4 MISSING ELEMENTS OF

YOUR ONBOARDING PROCESS

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The 4 Missing Elements:

Introduction

Onboarding is a vital component to any company's success. Without a strong onboarding process in place, it's difficult for new employees to excel in their role and identify with your company. This is critical to retaining employees - in fact research shows that 28% of employees will leave their job after 3 months due to poor onboarding experiences.

We've identified 4 important elements that might be missing in your onboarding process:

1. Presenting a clear path after the initial offer
2. Making an employee's first day memorable
3. City and office specific hyperlocal information
4. 90-day plan to ensure success

Read on to discover onboarding success factors and gain actionable tips that allow you to implement or improve these elements right away. Don't let your onboarding process fall behind!

Ch. 1

Presenting a Clear Path After the Initial Offer

Presenting a Clear Path After the Initial Offer

Think about the weeks leading up to any new job - it's overwhelming. You're full of questions, and you have no idea how to go about getting any of them answered.

☐ **WHAT SHOULD I BRING?**

☐ **DO I NEED MY COMPUTER?**

☐ **SHOULD I BRING MY SOCIAL SECURITY CARD?**

☐ **SHOULD I ARRIVE EARLY? HOW EARLY?**

☐ **DO I NEED A KEY TO GET INTO THE OFFICE?**

☐ **DO I BRING A LUNCH?**

☐ **WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?**

☐ **WILL ANYONE KNOW WHO I AM?**

There's nothing worse than having all these uncertainties circle your brain in the days leading up to a new job. Many new hires don't want to feel pesky by asking too many questions, but these are all valid concerns that should be addressed, and that your employee deserves to have answered.
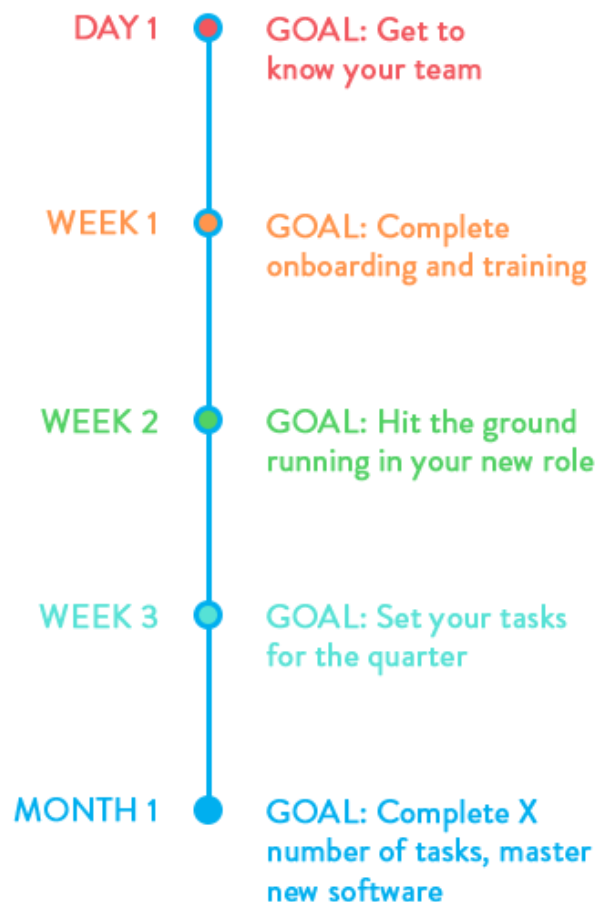
What many employers forget is that onboarding doesn't start when the employee walks in the door on their first day. It doesn't even start the week before they begin.

Onboarding starts the minute your candidate accepts the offer.

Whether their first day in the office is 5 days from that moment, or 50 days, onboarding needs to start immediately. Once your job offer is accepted, provide a clear path to your employee for what happens next. This will substantially ease their stress and confusion, starting the process for a successful onboarding experience - and a loyal employee - on the right foot.

It's crucial to have a centralized location for your new hire to find all of their job-related information. It could be an internal employee page or a platform within your relocation or HR software - however you choose to do this, it should be organized and it should be easily accessible. From there, you can decide how you want to begin walking them through the onboarding process.

Start by giving them a timeline. Let them know when they can expect to hear from you, what you'll be sharing, how they can prepare for their first few days of work, and any pre-first day expectations. Maybe there are company documents they can begin reading to help familiarize themselves with processes and industry information. Or, maybe you want to start making introductions via email to help them feel welcome and get conversations flowing. You could even set up an initial task list for them so they know exactly what they'll be doing in the first few days or weeks.

