

6 Elements of a Successful Employee Onboarding Process



Prioritize Your Employee Onboarding

The cost of bringing on a new hire can incur a number of expenses, including recruitment fees, benefits enrollment and supplies. In addition, your company will lose productivity as it finalizes the training of a new hire, potentially for weeks or even months.

Your company needs to prioritize limiting turnover and engaging long-lasting, well-educated employees. Fortunately, a strategic onboarding process can support long-term employees who are invested in your company.

When new employees are engaged in an inclusive onboarding process, there can be significant positive results, including:

- 82 percent increase in employee retention.*
- 54 percent higher employee engagement**
- 70 percent increase in productivity.**

Take the time to invest in your onboarding process now to help create efficiencies—and save your company from the high cost of turnover.



Onboarding Isn't Orientation

Employers often confuse onboarding with orientation. Orientation is an event; it's something that happens during the first day or two on the job for a new hire. Onboarding, however, is a process that aligns an employee with the organization's culture, brand and business objectives.

A well-managed onboarding program begins the moment an offer is extended and ends when the new hire is classified as a fully functioning employee. In many cases, it can take up to a full year. That may seem like a long time but when you consider that an effective onboarding process can pay off in successful, long-lasting employees, it's well worth the time and energy you'll invest.

No two organizations are alike, and your onboarding process should be tailored to reflect your business and fit your needs. There are six elements to focus on to make your program successful, though:

1. Preboard
2. Create a great first day
3. Implement a mentor system
4. Set goals, check in and plan for the future
5. Make training memorable
6. Get feedback

In the following pages, we'll take a closer look at each one of these elements and outline how a learning management system (LMS) can support a better onboarding experience.

Onboarding is a process that aligns an employee with the organization's culture, brand and business objectives.

1. Preboard

Your new hire is excited to work for you, so start by supplying the basics before the first day.

Many employers have a preboarding plan as part of their onboarding process. They'll send new hires an information packet that includes everything employees should know when they start. The packet may contain standard forms and business information, but some employers go beyond the need-to-know basics.

NEED TO KNOW

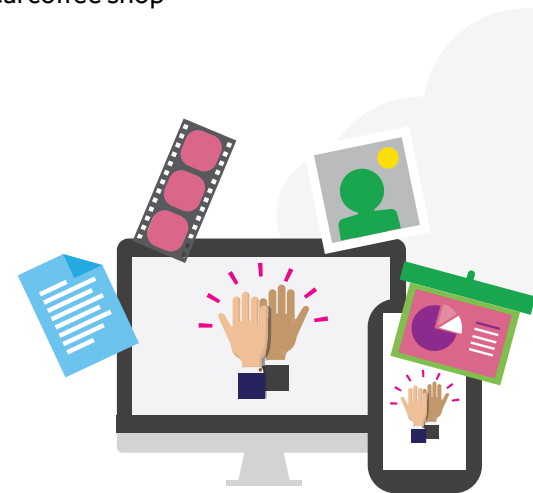
- Company hours
- Office location
- Manager name and contact information
- Parking details
- Employee forms
- What to bring on the first day (driver's license, Social Security card, bank info)

