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Onboarding for Excellence - Part II

You Hired the Right Person—Now Don't Lose Them

Editor's Note: In the January/February issue of *Board-Room* magazine, Part 1 discussed *Recruiting for Excellence*, presenting best practices to attract top talent. Part 2 focuses on onboarding for excellence, highlighting key strategies to effectively integrate new hires and set them up for long-term success.

You've completed your search, extended an offer to your top candidate, and they've accepted. Now, it's time to onboard them. Many organizations drop the ball during onboarding, especially with senior or executive-level leadership positions. Organizations and even the candidates themselves often assume that putting them through an onboarding process wastes precious time and resources.

In fact, senior and executive-level candidates should be onboarded with the same attention to detail and care as any other role at your club. A formal onboarding process increases the likelihood that new employees will stay past three years by 70 percent.

My experience at NexusTek, a North American Managed Services Provider where I serve as the director of learning and development, substantiates this. Our onboarding program has earned us a World-Class designation for the last 12 month period ending each of the last four quarters, as measured by Net Promoter Score™ (NPS).

NPS is a metric widely used to measure customer sentiment. An NPS score of 80+ is considered a world-class experience. The onboarding best practices listed and paired with others we use throughout the employee lifecycle have helped us reduce staff turnover by 63 percent and raised employee engagement by 88 percent against industry benchmarks.

STEP ONE: PRE-ONBOARDING

There are legal restrictions on having someone perform work before they become an official employee. However, you can still provide your soon-to-be team member with information about benefits, the documents they will need to bring on their first day and links to branding resources for their social media profiles, such as LinkedIn. Their manager (or other relevant person) should send a welcome email outlining what to expect on their first day and first week.

STEP TWO: CREATE A 30/60/90 DAY PLAN

Draft a list of goals, training, orientation and other tasks for your new team member. Be sure they align with your club's goals. This will help you and your new hire understand what is expected of them and track progress during their onboarding. Organize the list into buckets within their first 30, 60, and 90 days.

Items to cover during the first 30 days should include:

- A review of the roles, responsibilities and job description
- Overviews of your club's mission, values and culture
- Introductions to key stakeholders and other constituents
- Relevant tools, processes, or workflow training
- Goals they will be expected to achieve
- Any required legal or regulatory training.

Items during days 31-60 should move the candidate from applying what they learned to starting to contribute independently.

Days 61-90 should focus on the new hire taking full ownership of any initiatives they have and developing a road map for their future at the organization.

If onboarding a new supervisor, ensure you have equipped them with training to help them understand how to lead, coach employees, lead change and manage budgets.

Once you have a draft ready, get feedback from other key stakeholders at your club. Deliver the 30/60/90 Day Plan to new hires on their first day and encourage them to help refine the plan as their onboarding proceeds.

Remember: dividing onboarding activities into buckets of 30, 60, and 90 days is more of a way to organize and order onboarding than an inflexible plan that must be followed. The key point isn't a fixed schedule, but instead to have a logical sequencing of activities. However, some tasks, such as legal or regulatory compliance training, may have firm due dates.

STEP THREE: TEAM INTRODUCTIONS AND REGULAR CHECK-INS

A common assumption about senior and executive new hires is that they will manage their own onboarding. Do not make this mistake! Establish a regular check-in schedule with them. Use their 30/60/90 Day Plan as the agenda for those check-ins.

STEP FOUR: ONBOARD YOUR PROMOTIONS AND TRANSFERS

Promoting from within demonstrates to your club's workforce that you value their contributions to sustaining your club's culture. It helps increase employee engagement, retention and member experience. It can also have a higher ROI than finding a candidate outside your club.

However, do not assume that promoting someone to a new role—especially a leadership position—means you do not need to onboard them. Follow the same guidance by building an onboarding 30/60/90 Day Plan with your promotion or transfer and reviewing it with them regularly. Don't forget to announce the recent promotion to your club's workforce, too!

STEP FIVE: MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING PROGRAM

Connect your employee onboarding program to your club's key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics, such as member experience, member retention and employee turnover. To do this effectively, you'll need to collaborate with your club's stakeholders to understand how other programs impact these KPIs and determine the onboarding program's contribution relative to those other initiatives. Additionally, you can consult your HR partner or club data partner for any relevant benchmark data they may have.

Gather feedback from your new hires about their onboarding experience. You can use a survey tool like SurveyMonkey or Microsoft Forms, the latter included with Microsoft 365. Net Promoter Score is a fantastic way to get good data (e.g., "Based on your experience onboarding, on a scale of 0-10, would you recommend our club to someone seeking employment?") and is included as a question type in Microsoft Forms.

A well-structured onboarding process is crucial for ensuring long-term success for both new hires and your club. Applying best practices such as pre-onboarding, creating a 30/60/90 Day Plan and conducting regular check-ins can foster a smooth transition that promotes engagement, retention and performance.

Whether for senior leadership, internal promotions or other roles, investing in a thoughtful onboarding experience aligns your team with the club's goals and sets the foundation for lasting success. Monitoring the impact of your program through KPIs will further help refine and enhance your onboarding strategy. **BR**



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