

On-Boarding – Fast Track To Productivity

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It's Monday and your new employee is standing in the lobby waiting to get started. Have you prepared an **On-boarding** plan? Have you selected a **coach**?

Traditionally companies begin the employment relationship exchanging lots of information, e.g., completion of forms, review of the handbook, selection of benefits, etc.. All the while the new employee is thinking..."I wonder what my co-workers will be like, will I fit it, and will I be a success?"

The objective of **On-boarding** is more than paperwork compliance; it is creating a bond with the new employee through effective communication and provides guidance on how to be a successful member of the company. Surveys from Aberdeen show that up to 80% of new hires make a decision in the first six months whether to stay or leave his/her new employer! This is not much time to create a success story.

The key to successful **On-boarding** is achieving a balance between the exchange of information with learning about the work environment and how to make a positive impact. A key plan component is the **On-boarding coach**. Below are some important points to note:

- Setting the stage - Before the employee's first day, send a package with the forms required, instructions for completion, a list of nearby food establishments, and a welcome letter from company identifying the **coach** you have assigned.
- The **coach** will be the new employee's go-to person. On the first day the **coach** will greet the employee, escort them to human resources, give a tour of the work area, make introductions and take the new employee to lunch.
- During the first few weeks the **coach** will also be a resource for the new employee, answering questions they might hesitate asking human resources or their manager.
- The **coach** should be selected for knowledge of the company, successful performance and ability to clearly communicate. The **coach** does not need to be from the new employee's department as this is usually not a skill training role. Being a **coach** should be a reward and development opportunity for future leadership roles.
- At the core of **On-boarding** is communication. Regularly scheduled conversations between the employee and **coach** should happen during the first six months addressing questions such as ... What has been your best experience so far? The biggest challenge encountered? What ideas do you have

to make things better? This gives the new employee the chance to give feedback and gives the employer information on how the company is perceived.

- **On-boarding** takes at least 90 days and more often a six month period. The goal is to ensure that the new employee has been assimilated into the company at the conclusion of this period. How success is measured? - Employee satisfaction, retention, strong performance and perhaps creating the next **coach**!

So that is the role of the company in **On-boarding**...but what responsibilities does the new employee have to ensure his/her success? Stay tuned for **On-boarding Part 2** in an upcoming edition.

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