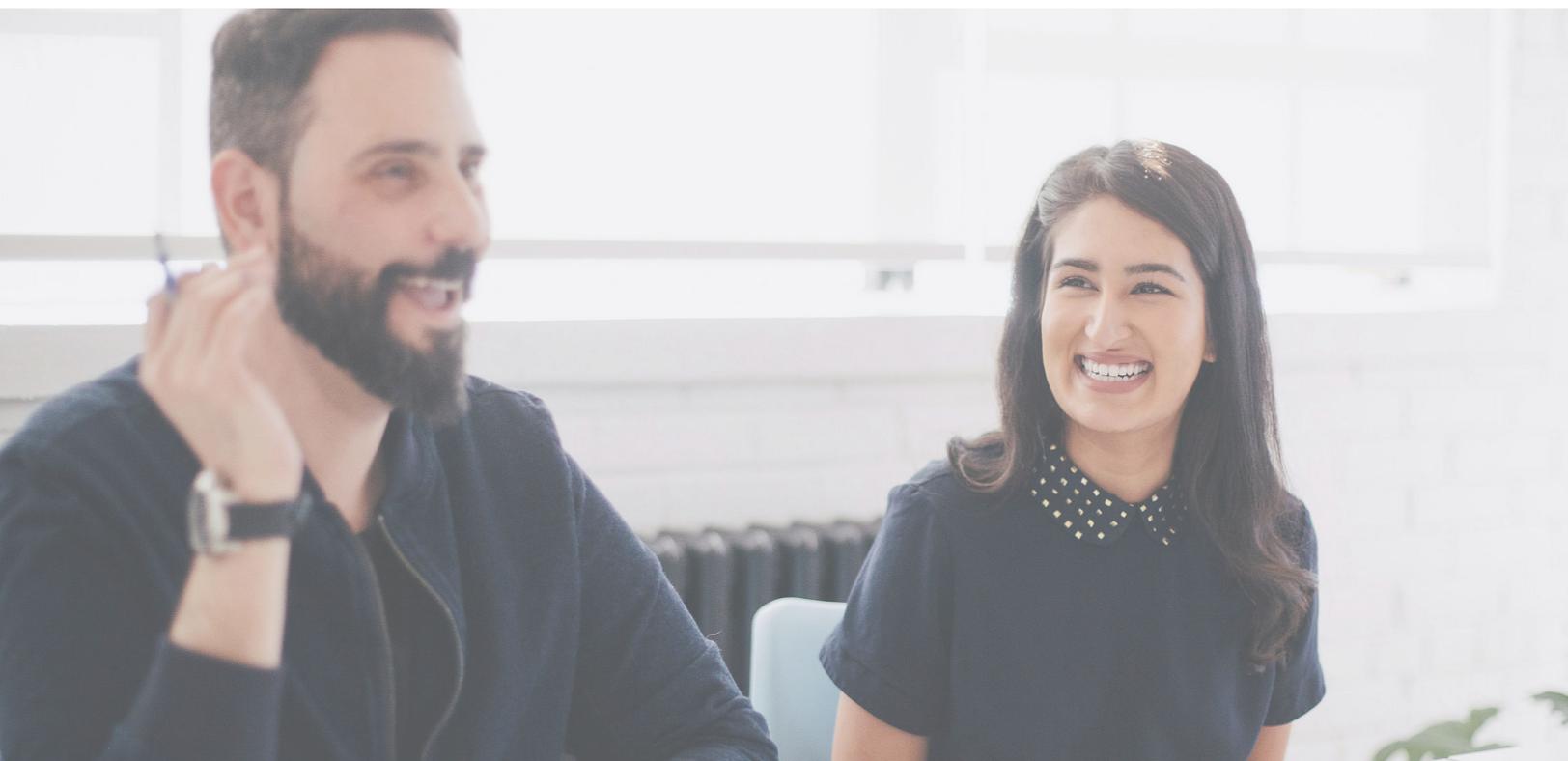
BEST PRACTICES

01.