GOOD TO KNOW

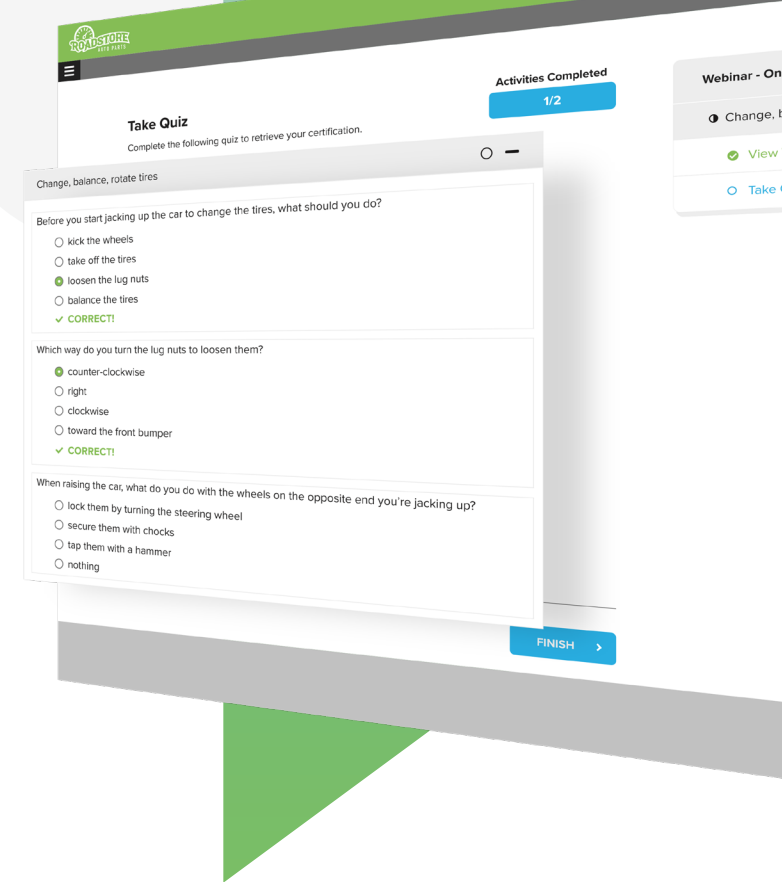
- Company social channels
- Company website URL
- Answers to frequently asked questions
- Lunch hotspots
- Traffic patterns and road construction updates
- Names and pictures of team members
- Company history

SPECIAL EXTRAS

- Gift card to a local coffee shop
- Company gear



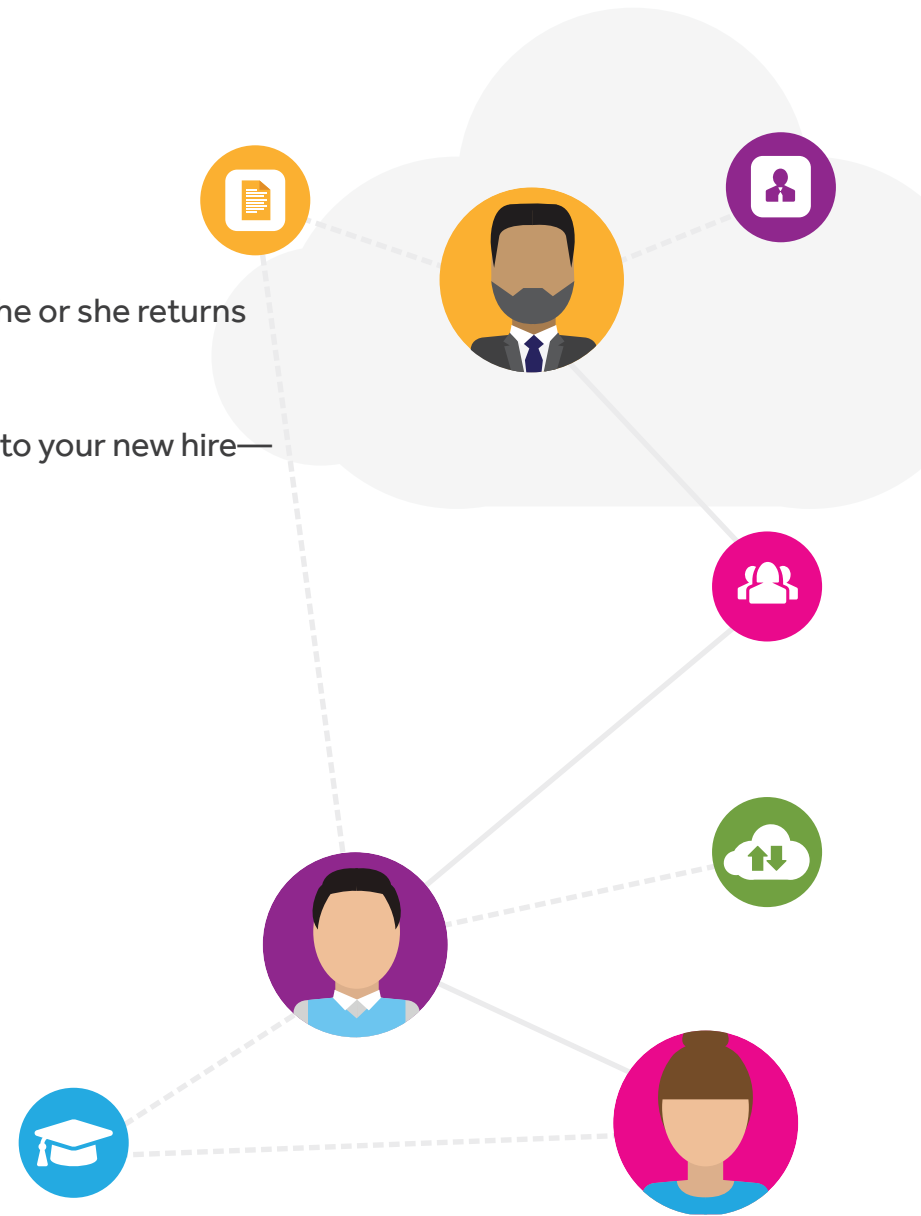
Part of the preboarding process can also include providing new hires a link to the company's LMS. Within the LMS, you can set up fun quizzes or learning modules to help the hire get familiar with the company, its employees and its culture. Make sure to focus on making these initial LMS quizzes fun and informative instead of grading your new hires. Rather, consider these to be value-adds that help acclimate them to the company before the first day.



