

NEW HIRE PRE-BOARDING & ON-BOARDING

“One out of every 25 new employees quits on their very first day.”

Modern Survey (2011)

Engaging your new hire from the first day and beyond is more important than any other thing you do.

With a utility belt of proven talent acquisition tools and hiring best practices, this guide will equip you with the skills to rock that onboarding process. Once empowered with these strategic solutions, our heroes can then execute world-class hiring cycles, reduce hiring costs, and increase their company's bottom line by hiring the best talent in the market.

You know, basically saving the world.

INTRODUCTION

We have created this guide to help our HR business partners and Hiring Managers facilitate awesome hiring cycles and engage new hires from the moment the offer is accepted through the end of their first week of work and beyond. This guide's purpose is to help companies meet their hiring and business objectives and most importantly, KEEP YOUR NEW HIRES.

The proven processes and concepts that are included in this toolkit are used by Switchgear, and modeled after some of the most successful recruiting departments in companies globally. We've used these ideas ourselves to drop our own turnover rate from more than 30% in 2015 to 0% in 2016. We believe this new pre-boarding and on-boarding process helped us keep everyone active and engaged when new people joined our team.

It is our desire that the information in this toolkit will help our partners and our recruiting teams synergistically work together to accomplish the mission of seamlessly on-boarding new employees.

“31% of people have quit a job within the first six months.”

BambooHR (2014)

WHY ARE THEY LEAVING?

According to a 2014 survey by BambooHR, here are the top five reasons U.S. workers gave for leaving new jobs shortly after being hired:

- Changed mind on work type (in other words, they were still deciding on their career path and it turns out they didn't like the one they'd chosen)
- The work was different than they expected (in other words, the job description didn't accurately reflect the position)
- My boss was a jerk (so the hiring process didn't filter for culture and communication styles)
- Didn't receive enough training (in other words, employees don't want to be set up to fail or thrown to the wolves), and
- The job wasn't fun (in other words, the job description failed new hires again).

IT'S TIME TO RE-THINK YOUR ON-BOARDING PROCESS

The talent acquisition landscape has changed. Gone are the days when people were thankful to have a job, any job. Today, many new employees of every generation are looking for something more than just a paycheck. They want and need to be respected, to live a balanced life and to make a difference.

The way employees are treated from offer to their first day (and beyond) is important; employees are paying attention to how they are treated during this process. They are forming opinions about their choices before they walk in the door on their first day.

A few years ago, we realized we had done ourselves a huge disservice. We were growing quickly and needed “butts in seats” fast. So instead of taking the advice we give our clients (hire slowly, fire fast) unfortunately we hired fast. And we paid the price. We ended up with people who didn't fit our culture and weren't behind our mission. We failed ourselves and the employees who stuck it out until the black cloud was gone. But we have learned a very valuable lesson. And we changed.

Now we utilize an in-depth interview process called TopGrading (want to know more about that? [CLICK HERE](#)). Once we make our offer, we focus on Connection, Context, Compliance and Culture from the moment we have an offer acceptance. We didn't come up with this concept, it came from Kevin Sheridan, author of *Building a Magnetic Culture* and *The Virtual Manager*. We just took his concepts and made them our own.

Connection: a person connected with another especially by marriage, kinship, or common interest

CONNECTION

At work the connection is common interest. For us and for the majority of people in the workplace, this is personal relationships with our teammates. When a group of coworkers all happen to like each other quite a bit, that team synergizes and communication becomes easier and faster. People give each other the benefit of the doubt and work in the best interests of the team, not just themselves.

Context is the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed.

CONTEXT

To us context means, clarifying expectations and explaining why these expectations and goals matter. Simon Sinek has one of the most popular TEDTalks of all time, titled [“How Great Leaders Inspire Action”](#). When people understand their value to the organization and why what they do matters, they can make better decisions and are more engaged in their jobs. Simon says “Great companies don’t hire skilled people and motivate them; they hire already motivated people and inspire them.”

COMPLIANCE

That’s the boring stuff. Paperwork, I-9, handbook reviews, etc. You know—the paperwork you have to complete to get paid, get in the building and keep the Department of Labor happy. Yes, it is necessary and required by law, but it is unbelievably boring.

CULTURE

This is the most fun! Everyone talks about their culture and what it means to work at their company, but to us, culture is more than a sign on the wall – we live it every day. Your company’s culture is everything from traditions and habits in the office; communication styles of your employees; and how people feel when they walk in the front door. Don’t think culture matters? A quick perusal of GlassDoor.com reviews will tell you quickly that it does. Ideal candidates have walked away from what looked on paper to be their dream job, simply because they couldn’t imagine spending 40-60 hours a week there.