DAY 1 — GOAL: Get to know your team

WEEK 1 — GOAL: Complete onboarding and training

WEEK 2 — GOAL: Hit the ground running in your new role

WEEK 3 — GOAL: Set your tasks for the quarter

MONTH 1 — GOAL: Complete X number of tasks, master new software

Setting your new hires up like this ahead of time will help ease them into their first few days of work, hopefully avoiding the deer-in-headlights look most managers are used to seeing.

THE MORE SEAMLESSLY YOUR NEW HIRES CAN FLOW INTO THEIR NEW ROLE, THE BETTER FOR EVERYONE.

Ask your employees what they wish they'd known before their first day, then use their feedback to create an FAQ sheet to use in your onboarding process. They know better than anyone else what the important information is, so use it to your advantage! You can include things like what to wear, what they should expect for lunch on their first day and afterward, a quick outline of office layout and where each department is located, an overview of team structure, and more.

This is completely customizable to your specific office, and that's why it's so valuable to your new hires. This type of information can't be found anywhere else, and it can drive up engagement and dramatically reduce confusion.

The more information you can provide the better - even if you think it's obvious.

FAQs

Start Date ---> Jan. 5

What to Expect

Dress Code

Lunch Policy

Office Keys

Security

Transportation

Ch. 2

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The First Day:
Make it a Great
One

The First Day

Think about any first day you've had. What's the very first thing you did when you walked out the door at the end of the day? For many of us it's probably somewhere along the lines of - walk out, breathe out a sigh of relief, and pull out our phone to call a friend or family member. The first question they ask is also probably the same:

HOW WAS YOUR FIRST DAY?

The answer your new hire gives is your company's grade for the day. That answer will be the guiding factor that influences their opinion on your company in the critical 90-day timeframe.

First Step: Avoid the Awkward Glances

Remember getting those confused looks on your first day? People are whispering and wondering who the new person is, what they do, what they're like, and so on. Put an end to this! Make a new hire's first day special and memorable by engaging them with the rest of your team. A great way to get the ball rolling is to have new hires fill out a questionnaire before they start, then post their answers around the office on their first day for the rest of the employees to read.

You Can Ask Questions Like:

"What's your favorite movie?"

"What's your favorite thing to do?"

"What's something interesting about you?"

What's your favorite food?"

Where's your favorite place to travel?"

This gets conversation organically flowing between your existing employees and new hires. This can help prevent those awkward hallways passings and shy glances that often happen on a first day. If existing employees can use information from that questionnaire to connect with your new hires, it will make things a lot less tense and more comfortable for everyone.

NEXT STEP: DO NOT HAVE THEM DO PAPERWORK ON THE FIRST DAY

This is a mistake companies make far too often. First days end up being spent sitting in long meetings, reviewing and signing documents, and formatting email signatures.

Make their First Day Exciting!!

When they arrive, have something waiting at their desk. It doesn't have to be extravagant, even just a card signed by members of your executive team - or everyone if your company is still small - and a promotional item or two (a pen, water bottle, notepad) with your company brand goes a long way. This is a quick win that will make new hires feel special and help them to start feeling like a part of your company.

NEXT: HAVE A LIST OF THINGS FOR THEM TO DIVE INTO IF YOU CAN'T MEET WITH THEM RIGHT AWAY

Kick off their first day by letting them get their hands a little dirty so they can feel a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day. There's nothing worse than sitting at your desk twiddling your thumbs because you don't know what to do. If you assigned tasks prior to their start date as mentioned in the previous chapter, this would be a great time for them to get going on those tasks or continue where they left off.

DON'T FORGET TO INTRODUCE THEM TO THE REST OF THE COMPANY

If others are expecting a new person and know what to expect from their role, it will make their arrival a little less surprising. Make sure your employees understand the new hire's position and how it will (or won't) affect their roles as well. This gets collaboration going as soon as possible and will help the new hire feel like a welcome part of the team.

TIP: TREAT YOUR NEW HIRE TO LUNCH!

The meal doesn't have to be fancy, just something to get new hires out of the office that first day and talking with other team members. Take them to your favorite local spot to help familiarize them with the area. If you're onboarding a large group of people, you could choose a place to take all your new hires, or order in as a way to build tradition. This will make them feel like they've been "inducted" into the group.

ANOTHER THING THAT CAN MAKE A HUGE IMPACT ON A NEW HIRE IS REMEMBERING THEIR FAMILY.

If a new hire had a spouse and/or family members relocate with them, send them something - flowers, a card, anything! Let them know they're equally important to the success of this new endeavor, and their happiness is just as important as your employee's.