2. Create a Great First Day

The first question your new employee will probably hear as soon as he or she returns home is, "How was your first day?"

Establishing the right tone on the first day sends the right message to your new hire—we're organized, we're efficient and we're invested in your success.



SET THE STAGE

The first way to set the right tone is to have the employee's desk, supplies and all reference materials needed ready to go. Here's a quick checklist of the basic first day necessities:

- Working computer and monitor
- Business portal (intranet) log-in
- Access to email and instant messaging systems
- Working phone with instructions on how to use it
- Access to an employee directory
- Instructions on how to find files on the company server or within the digital asset management (DAM) platform
- Access to additional learning modules within the LMS focused on company processes and workflows
- Plenty of office supplies

ORGANIZE THE AGENDA

Having a well-planned agenda can make the first day more enjoyable and limit the time spent just making a new hire read employee manuals and other company files. Try to introduce the hire to his or her new coworkers and the job role—then maybe even include an office tour.

Don't forget to remind your team members that a new employee will be joining you and encourage them to stop by and introduce themselves.



Sample Agenda

- 8 A.M. MEET YOUR MANAGER AND SETTLE IN YOUR OFFICE SPACE**
- 9 A.M. TEAM WELCOME**
- 10 A.M. LEARN ABOUT THE COMPANY (PRESENTATION AND VIDEO)**
- 11 A.M. OFFICE TOUR**
- NOON NEW HIRE LUNCH**
- 1 P.M. GET COMFORTABLE WITH YOUR TECH**
- 2 P.M. Q&A WITH TOP MANAGEMENT**
- 3 P.M. HR TASKS**
- 4 P.M. WRAP UP AND ESTABLISH SHORT-TERM GOALS**

3. Implement a Mentor System

Despite its name, the workplace isn't just a place where we work—it's a place where we socialize, develop team relationships and form support networks. In fact, our work colleagues often become a family away from home.

Connecting your new hire with a seasoned office mentor will help smooth out and speed up the onboarding process. The best mentors will not only be a go-to person who can give help with job-related questions and ideas, but they can also acquaint the hire with other colleagues and area hot spots.

Mentoring, of course, helps the new hire navigate the new job role, but it also has important benefits for your organization. New hires who have a mentor's support are much more likely to become long-term employees.

Consider integrating a more in-depth learning component to your mentorship program, as well. You can have each mentor set up unique learning modules within the LMS to provide deeper insight into their specific department or expertise. This can help curate ongoing learning for your new hires as they work through the mentorship program. It can also gauge how engaged they are with the mentorship program by following up on what they've learned or taken away from the program.