Help them on the admin side

From tax forms to sign to direct deposit info, paperwork is inevitable. Yet you can help your new employee on the admin side by getting their security logins and new company email address up and running before they arrive!

It's also easy to focus on the paperwork and slip up on what's literally right in front of you: their workspace. From uniforms to specialist tools and equipment, be sure to prepare the main necessities for your new hire to set them up for success.

02.

Get to know your new employee by sending them a fun mini-survey

Let your new employee's personality shine through by having them answer several quirky questions in a fun mini-survey. Their responses will be a handy icebreaker for the team and give them something to talk about on their first day! Additionally, you can shine a light on their personality by displaying their profile (such as their hobbies, interests, fun fact about them) on your company's billboard or community dashboard.

03.

Create a pre-arrival email detailing all they need to know

Before their big day it's important to send them an email listing all the important details they need to know such as their start time, dress code, details on parking and any important company information so no unexpected surprises arise.
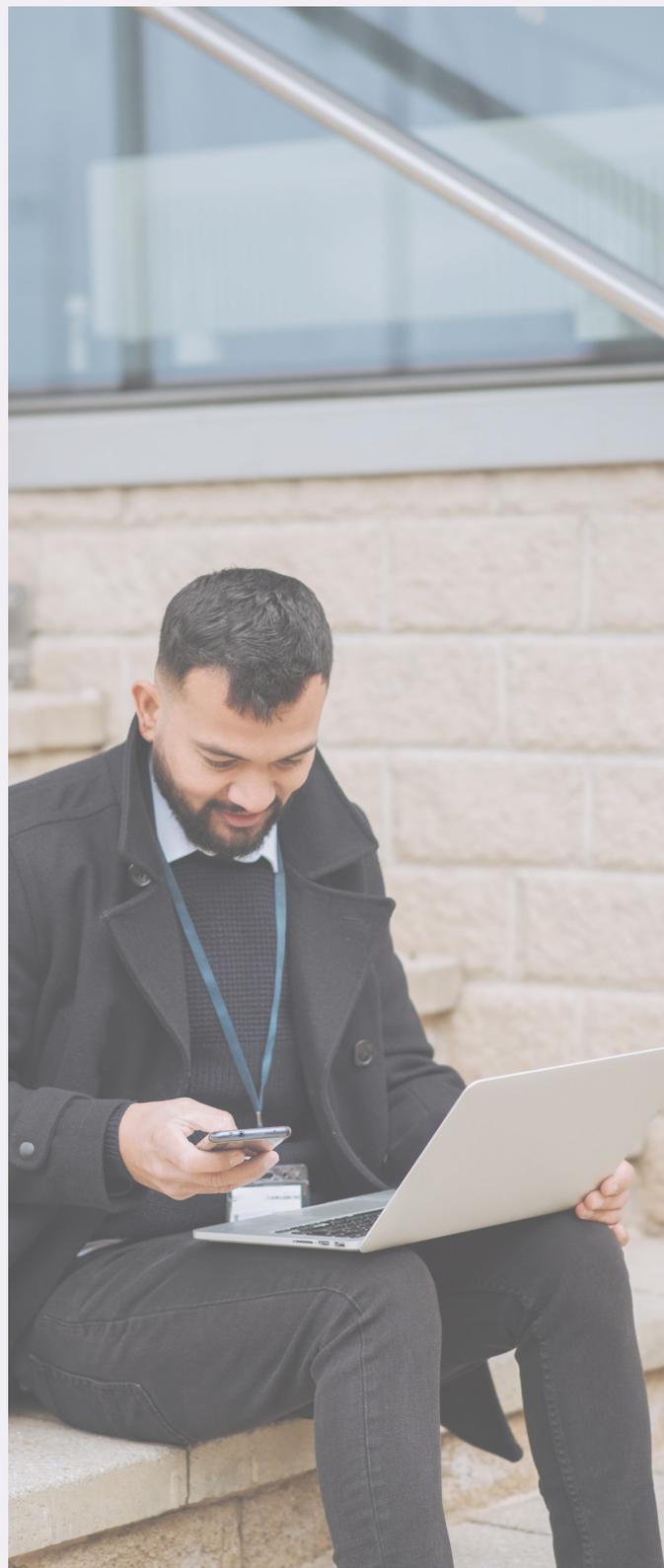
04.

