

How to create a “Positive Workplace Culture”: Step 2

A very useful, much overlooked effective tool for building a positive workplace culture is the Induction Process. Much more often, onboarding processes are half backed and rushed, often leaving new joiners with an option to either self-figure the workplace culture or sadly fail to effectively fit in. Onboarding is the process of integrating new employees into an organization. Without successful onboarding procedures, companies suffer immensely from high employee turnover rates, loss of productivity and most importantly, cannot build or maintain a Positive and Organisational Culture.

What aspects are important when you develop your Onboarding Programme?

1. Develop and implement an Induction Checklist

An induction checklist is a very useful way of ensuring that all arrangements and preparations have been taken care off before the employee commences service or to ensure that employment information is imparted to new employees when they are likely to be most receptive. It avoids overloading employees with information during the first week of employment.

At the end of the process the induction checklist should be signed by the relevant parties and placed in the employee’s personnel file. Always make sure that all aspects on the checklist have been covered. Appoint a dedicated person, such as the HR Representative, to ensure the checklist is followed from beginning to the end.

2. Start onboarding before the official start date

One way to give your new employee a taste of your culture and to ease the first day work anxiety is to start the onboarding process before they actually set foot in the office.

Start with the employment contract and offer letter. Customise it to make it feel authentic with language that represents your values and gives new hires a taste of what is to come.

Secondly, allow them to complete any paperwork ahead of time. It’s less awkward for them and more efficient for you.

The third part of your preparation should involve relieving some of their anxiety by answering any questions they may have, such as:

- Should I pack my lunch on the first day or is there a team lunch scheduled?
- What time should I arrive at the office?
- Where do I park?
- On what floor is the office? Who should I ask for when I arrive?
- What will I be doing on the first day?
- Do I need to bring my computer, stationery or anything else?
- What should I wear?
- Does the office have coffee?
- Where do I sit?
- Who do I ask if I have questions?

It’s easy to assume that new employees will be able to find the answers to these questions on their own, but you want them to feel welcome and confident on their first day — not socially exhausted, bewildered or embarrassed. Make it easier on them by eliminating the logistical questions they likely have but may be reluctant to ask.

3. A Welcome Pack

If you have an onboarding box or a few welcome gifts, think about how to make it reflect your brand and make them feel special at the same time. It doesn't have to be fancy; it just has to be thoughtful.

4. Tools and Equipment

Preparations should be made for the arrival of the new employee well in advance, for example, arrangements should be made to provide a desk, equipment, parking, stationary, internet connectivity etc. The PC and e-mail address should be set up in advance.

5. Appoint a "Buddy"

A further way of easing the employee's anxiety is to assign someone to take them around the office and meet people. Most new employees tend to be concerned primarily with two matters:

- a) Whether they can do the job and
- b) How they will get along with their new colleagues.

The new employee will want to get to know his/her colleagues and quickly become part of the team. A "buddy" will show the new employee where everything is and make him or her feel welcome and help him/her to settle into the new environment with ease.

6. Introduce the Employee

Before you introduce the company to the employee, introduce the employee to the company for him/her to feel important and valued. Welcomes can be done in different ways depending on the size and operation of your company i.e.:

- Email to all staff which includes an email introducing the new employee.

- Personal introduction with a standard staff meeting in the same start week.
- Personal introduction to each employee.

Ensure the entire workforce know about the new employee, not only about his or her new position, but how he or she fits into the company. You can also make the instruction more personalised by providing a little bit of background about the new employee (with his or her permission in case you want to mention some private info like hobbies and interests etc.)

7. Introduce the Company

Prudent information that must be shared:

- Your company's mission and vision should be introduced early in the onboarding process so that employee gets a feel for the environment before they join the team.
- Performance contracts and measurement.
- Leadership accessibility and regular performance feedback
- Introduce the benefits and resources provided:
 - Access to training and development opportunities
 - Employee wellness, health and support services
 - Work from home and flexible work hours
 - Team Buildings and year end functions or any other functions
 - Bonusses and Increases
 - Reward and Recognition system
 - Payroll process (Travel claims and deductions etc.)
- The outlines of your company culture so that each new employee is aware of what types of behaviour are encouraged or discouraged.



- Company's organogram and explain how and where the employee fits into the organisational structure and further provide him/her with his/her job description or brief summary of duties.
- Let the CEO or one of the executives welcome him or her in person.
- Your company's handbook is the right place to include in-depth explanations and examples of the company. Always include a broken-down explanation of your company's origin story, vision and mission. Give each employee a formal copy of your handbook.
- In the first few months, a new employee should be welcomed into regular one-on-one meetings to learn how they are adjusting during their probation period. This creates an opportunity to ensure that each new employee is adapting and participating in your company culture. Address any issues at this time and decide how well each new employee is settling in and whether or not further training or induction is necessary.
- Do not give too much information on the first day, but also do not give too little information, as they might get the wrong impression.
- Introduce and visit all relevant departments with which the employee will have regular contact in the course of his or her duties.

8. Lunch

Celebration lunch that includes other team members is a great way to welcome your new hire. A setting that is away from the company office, like a local restaurant, can be the perfect venue for relaxed conversation that will help everyone get acquainted.

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Conclusion:

Introduce the company culture at the beginning of employment with your onboarding programme, which will also create a solid foundation for a pleasant working relationship.