TIP: CONTINUE TO INVOLVE THE EMPLOYEE'S FAMILY

Beyond the first day, whenever you're hosting an event, throwing a company party, going to dinner or drinks, volunteering, etc. invite family members to come along, as appropriate!

According to Kent Employment Solutions, "Research confirms that the failure rate of new executive hires is close to 50 percent. Most of these frustrating and expensive failures are more the result of personal/family dissatisfaction than job-related issues."

Encouraging families to build networks and relationships will make a big difference in whether or not they begin to view their new city as home.

Ch. 3

HyperLocal City & Office-Specific Information

Hyperlocal information is the most valuable tool you can provide your new hires and transferees. It helps employees truly settle into their new city, instead of feeling like a tourist for the first few weeks.

So, what exactly is hyperlocal information?

HYPERLOCAL INFORMATION IS INFORMATION THAT CAN'T BE FOUND BY A SIMPLE SEARCH QUERY.

Essentially anything anyone could ever need to know can be found on the Internet; however, there's a lot you can tell employees that would take quite a bit of searching and digging to find below the surface.

For example, are they going to be able to find the best mom-and-pop deli from a search query? Can they figure out the insider tips for public transportation? Can they uncover the restaurants that locals deem the most worthwhile? Are they going to be able to find the hidden gem coffee shop tucked away on a side street?

It's these tips, the tips that can only be acquired by truly LIVING in the city, that your new hires will really want to know.
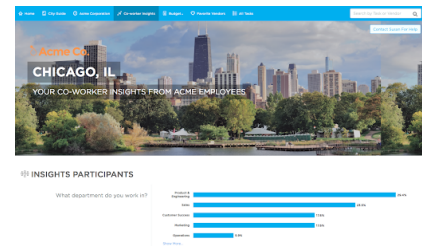
THE BIG QUESTION IS "HOW TO COLLECT ALL THIS INFORMATION?"

The answer is really simple...

USE YOUR EMPLOYEES!

Their combined city expertise is a very powerful tool. You can easily unlock this hyperlocal knowledge by surveying employees and compiling the data into a visual representation. This makes it easy to read and feels truly customized.

Seeing information in a visual format, as opposed to reading blocks of text on a page, also helps add excitement to the intel you're sharing with new hires, drastically increasing retention rates.

Capturing hyperlocal information for new or prospective hires helps existing employees feel valued, and new employees are grateful for the insider tips.

Providing information like this will save weeks of a new hire's time that would have otherwise been spent wandering around the office (or their new city) wondering where the best lunch spot is or how to get to public transportation.

This is also a great way to encourage conversation between employees. With common ground, conversation will flow organically, giving both current and new employees that first stepping stone toward a positive experience.

Ch. 4

90-Day Plan to Ensure Success

The First 90 Days

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employee turnover hit a record high of 9.7% in 2020. And O.C. Tanner reports that 20% of turnover happens in the first 45 days of work at a new company. Although these stats can be overwhelming for companies trying to build up their workforce, it highlights how crucial it is to find ways to encourage employees to stick around.

The responsibility to create an initial structure for employees, detailing the growth path for each specific position, typically falls within your onboarding process. You don't want to make promises you can't keep, but you need to show your employees what they're working towards and how their contribution matters. If you end up training and onboarding an employee just to have them leave in a few months due to job dissatisfaction, it can get extremely expensive. New hire employee training can cost anywhere from 25-200% of an employee's annual salary. This translates into a lot of wasted money if you're not properly onboarding and retaining your new employees.

What's the Solution?

IMPLEMENT A 90-DAY PLAN

Just as onboarding doesn't start on a new hire's first day, it doesn't stop after the first day either.

ONBOARDING EXTENDS THROUGH THE FIRST 90 DAYS OF EMPLOYMENT.

As employees begin to find their stride and get used to their new job and environment, it's important to continue to act as a guide for them until they're confident enough to fly solo. The tricky part is finding the right balance between acting as a guide and giving them too much time to acclimate. Some companies allow months for employees to ramp up, and the truth is, it doesn't need to be such a drawn out process. Give your employee a few weeks to adjust to their new job and get familiar with the industry, but after that, encourage them to hit the ground running.

In the first 90 days, employees develop the habits and behaviors they need to be successful, so you should strive to make those first three months exceptional. One of the best ways to do this is to lay out exactly what success looks like in the first 90 days for each position. Give real, attainable goals that new hires should be striving to achieve, and give them the resources they need to succeed. If employees have something to work towards, or some new skill to acquire, it will give them a benchmark for how well they're performing.

