

Keys to Effectively Onboarding a New Hire

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Do you remember your first day at your existing company? What was that experience like? Did you feel a sense of excitement, apprehension, regret – or all of the above? Who greeted you? What were the first 90 days like? Were they memorable? What from that experience would you consider to be a “success” or “failure”?



Successful Onboarding of a new hire is both an art and science. To be effective, new hires must learn not only about their role, but also about your company and (in some cases) the industry, as well as the make-up of their internal and external clients and customers. In essence, you must tell a compelling story that helps your new hire connect the dots. That way, they are able to grasp both the big picture and the nuances of what it takes to be successful.

You, as a hiring manager, must be engaged throughout the recruitment, screening and onboarding phases. Those who believe “HR will handle it” are the ones that – typically speaking – experience the most turnover within their department. We highlight five (5) key steps all hiring managers must take from the very beginning of the hiring process to improve the overall experience and assimilation process:



- 1. Hire the right person.** It sounds straightforward, but hiring managers often fail to look at all the factors involved before extending an offer to someone. The “right person” must have the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to perform the job – yes – but more needs to be considered. You need to think about how this person compliments the team and what void they will be filling.

Key questions that must be answered:

- > What gaps must the candidate fill (address)?
- > What do others (teammates, clients, customers) believe are keys to success for this role?
- > Where has someone in this role failed or fallen short in the past?
- > Is the candidate’s past behavior indicative of future success for this role?
- > What do I, as well as my direct reports, feel about the candidate’s personality?
- > Is the candidate a good fit for my work culture/environment?



2. **Be transparent.** To ensure that your new hire gets off on the “right foot”, they must understand how you communicate, lead, manage and coach the team. Explain what your expectations are for the role, how performance will be managed and what success looks like. Make a connection with the employee by showing a genuine interest in their success.

Key questions you must answer for the new hire:

- Does the new hire know where I stand and what to expect?
- Have I articulated my vision for success – both for the role and team?
- Have I explained my management approach?



3. **Connect the dots.** If the employee does not understand how the role they are filling impacts the team and – ultimately – the bottom line, they may view the role as merely a job. Explaining its importance and where the employee fits in to the “grand scheme” of things is crucial to gaining buy-in from the start.

Key questions you must answer for the new hire:

- Did I tell the story of the company? Did it resonate with the employee?
- Was I able to convey my passion for what I do?
- What have I done (or do I need to do) to make sure the employee shares my passion?



4. **Share your 90-day assimilation plan and check in frequently about progress.** Without a clear plan for getting up to speed on the role, company, responsibilities and other “intangibles”, mistakes will occur and the onboarding process will appear disjointed and perhaps even sloppy to the new hire. The onboarding process is a reflection of what is to come, and getting off on the wrong foot may leave a negative lasting impression.

We recommend a 90-day plan for assimilation that ensures proper training, relationship-building, exposure and knowledge transfer has occurred. The plan should consist of checklists with to do items, as well as a training curriculum and job aids or other resources needed to effectively perform the job.

Key questions you must answer to assimilate the new hire:

- Is there a clear plan for learning the nuances of the role?
- Is the plan easy to follow?
- Can the new hire become assimilated without my assistance?



5. **Provide Multiple Perspectives.** While your involvement in the onboarding process is critical, you cannot run the team effectively and give your undivided attention to onboarding the employee. It is important to involve team members in the process, as they are closest to the day-to-day responsibilities and demands of the role.

Key questions to consider when thinking about who to involve:

- > Who knows the role the best? Who is most familiar with its responsibilities/demands?
- > Are there adequate resources for job shadowing to better understand core tasks? If not, are there other methods of learning this information?

Partnering with Human Resources and Training helps ensure that the entire onboarding process is seamless. You have a story to tell, and the better the beginning, middle and end are, the more comfortable and confident your new hire will feel about their decision to join your team and the organization.

Contact Learning Curve Consultants (info@lc-consultants.com) for assistance with building an effective onboarding program.