

## 9.10: Methods of Onboarding

### Learning Outcomes

- Evaluate various methods of onboarding



Onboarding approaches range from formal, structured programs to a hands-off policy, where employees are left to figure out cultural norms, organization dynamics and performance expectations on their own. As would be expected, research shows that organizations that engage in a formal onboarding process are more effective than those that don't. Research shows that effectiveness translates to both employee productivity and retention. In a SHRM article titled "Don't Underestimate the Importance of Good Onboarding," author and career counselor Arlene Hirsch cited the following statistics<sup>[1]</sup>:

- Organizations with a standard onboarding process experienced 50% greater new-hire productivity
- New employees who went through a structured onboarding program were 58% more likely to be with the organization after three years
- New employees who experienced a great onboarding process were 69% more likely to stay with a company for three years

### ✓ Onboarding at L'Oreal

For perspective on best practices, consider L'Oreal: The global beauty company's onboarding process consists of a two-year, six-part integration program called "L'Oreal Fit." The stated aim: "to develop successful, committed and mutually beneficial relationships with each of our employees."<sup>[2]</sup>

The L'Oreal Fit program includes:

- Training and roundtable discussions
- Meetings with key insiders
- On-the-job learning supported by line management
- Individual mentoring and HR support
- Field and product experiences such as site visits and shadowing programs.

Author, speaker and marketing instructor Stan Phelps refers to onboarding as the first step in employee engagement, noting that "there is no better place to start applying G.L.U.E. (giving little unexpected extras). His premise: "employees are the key drivers of customer experience and that 'Happy Employees Create Happy Customers.'"<sup>[3]</sup> In a draft version of his book on employee engagement, Phelps highlights examples of companies who are getting onboarding right.



One of the companies that Phelps mentions briefly is W.L. Gore & Associates, who assigns every new associate a sponsor who is responsible for coaching and mentoring the new employee and it committed to his or her success.

For perspective on the mentoring point (also an aspect of L'Oreal's onboarding program), SHRM's online editor/manager Roy Maurer cited research by the Aberdeen Group that found that "high-performing organizations are nearly two-and-a-half times more likely than lower-performing employers to assign a mentor or coach during the onboarding process."<sup>[4]</sup>

#### ✓ OnBoarding at CustomInk

Another company profiled is custom t-shirt company CustomInk, who uses the onboarding process to both demonstrate and reinforce culture. On arrival, new employees are given a blank journal to record their onboarding experiences, observations and any questions. They are also asked to record instances that illustrate Customlink's values in action. After 30 days, the new employees gather to share their findings. As Phelps notes: "making new hires accountable for noticing how their colleagues and managers live those values every day helps bring those behavior to life."<sup>[5]</sup>

#### ✓ Onboarding at Veson Nautical

A final example is commercial maritime software provider Veson Nautical, who uses online tools to facilitate the assimilation process. The company's "FastStart" program uses an online tool that allows managers and new employees to rank or score relevant job-related skills and guides the manager and employee through a discussion of differences. As Sarah Taffee, the company's director of human resources and organization effectiveness explains: "The actual score doesn't matter. It's purely a way of getting up to speed quickly and building the relationship quickly."<sup>[6]</sup> For additional perspective on onboarding and employee engagement, view Phelps's SlideShare presentation titled "[Green Goldfish—Beyond Dollars: 15 Ways to Drive Employee Engagement](#)."<sup>[3]</sup>

BambooHR's Peterson recommends that human resource management check-in with new employees on regular intervals—specifically, one-month and 3-6 months—to ensure that the new employee is thriving. This is also an opportunity to provide feedback. A second check-in is advised prior to the end of six months—a significant stay or leave decision point. Peterson observes that HR can have a significant impact on that choice, commenting that "sometimes you just have to show that you sincerely care."<sup>[7]</sup> Although different companies have different timetables, employees are expected to be fully up to speed by the end of their first year and the training emphasis is likely to shift to continuous learning and development and career management.

#### ? Practice Question

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/18163>

1. Hirsch, Arlene. "[Don't Underestimate the Importance of Good Onboarding](#)." Society for Human Resource Management. August 10, 2017. Accessed July 17, 2019. ←
2. Sunny, Akash. "Onboarding New Employees: Maximizing Success." Medium. July 1, 2019. Accessed July 17, 2019. ←
3. Phelps, Stan. "[Green Goldfish – Beyond Dollars: 15 Ways to Drive Employee Engagement and Reinforce Culture](#)." LinkedIn SlideShare. March 25, 2013. Accessed July 17, 2019. ←
4. Maurer, Roy. "[New Employee Onboarding Guide](#)." Society for Human Resource Management. Accessed July 17, 2019. ←
5. Phelps, Stan. "Green Goldfish – Beyond Dollars: 15 Ways to Drive Employee Engagement and Reinforce Culture." ←
6. Berg, Jackie. "[8 More Onboarding Programs We Love](#)." Brilliant Ink. August 15, 2016. Accessed July 17, 2019. ←

7. Maurer, Roy. "New Employee Onboarding Guide." Society for Human Resource Management. ↵

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