



Onboarding

Make Every New Hire Successful

Hiring decisions are equally important for the organization as well as the new hire taking up the job. If the new hire is successful it bodes well for him as well as the organization. Beyond the products, markets and individual capabilities, what makes new hires successful is how well they are assimilated in the organization. Their success depends on how they feel in the initial few months of starting their journey. Organizations who are consistent in making their new hires taste success follow a structured onboarding process.

Onboarding is the process of inducting, assimilating and absorbing new hires into the cultural, social and performance fabric of an organization.

Typically, new hires get about 90 days to prove themselves in a new job. This is also the time where they make opinions about the organization and whether they want to stay with the organization long term. Every organization approaches these first days differently in terms of imparting knowledge, skills and processes required to work efficiently. But whatever the approach or maturity of this process may be, the accepted fact is that more the new hires feel welcomed and equipped for the job, the faster they will be able to become productive for the organization.

The level of maturity of the onboarding programs in organizations tend to vary from the unstructured, non-repeatable, learn as you go approaches to highly structured and process driven onboarding programs with each step and objectives lined out. What level of process would benefit your organization is something that the HR and functional teams need to decide but some level of automation and processes and has shown to improve results irrespective of the maturity level of the organization.

When we studied the onboarding processes across the industries, a common theme emerged around the key objectives of the onboarding program. Simply put they form the foundation of every onboarding program

1. Engage

Keep the new hires engaged during their early days to make sure that they feel connected with the enterprise culture and goals. The engagement helps build a feeling of trust with the organization and gets new hires perspective.

2. Educate

Very few new hires are productive out of their orientation. They must unlearn a lot of old ways and learn the current ways of the organization. This process of learning is easy if the plan is documented and measured frequently.

3. Evaluate

Evaluate the new hire performance and provide regular coaching and feedback to accelerate performance. Skill assessment is needed during the first few days by the team to determine what is needed to get them ready to work at their full abilities. The employee should then be assigned a coach to help him/her develop their skills and meet their performance goals.

4. Enable

Enable the new hires to reach new heights faster. The first few days are very crucial in making a new hire successful. Organizations should enable them to focus on learning and acquiring skills for the job rather than spending their time filling lengthy forms or waiting for that elusive desk or computer. Provisioning of assets enables them to focus on their tasks.

These foundational blocks are also called the 4E's of onboarding.

What happens during Onboarding and how it makes new hires successful?

Irrespective of the organization the process of assimilating the new hire can be divided in four logical steps. These steps start even before the new hire starts.

1. Pre- Onboarding

Pre-Onboarding is the stage between a new hires acceptance of offer letter and their joining date. There is a strong uncertainty in this phase and a strong pre-onboarding process engages them effectively. It also reduces operational overhead by automating administrative and logistical tasks. Most importantly, it provides opportunities for the new hire to feel welcomed and valued, and to begin ramping up for Day 1.

2. Day 1 Induction/Orientation

Welcoming new hire to the company is induction. It is a well-planned program to socialize the new hire with the peers and the workplace. It is a process of introducing an employee that takes place on the day when he joins the organization and provided with basic information needed to adjust as soon as possible in the new organization to gain maximum efficiency in the minimum time.

3. Onboarding

Onboarding is a longer-term process that focuses on helping new employees become a part of the organization, building crucial relationships, understanding their role and learning how they add value to the organization

Ingredients of a successful Onboarding program

Based on research across geographies, industries and size of the organizations, following emerged as ingredients of a successful onboarding program.

1. A written plan for success – First 100-day plan, 30-60-90-day plan, etc.
2. Stakeholder meetings – Pre- planned calendarized meetings
3. Coaching and support – from reporting manager, HR, Mentor
4. Online tools to understand policies, etc.
5. Training – Skills, Behaviors, Processes, Products, etc.
6. Regular Feedback and support

Successful onboarding is often the missing link between a successful new hire or not. With exorbitant cost of hiring and talent shortage looming across the business leaders should recognize the fact that integrating new hires in the organization is a crucial step to make them successful. Used with proper structure and involvement from key stakeholders, structured onboarding will result in faster learning curve, more engagement with new hires and faster productivity. This is one investment which will continue to reap benefits for a long term.