

## Are you Onboarding Effectively?

### What is onboarding and why it matters more than you think

Onboarding is the process in which a new employee is integrated into their new role, team and company, allowing them to become engaged and contribute faster. If first impressions are everything, then it makes sense that the onboarding process might be the most important segment of the hiring (and retention) process.

Changing jobs is one of the most stressful life events and successful onboarding can help mitigate the stress a job change causes. Pre-boarding is a separate process that is underutilized, but can help mitigate stress BEFORE they start (and in turn reduce the chance of accepting a counter-offer).

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### Data!

Variant Partners conducted a survey in September of 2016 regarding recent hires and their pre/onboarding experience. Below are some key takeaways:

- 55% were not pre-boarded
  - The two most important on-boarding factors? Defined expectations and a defined training process, yet only half were given a clear training schedule or plan
  - Of those that rated the experience greater than 80 (out of 100), 70% were given a training schedule and 90% had a work area that was ready
  - Of those that rated the experience less than 30 (out of 100), 100% said the experience was less than two weeks, 86% were not pre-boarded, 0% were assigned a mentor or buddy and 71% did not have a clear training schedule or plan
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### Pre-Boarding

Pre-Boarding is the process in which you engage and integrate your new hire before they actually arrive for their first day. Our survey found that those who were pre-boarded rated the onboarding process 20% better than those that were not.

Consider implementing a pre-boarding process to increase engagement and help prevent fall-off. The following are just a few ways a company can implement a pre-boarding process at minimal cost:

- Send an email detailing their first day (when to arrive, what to wear and what to bring)
  - Send an email outlining a detailed training and onboarding plan
  - Treat them to lunch within a week of accepting an offer (to prevent falloff)
  - Have their references and new manager call to congratulate them
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### Onboarding

As mentioned previously, onboarding is the process that integrates new employees into their new role, team and company. With an average score of 57 (out of 100), it appears that most companies are 1) not investing enough time/resources into the process, and 2) not effectively onboarding staff.

The following are just a few things a company can implement to increase the effectiveness of the onboarding process:

- Provide a clear and defined onboarding and training process
- Provide clear and defined roles and responsibilities (go beyond the job description)—Have the manager provide 3, 6 and 12 month goals as well as how they will be reviewed or evaluated
- Make sure they have everything they need on the first day and a clean work area
- Assign them a buddy or mentor—consider assigning an employee that is NOT on their team—this will encourage collaboration between teams and provide them a different viewpoint
- Make a fun fact sheet: <https://venngage.com/blog/how-to-create-a-fact-sheet/>

Want more reasons to take onboarding seriously? Consider that [this survey](#) found that “onboarding programs can increase retention by 25% and improve employee performance by 11%.” Additionally, the same survey discovered that “Employees who participate in a structured onboarding program are 69% more likely to stay with an organization for 3 years.”

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### Final Thoughts

There is a disconnect between what new hires want and what employers are providing. While onboarding can be an afterthought for employers, data reveals that it is one of the most critical processes that impacts an employee; that same data reveals that employers are not effectively onboarding their new hires.

The good news? Many, if not all, of the things an employer can do to improve their onboarding process comes at little to no cost outside of time.

As you and the leadership team finalize plans for 2017 it is critical that your onboarding process gets a serious look to build-upon your years’ recruiting and hiring successes.