Create an agenda for their first week

Nobody likes ambiguity, let alone wondering what's in store for the first week of work. It's important to go beyond one-day orientation by establishing clear expectations for the first week.

05.

Get your entire team involved!

It's important that your employees are always aware of what is going on in the company, even if it doesn't directly concern them. As much as your new hire's direct supervisor/manager is their key contact, getting their entire team involved helps build relationships with the new hire and showcases a strong team spirit.

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Get all the info you need to get started by downloading our FREE pre-onboarding checklist

Start on the right foot

Day 1 Onboarding

As a new employee, walking into a new role can be intimidating. With new faces and challenges to take on, fear of the unknown can easily take over. This is why it's important to ensure your new employee is well prepared on their first day.

Having their first day's schedule emailed ahead of time and offering a detailed breakdown of how orientation will work, takes away some of their first-day jitters.
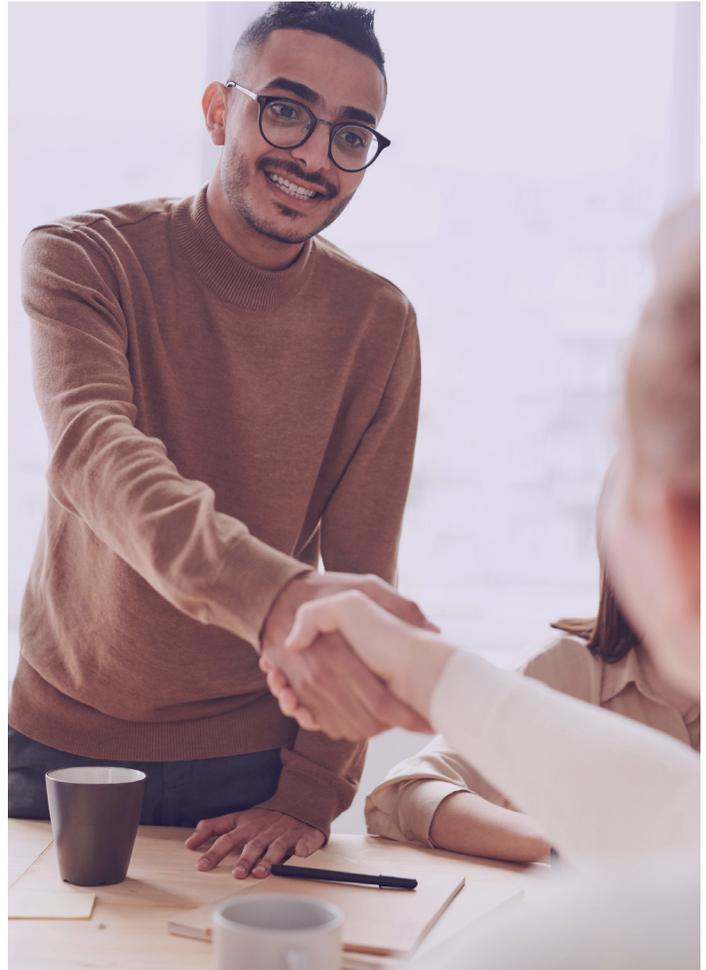
Apart from the obvious need to make a good first impression, here's why a good first day is so important.

Day 1 Onboarding

01. Make them feel appreciated from Day 1

02. Establish clear expectations in their new role

03. Create a strong learning foundation

01.

Make them feel appreciated from Day 1

Starting a new job brings a lot of uncertainty, and many employees actually leave before even completing their first day.