Part of our culture is making people feel like they fit in immediately, that they are welcomed and accepted!

PRE-BOARDING STEPS

Offer made & acceptance

The offer should come from the hiring manager - not HR. Sure HR can be present and a part of the offer process but the candidate wants to talk with the person they would report to - not someone in HR that they might only see a few times a year. The offer should be made verbally first, then followed up with a written offer outlining all the details that were covered, including expectations of performance. HR can then walk candidates through all the benefits information and company policies like PTO, profit sharing, etc. and answer any questions they may have.

Notice

The candidate now must give notice, and that can be an emotional and stressful conversation. The hiring manager should know when “Giving Notice” day is, so they can touch base with their soon-to-be new employee the day before and the day of to make sure everything went okay. Encourage them, let them know you know it is going to be tough but you are so excited they are joining **YOUR** team!

This may seem like an extraneous step, but this additional communication and caring is your company’s best defense against losing your new hire to a counteroffer from their old company, putting you back at Square One. It is absolutely worth doing and sets the stage for deeper trust and better communication in the working relationship.

Welcome Email to New Employee

Okay, yes this email can come from HR and can be a formal email. It’s a welcome message letting them know how excited everyone is that this new person is joining the team. It gives them a baseline of what to expect on their first day and provides all the company documents they are going to need. This email can include dress codes, policies, handbooks, non-competes or employment agreements, etc. It also includes a digital copy of all compliance paperwork they will complete, to give them a head start before they arrive and get to work.

Internal Stuff

Requisition the computer, phone, business cards, parking lot pass, and door key-whatever they will need so they arrive on or before Day ONE. Set up log-ins for their computers, set up their desk with pens, paper-all the fun supplies. Post New Hire Informational Sheet around the office. *What is this New Hire Informational Sheet you ask?* It’s a paper introduction that can be hung around the office or in the break room to let people within the company get to know the new person beforehand. It can be as silly as you want to make it!

Sounds like a no brainer to have their desk ready, right? Well, it’s not. Nothing makes a new person feel extraneous and unimportant like not even having the tools they need to do their job.

Update LinkedIn

Now that you are 100% sure they have given notice (and you have their permission). Update your company’s LI page by saying we can’t wait for So-And-So to join the team on Monday. Put it out there that the company is excited and proud of its newest team member. Encourage their future teammates to connect and introduce themselves if they have not already.

First Day Email to New Employee

This one is from the hiring manager again. This is going to be a detailed description of what your new employee can expect on their first day - everything from where to park, what time to arrive, and the schedule for the day or week. (BONUS POINTS IF YOU TAKE THEM TO LUNCH).

More Internal Stuff

Now that the desk is set and ready, have their teammates write little post-it notes or cards and leave them for the new employee - things like "Welcome to the Team! Glad to have you here!" Anything they want in order to make the person feel very welcomed on their first day. Our internal new hire paperwork includes a "Favorites" sheet so we can have a bowl of their favorite candy and one of their favorite sodas on hand.

ON-BOARDING

Hooray! They are here for their first day! So all the work is over right? **WRONG!** Your work has just begun - now you have to keep them engaged.

First Day

Stick to the schedule! Make sure their first day is spent as much as possible with their hiring manager and their team. Get them started on real work as quickly as possible. Don't make the mistake of having this day be their HR day, or parking them in front of a training module somewhere. That can wait till day 2. Get them engaged and involved immediately.

Every Day for the First 2 Weeks

Involve the new hire as quickly as you can to meetings that they would regularly attend, introducing all the meeting attendees and explain both the attendees' functions and the new hire's role. Make sure they know who they would need to go to for what, for instance, who has the key to the office supply cabinet or who fixes the printer. At the end of each day, have them check in with their hiring manager - we use a quick 4 question email. We do this email for the first 90 days, so that newly hired individuals can give us feedback at the end of every day and we can adjust and correct as soon as possible.

Our "magic" four questions are:

- 1.) What did you learn today?
- 2.) What did you do well?
- 3.) What can you do better?
- 4.) What do you need from me to support you?

So what's after the first 1-2 weeks?

Engagement. As a manager that is your job, all day, every day. Communicate the goal and the plan to get there. Allocate resources. Give feedback. Keep people on track. Ensure trust and communication. Grow and develop your team. That's the secret sauce to keeping your employees engaged.