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Remote

Onboarding

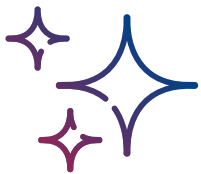
Remote Onboarding - Getting it right the first time

Remote working has been an area of significant interest and growth over the last few years. However, when it comes to delivering tailored and effective onboarding practices for our remote workers, many companies are still behind the curve.

With the sudden need for large sections of the workforce to work from home, it is even more important that everyone has the processes in place to offer a seamless and positive onboarding experience. It is widely recognised that the process of onboarding can make – or break – those crucial first few days, weeks and months for an employee. It is the famous “first impression”.

According to CIPHR, HR software provider “employees are 69% more likely to stay with a company for three years if they experience great onboarding... further research that suggests up to 20% of staff turnover happens during individuals’ first 45 days with an organisation”. Investment in onboarding is critical to build a happy, engaged and productive workforce.

Many expect that they can simply mirror their in-office onboarding with minor ‘adjustments’. This approach won’t offer your employees a great experience and fails to account for all the differences. So, are you doing everything you can to effectively onboard your remote employees? Is it time for a new approach?



What are the benefits of an onboarding program?

Rolled out successfully, an onboarding program can offer a huge range of well documented benefits. If you offer remote working and are still entrenched in in-office onboarding, then it is time to re-evaluate.

Offering virtual onboarding shows your candidates your commitment and ability to support remote working, this in turn will:

- Immediately improve the overall employee experience
- Enhance employee engagement and commitment to your business
- Reduce time to productivity for new employees
- Increase employee retention which in turn offers associated cost saving
- Improve job performance and enhanced best practices such as collaborative working, innovation, and team work
- Boost employee happiness and reduce work-based stress!



Great onboarding starts before the employment offer

If you want to really maximise the benefit of your investment in your onboarding process, then you must embed it early, and as part of your recruitment process! This is especially true for remote workers.

It is key that you communicate the job role, hours of work, scope and output from the moment you go to market with the position. Remember to take time to keep your careers pages up-to-date and provide clear communications and feedback when interviewing. The physical distinction between onsite and off-site often means that identifying the clear roles are more important to remote workers.

Update role description and responsibilities

Online / website careers information current and update

Interviewee given details around role expectations and accountability



On acceptance of offer

Some element of paperwork is unavoidable, but that doesn't mean you have to think in terms of actual "paper". Consider using a certified virtual signing system, such as DocuSign, which is legally binding and something that Spring and the Adecco Group have invested in.

Make sure the documentation complies with your remote workers location - if they are based internationally, there may be proof of eligibility to work, alongside differences in tax or payroll. We have access to international legal experts who can ensure you stay compliant, wherever your remote employee is based.



Pre-boarding! Make people feel good before their first day

Making newcomers feel welcome and comfortable, as well as motivated to join, is a very good reason to enhance your onboarding. Don't wait until their first day; take the opportunity to make them feel welcome and valued. Pre-boarding should introduce employees to your business practices and its culture, making them feel a part of it! Performing these vital admin tasks ensures those first few days go smoothly.

The advantages of refining your preboarding?

- Boost speed, confidence and competence, helping your staff bed in quicker and feel part of the team.

We recommend a **welcome email** which includes some (or all) of the below:

- An itinerary - even if that's only for first few days. It's key to help your employee settle into their role and familiarise themselves with their day-to-day tasks.
- Contact details - key people, line managers and HR.
- Your business handbook or early access to your employee intranet (potentially just key areas) enabling your new starter to access your culture, vision and values.
- Provide FAQs – answer some of the core questions – when they will receive their equipment, common benefits, working hours, dress code etc.



Onboarding checklist for remote employees

We encourage the gesture of sending a 'Welcome to the team' pack. It doesn't have to be costly and can be easily posted - sometimes even a small gesture makes a big difference. Suggestions we love are pens, note books, signed welcome cards from the team, multiway chargers or wireless mice. All are a good starting point. Then it is down to the nitty gritty!

Documentation

Ensure you have a strategy and technology to make sure these can be signed or verified where necessary. We invest heavily in our remote process documents, to support the following exchange:

Employee contract

Tax documents

Benefits

Health, life, and disability insurance

Retirement plans

Employee handbook acknowledgement

Copy of ID & Right to Work

Collect personal information for HR including home address, phone number, emergency contact, bank details

IT set up

The ideal is that you set up IT equipment before dispatching to your employee. However, if the equipment is going directly to the employee, create step-by-step instructions, or set up a virtual induction meeting with a member of your IT team.

*Checklist on next page.

Checklist

Order necessary equipment or tools required- laptop, mobile phone, printer

Set up necessary accounts for key IT systems, such as – email, CRM, cloud storage access

IP Assignment (if applicable)

HR or payroll systems

Office365

Determine WiFi needs. Will your employee have sufficient connection, or will they require VPN access?

Communication channels (e.g. Skype, MS Teams, Slack)

Things to consider

Do you already use services that will allow your internal teams to remotely access essential tools and applications etc? This can also really enhance the process.

Can you synchronise passwords to avoid the burden of remembering multiple logins and password?

Don't assume that you employee will know how to use all of your products. Book software inductions and offer training.

Employee policies

Make sure you provide the following:

Employee contract

Tax documents

Benefits



The First Day

For remote employees, the first day is very important. Removing the face-to-face engagement or the 'physical' aspect of onboarding can be daunting. The key to success is to set up regular points of contact throughout the day and clearly outline expectations.

First day welcome email!

Some recommendations of what this can include:

- Welcome video for new hires
- Introduction of company values
- Review of the team, including things like time zones and availability windows
- Schedule of daily stand-ups with team lead/manager (usually for first two weeks only)
- Agree some casual check-ins to make sure new hires feel supported
- A dedicated sponsor or mentor. This makes it much easier for your new starter to reach out with any questions

Office tour

Give your remote employee a virtual tour if you can. Give them an idea of layout, where people sit and where key processes within your business occur. This brings your organisation to life!

Introduction to the team

Set up a video call team meeting to introduce everyone. Get everyone to give an overview of their role. It can be useful to provide an organisation chart too.

Check the IT systems all work

Offer a helping hand to make sure everything is set up before any calls are scheduled.

Conclusion

So, are you ready to tailor your onboarding for your remote workers? Here are the key pointers for taking it to the next level:

Don't wait for contracts to be signed to start thinking about onboarding - the best onboarding starts when you write the role description

Prioritise the employee experience

Keep it simple and make sure it is clearly communicated

Personalise the experience as much as possible

Ask your new starters what they thought and continue to improve

A background image showing two women in an office setting. One woman is pointing at a document on a desk, and the other is smiling and looking at the document. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.

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