Making them feel appreciated from the start is therefore a great, and crucial, way to reduce this anxiety and help them focus on all the positive aspects of their new role.

02.

Establish clear expectations in their new role

Once your new employee has gotten the office tour, met all their teammates and got comfortable in their workstation, it's important to establish the expectations for their new role such as work hours, tasks and whom they'll interact with going forward. After all,

**less ambiguity
=
more productivity**

03.

Create a strong learning foundation

Starting off on the right foot is crucial. You want your new hire to learn your ways and integrate the team as fast as possible. Also, you want to prevent them from developing bad habits due to a lack of coaching. Implementing a solid learning path and clearly establishing ways they can learn their new job ensures new hires are on the right track to success!

BEST PRACTICES

Ask them to arrive later on the first day

The first day can be overwhelming. Having your new employee arrive after the morning rush can ease some of their anxiety and give your team a chance to get some tasks out of the way so they can be fully present for the new hire and offer a warm welcoming. Plus, they can probably escape the heavy morning traffic and have some time to grab a good coffee along the way.

Warmly welcome them to the team by meeting them at the door

Whether it's HR, their supervisor or an onboarding buddy, a designated person should be there to warmly welcome them on their first day and walk them through the office, introducing them to the team.

After all, nothing kills a new hire's excitement and energy more than having to be left to figure things out for themselves from the very start.

Offer a cheat sheet

This handy guide provides your new hire all the employee tips and intel they need to kickstart their first day. It should cover the 3W's: the **who, what and where.**

It should also provide info on key staff members, what each department does and the main physical and digital locations to know about (like bathrooms, kitchen and wifi areas) as well as food and retail stores nearby.

Send a personalized video greeting

Creating a video greeting is a great way to welcome the new hire and make them feel like part of the team. Not to mention, it puts a face to a name and prevents them from having to go down the digital rabbit hole of finding out more about their supervisor and teammates.

Additionally, if they have video training to do, you can get the CEO of your company to leave them a personalized greeting instead of a canned message recorded in the 90s.

Prepare and give them the main necessities during their integration

This includes office supplies, access cards, computers, uniform (if necessary), login passwords for their time & attendance app and more.

Provide them with an awesome welcome package

If they're working remotely, consider mailing them a **customized welcome** package that showcases your company's culture. Making them feel valued from day 1 allows room for engagement to grow and prevents your new hire from looking for other opportunities.
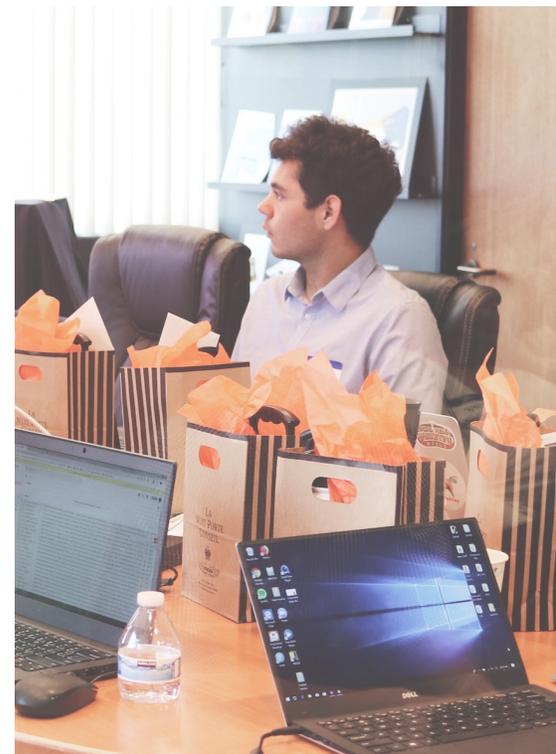
BEST PRACTICES

Take them out for lunch

Nothing says **"Welcome to the team"** more than taking your new hire out with the team.