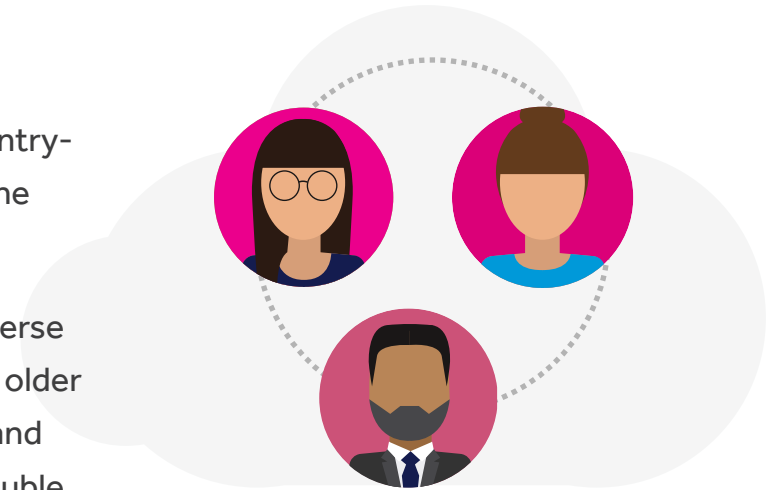
**67% of
businesses
have reported
an increase
in their
productivity
due to business
mentoring.**

—Mentorsme

THE CHANGING LOOK OF MENTORSHIP

You may think of a mentorship as a match between a senior leader and an entry-level associate. As the look of the workplace has changed, though, so has the look of mentorship programs.

New types of mentorships such as co-mentoring, group mentoring and reverse mentoring are starting to emerge. In particular, reverse mentoring—where older executives are mentored by younger employees on topics like technology and social media—is becoming increasingly popular. This trend pays off with double benefits: Executives can stay on top of popular trends, while younger employees feel connected and invested because they are personally contributing to the improvement of their company.



PRO TIP: Check in with the new hire's mentor, as well as the new hire. This can provide valuable insight on how your new employee is feeling about and functioning in the new position.

4. Make Goals, Check in and Plan for the Future

As previously mentioned, onboarding is a process, not an event. A solid process requires an equally solid plan.

Establish clear goals for the employee's first week, month, quarter and year. Routinely evaluate those goals as the new hire progresses to make sure they're both relevant and achievable. Goals should be adjustable so they can fit the needs of both the organization and the new employee.

If new employees are expected to complete formal training, consider utilizing an LMS. Within the LMS, you can organize training materials and guide employees through a self-study process. Integrating an LMS into the training process ensures that your new hires have access to all the training information and materials they need and that any training can be done at a convenient time. If the LMS includes a monitoring function, it can enable supervisors and human resources managers to be updated on progress and performance.



WEEKLY CHECK-INS

Some companies rely on the 90-day review to formally check in with the new employee. With a high new hire turnover rate being a problem for many companies, though, more frequent check-ins are recommended. They're a great way to eliminate any confusion and ensure you're on the same page. Consider informal weekly one-on-ones just to check-in and get an update on how your employee is settling into the new role and routine.

You can also consider setting up a quiz within your LMS to check-in with new hires, allowing them to answer the questions as time permits.



Goals should be adjustable so they can fit the needs of both the organization and the new employee.

SAMPLE CHECK-IN QUESTIONS

1. Is this job what you expected? Why or why not?
2. Do you have everything you need to work productively?
3. What's the best part of the job so far?
4. Has anything surprised you about your role or the company?
5. What do you wish you understood better?
6. How do you feel about your team and coworkers?
7. Do you feel "out of the loop" about anything?
8. Is there anything about the job or the company that's still unclear?
9. Is there anything that you feel we should have provided that we didn't?
10. Has your training been helpful? Should we add or change anything?
11. Is there anything we can do to make your transition easier?

MILESTONE MEETINGS

Use 30-day, 90-day and annual meetings to review the goals you established and assess progress your new hire has made.

Remember, though, that goals can and should be adjusted as tasks change. On the following page, you'll find a template you can use to note goals and deadlines and review the results.

