



10 PITFALLS TO AVOID WHEN ONBOARDING NEW EMPLOYEES

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The Consequence of a Poor First Impression

Ninety percent of companies correctly believe employees make their decision to stay or leave within the first six months of employment. During this period, employees are in unfamiliar territory and highly alert to signals and experiences, however minor, that will help them navigate their new work environment. In this impressionable state, they are more likely to jump to conclusions about their employer before having all the data to make an informed opinion.

Making a favorable impression during the first six months of employment is critical to employee retention, engagement and productivity. Most employers, however, focus on making good first impressions during the recruitment process and neglect to think about what will happen once the employee accepts the job and arrives ready for work.

Research shows that employees who attended a structured orientation program are 69% more likely to remain with the company after three years than those who do not. Organizations with structured onboarding programs also enjoy a 60% year-over-year improvement in revenue per full-time employee and a 63% year-over-year improvement in customer satisfaction.

If you are going to spend money and time acquiring top talent and paying them to work, why not prepare them to succeed and stay?



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There is no one-size-fits all approach to employee onboarding. Every situation is unique and an effective onboarding program will have direct alignment to a company's long-term strategy and goals. However, the following pitfalls to avoid apply to all conditions:

1. Not having a clean and ready workstation on Day One
2. Assuming a new hire cannot be productive in his or her job from Day One
3. Cramming 20 hours of information into four dull hours of orientation
4. Neglecting the importance of cultural adaptation to the new hire's success
5. Ignoring the onboarding needs of mid- and senior level employees
6. Relying on organizational charts, rather than cultural norms and behavior, to explain lines of communication
7. Failing to address generational needs and differences in the onboarding process
8. Starting new hires when their supervisor is absent
9. Running a disorganized program
10. Adopting a "sink or swim" approach because it worked for you!

The Bottom Line

Employees who feel challenged, empowered and acknowledged during the first year of employment will reward companies with loyalty and productivity. Those who feel overlooked or marginalized will eventually leave for opportunities that better meet their needs. To what extent does your onboarding process fit the needs and expectations of your top talent?