Taking the time to get to know them outside the work environment and have an informal meet and greet with coworkers helps them forge bonds and establish connections. Not to mention, it creates a memorable first impression and introduces them to the most loved pizza joints around!

Provide a copy of their training/onboarding schedule

To ensure the new hire that they'll be supported in the coming weeks and months, it's important to provide them with a copy of the onboarding and training guides. This can include contact information, important meetings, setups for training and more.

Craft a personalized message from the team

It can be intimidating to get to know lots of people at the same time. Ask the team members to write a welcome note by writing a short paragraph introducing them. That way your new employee will discover common interests even before having their first conversation with them.

Give them some time to settle in

In between all the signed paperwork, meeting new team members and adjusting to a new work environment, the first day can be overwhelming. Give your new hire some time to settle into their role and adjust to their workday so they can review and absorb everything that's been thrown their way.

Get the full breakdown by downloading our free first day onboarding checklist.

Set them up for Success

First week

Now the first day jitters are gone, it's important to help your new hire adjust to their new work environment and set them up for success in the long term. Here are some important goals to check off during the first week onboarding process:

First week

01.

Keep the doors of communication open

Not feeling competent enough is a primary source of stress for new employees on the first week. Being receptive to their questions or concerns they may have in their role and offering assistance in challenging areas allows them to feel more comfortable in their role and become more productive.

02.

Integrate your new hire into the team by introducing them to key members

In order for them to understand the company structure and know who to reach out to for certain situations, it's important to introduce your employee to their supervisor and other points of contacts. Take the opportunity to present them with a few of your most famous stories so they don't feel too much like an outsider.

03.

Hone their development

It's important not to expect your new employee to "learn it all" on the first day. Providing them adequate time for training to learn the ins and outs of their job role including company processes and protocols set them up for success. Additionally, it offers room to train them on new aspects of work that come up.

5
GOOD PRACTICES

01. Get creative with your employee guide!

Showcase your company's personality in the employee guide by making it fun to read. You can do this by incorporating employee wins, showcasing photos from previous team-building activities, feature a short bio of each employee and so much more!

Be sure to include all the details from job expectations to vacation policies as well. Having a page dedicated to the benefits accrued with seniority as well can be useful. **It allows your new employees to visualize a future with your company.**

02. Immerse them in your company culture

Every company has its own set of values to live by. From having an open-door policy for employees to get their voice heard to having a collaborative environment, it's important that the new hire gets immersed in your company culture. Not only will it help **grow their engagement** but they'll be more than likely to stick around since they'll feel part of a team.

03. Have them shadow a colleague or manager

The best way for your employees to adapt to their work environment and learn on the job is through shadowing. This practice helps familiarize your new employee with the company as well as get a clear picture of their responsibilities at hand. It also helps build long-term engagement in employees who take pride in their new mentorship role.

04. Set up a feedback loop

Checking in on a **regular basis** with your new hire not only promotes healthy communication but also helps to track progress and challenges that may arise. One way of doing this is by setting up 1 on 1 meetings and offering performance feedback twice that week.

Sharing feedback is equally important as receiving it so be sure to make it a two-way street. Setting up this feedback loop helps strengthen the bond between your employee and figure out what's working and what isn't. Having them fill a quick survey to review their onboarding experience can help you refine the process as well.

05. Implement a 70-20-10 learning model

This model is built on the belief that 70% of an employee's knowledge comes from job-related experiences, 20% from interactions with others (like coworkers and managers) and the remaining 10% from **formal learning events or training.**

Incorporating hands-on experience, employee interaction, as well as personal training will provide your new hire with a diversified approach to learning and as a result, increase their engagement in the long haul.