One of the main reasons for job-hopping is that employees, especially younger generations, don't feel challenged in their careers. They don't feel a sense of worth in their job functions and want to move onto a new adventure, one where they feel like they're making a difference. The minute they feel like there isn't a growth path for them, they'll be running out the front door faster than you can say "Welcome!"

How Can You Change this Mindset?

Give them a path to work towards. Don't let them flounder around for those first 90 days, expecting them to figure things out on their own as they go. Let new hires know immediately what they need to be doing in order to succeed, what metrics they should be working towards, the impact these metrics have on the business overall, and what the achievement of success looks like. The only thing Millennials love more than a challenge is the feeling of success, so giving that to them (as long as it's deserved) will make them feel valuable. The earlier you can instill this attitude, the better.
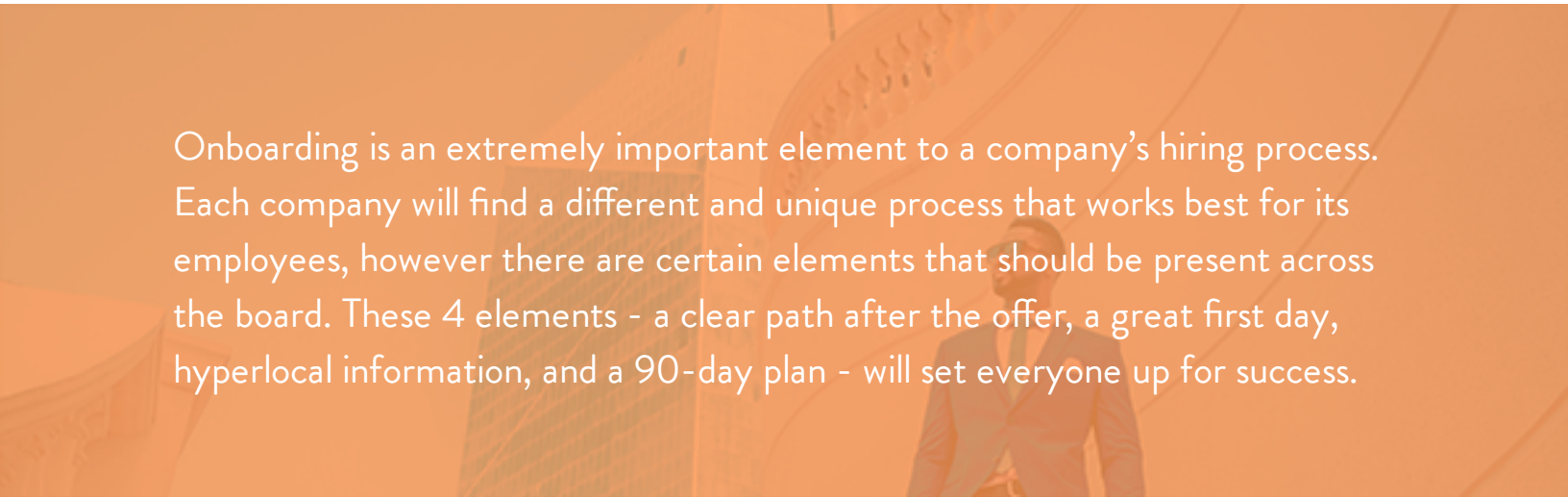
SET GOALS AND HOLD THEM ACCOUNTABLE

69% OF EMPLOYEES ARE MORE LIKELY TO STAY WITH THE COMPANY FOR AT LEAST 3 YEARS AFTER A GREAT ONBOARDING EXPERIENCE.

O.C.Tanner

This doesn't mean that if a new hire hasn't hit their goals at the end of their 90 days, it's time to cut the cord. Having these clear cut goals simply gives you and the rest of the team an idea of how to move forward from there. It lets you know where your employee's skill set is at, how it has evolved, and what areas need to be worked on.

This is a great time to give employees an opportunity to let you know what they've liked or not liked so far. Let them tell you what they want to work on, where they need help, and what you can do as their employer to help them. The main influencing factor for the current generation in the workforce is the opportunity for growth, so by starting employees out with a jampacked 90-day plan...

YOU ARE SETTING THEM UP FOR SUCCESS!

Onboarding is an extremely important element to a company's hiring process. Each company will find a different and unique process that works best for its employees, however there are certain elements that should be present across the board. These 4 elements - a clear path after the offer, a great first day, hyperlocal information, and a 90-day plan - will set everyone up for success.

Onboarding is the framework for a successful company, so make sure that you give it its due attention.

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Don't Forget the Candidate Experience is the First Step in Successful Onboarding!

CANDIDATE by UrbanBound helps you provide job candidates with the support they need to make a smart decision about their job offer.

GET A DEMO