

Methodology brings onboarding success

by Bob Rodgers

In the recruitment industry, the word “onboarding” means just that – bringing a new-hire “on board” a company and making certain not only that he fulfills his job duties, but that he melds into the corporate climate as well.

Employee retention is most vulnerable in the first year of employment, and a well-planned integration system can be your number-



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one aid to making your new hire a valuable asset and loyal employee for years to come.

There are three areas that together make up a company’s “corporate culture.” Successful integration into these areas is vital for your onboarding success.

that employees leave their jobs is due to dissatisfaction with management. A new hire must be comfortable seeing her manager and, better still, her manager’s supervisor.

Another beneficial aid is the assignment of calendar-dated goals.

Provide written, time-sensitive goals. Tell the new hire what you expect her to accomplish in this role within the first 30, 60 and 90 days, and provide feedback at each deadline.

First, a face-to-face meeting is in order, at which time your company’s expectations for the hire are addressed. All expectations need to be clarified from the outset of the relationship, from projects to projection of attitude.

The area of expectations can be subdivided into that which is appropriate and that which is politically correct within the corporate culture – murky areas indeed.

In some offices, for example, an employee who eats lunch at her desk may be viewed as “dedicated,” “available,” or “hard-working.” In other offices, this same employee may be viewed as “cheap” or “sloppy.”

Communication may be another arena in which to consider appropriate actions and behavior. Do employees gather in the morning by the coffee pot for a few moments of chit-chat before heading to their desks? If so, and your new hire misses these gatherings, she may be viewed as “arrogant” or “unfriendly.”

Also, a new hire must know if she is expected to keep her PDA on during the evenings, overnights and on weekends. Should she expect calls from co-workers during “off” hours? If so, within how many minutes is she expected to respond?

Perhaps the murkiest of all waters are office politics. This is an area of particular importance for a new hire on a senior or decision-making level, yet this information is mostly unspoken and implied.

An efficient onboarding program will, above all, contain an “open door” policy for management. Studies show that the number-one reason

This will motivate the hire to enmesh herself into the company’s culture.

Also, consider providing your new hire with a mentor. Select an employee within your company who models behavior appropriate to your company’s climate, and have that person available to your new employee for at least six months. A trusted and valued mentor will be especially helpful in guiding the new hire toward implicitly understanding office politics and other embedded information.

Additionally, consider sending the new hire on an office rotation, where she spends time with employees from each department, yet still works at his same status level. Nature should take its course, and the attitude and actions that are expected and appropriate should be absorbed naturally.

By implementing a clear-cut onboarding method, you can expect your new hire to become an employee who delivers defined, measurable goals in addition to less defined, cultural ones as well.

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