First week
GOOD PRACTICES

Get the full breakdown by downloading our free first week onboarding checklist

Engage them for the long haul

First month

Now that your new employee has settled into their job and gotten a taste of what the job entails, it's important to ensure they stay happy and engaged in their role. Checking in with them, offering continuous support and providing ample opportunities for them to learn and integrate into the team are all great initiatives to offer your new hire during their first month. With that being here are the key takeaways for keeping your onboarding process strong:

Make them ambassadors and build their engagement

There's no denying that an engaged employee will go out of their way for their company. But the best is to crank it up even more. By making employees embrace your company culture and become ambassadors, they will both help you generate new business through word of mouth and help you hire more people that share their vision and fit in with your company.

Assess their performance to ensure they're on the right track

Reviewing your new employee's work performance and providing thoughtful feedback ensures that they're on the right path to success. Arming them with the necessary tools to succeed and checking in to that their on-the-job training is done in a manageable way fosters room for adaptation and growth.

Foster inclusivity for the new hire by having them actively engage with the team

As much as a team lunch on the first day is an introductory meet and greet, think of extending it long term to foster inclusivity in your new hire. Helping them feel part of the team and fostering this sentiment is crucial if you don't want to see your onboarding efforts go to waste with the first external job offer your new hire will get. Because let's face it, if you are on the lookout for the best, other companies are as well.

By having your new hire actively engage with the team, they'll feel more included. For example, here at Voilà! we have monthly Zoom calls and after-work get-togethers such as beer-o-clock which offer the opportunity to get the team together and connect with one another through pizza, refreshing drinks and sunshine.

BEST PRACTICES

Co-create their schedule

In order to make a new employee feel like they're contributing their value in the long haul, think long-term. Empty schedules give off the impression they're not needed. Creating your new hire's schedules without his input can create a disconnect as work-life balance is gaining importance.

Try setting up their first 1-2 weeks before they arrive, and make room to adjust the following weeks by letting them share their availability and life constrains with you early after their arrival.

With a set of collaborative tools like Voilà!'s you can also let them create and request open shifts and replacements from the get go so they get to own their schedules a little more from day one.

Follow up with their direct supervisor for updates

To ensure they have all the resources and up-to-date training they need, it's important to follow up with their direct supervisor.

Get to know their sweet tooth by asking them to bring in their favourite dessert at the end of the month

It may sound like a silly thing to do, but hear us out: nothing brings people together more than food. By asking your new hire to bring in their favourite dessert, you'll get insights into their preferences as well as discover the type of foodie they are and learn more about their culture. There's no greater feeling than bonding over some Italian cannoli or Turkish Baklavas.

Collaborative tools

Plan ahead with a travel-style career development guide

Let your new hire envision a bright future with a travel-style career development guide. Feature inspiring interviews with your CEO/VP, scenic travel pics from the team, as well as a guide to all the places your new hire could travel to (like more senior roles) within your company!

Showcasing growth opportunities in a creative and inspiring way will keep your new hire excited for what's to come.

Turn your onboarding into a fun Bootcamp

We promise this kind of boot camp involves no physical exertion. An onboarding Bootcamp immerses your new hire with every team in your company each week. It can be as long as half a day or an hour. Think of it as a level above a meet n greet providing your new hire with the opportunity to quickly learn how your company operates within different departments. It also helps them develop strong ties with other employees as well.

Continue the onboarding process for the next 6 months

Now that 30 days have kicked in, it's important not to let it all go to waste. Remember: employee engagement is a long-term goal. Continuously checking in by providing the training and resources they need is key to ensuring your new employee is on the right path to success.

Additionally, ask for feedback and optimize. Letting them share their thoughts on the onboarding process and review your management style can help you improve both in the long haul.

Get the full breakdown by downloading our free first-month onboarding checklist.

Conclusion

It's important to remember that employee onboarding is an ongoing process that reaps long term rewards like increased employee engagement, higher productivity and a decrease in turnover. Now that you've gotten the walk through of all the essential onboarding stages and actionable steps to take for each to optimize your new hire's experience, it's time to put them into action!

Overwhelmed by scheduling changes and finding last-minute replacements? Want to free up your time to focus on growing your business? We're here to help! Reach out to one of our Voilà! specialists today to get a free demo of our time & attendance app.

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