MILESTONE GOALS

Employee's Name:

Manager's Name:

Date Submitted:

30-DAY GOALS

What do you want to achieve?	When do you want to achieve it?	Review of what was achieved:

90-DAY GOALS

What do you want to achieve?	When do you want to achieve it?	Review of what was achieved:

FIRST-YEAR GOALS

What do you want to achieve?	When do you want to achieve it?	Review of what was achieved:

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

What do you want to achieve?	When do you want to achieve it?	Review of what was achieved:

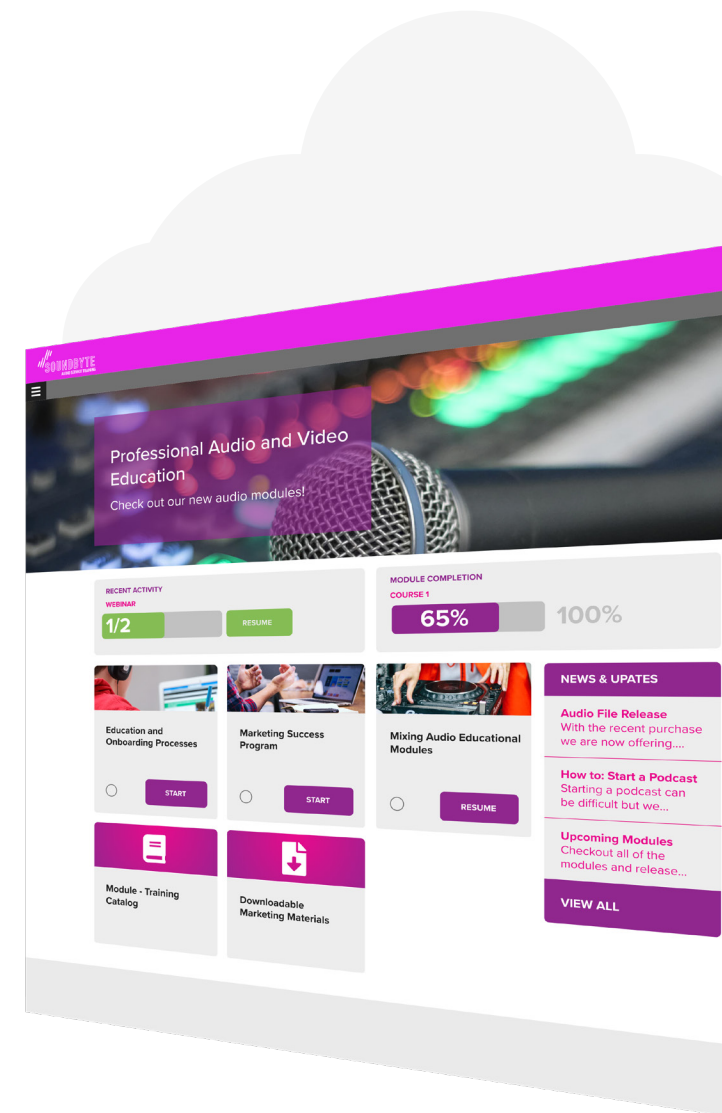
5. Make Training Memorable

What's the best way to know if your new hire training program is effective? Go through the process yourself!

Read the manuals, watch the videos, take the exams—whatever your training process entails, make sure you have personally experienced all facets of it before presenting the process to new hires.

STOCK THE TRAINING TOOLBOX

Equip new employees with an information packet that shows the process flow, procedure notes or whatever other reminders you think would be helpful to them. Providing your new employees with this information packet will allow them to study during off hours. Plus, it gives the new employee a resource to check before asking you for clarification.



SET AN ACHIEVABLE PACE

Start training off slowly and be flexible. When you overwhelm new employees, you make it harder for them to retain information. Check in frequently during the training process to ensure the pace is appropriate. If it seems like the new hire is overwhelmed, slow the process down. Conversely, if your new hire is having no trouble with the training pace, speed up the process to ensure he or she is working at the appropriate level.

LET YOUR EMPLOYEES TAKE THE REIGNS

Once your new hires are comfortable with what they've learned, challenge them. Present them with achievable tasks and responsibilities and let them run with it. Many people learn better by doing than by listening or taking notes. Generally, new employees like to be busy, and this is the best way to make a new person comfortable with your company's processes and the job role.

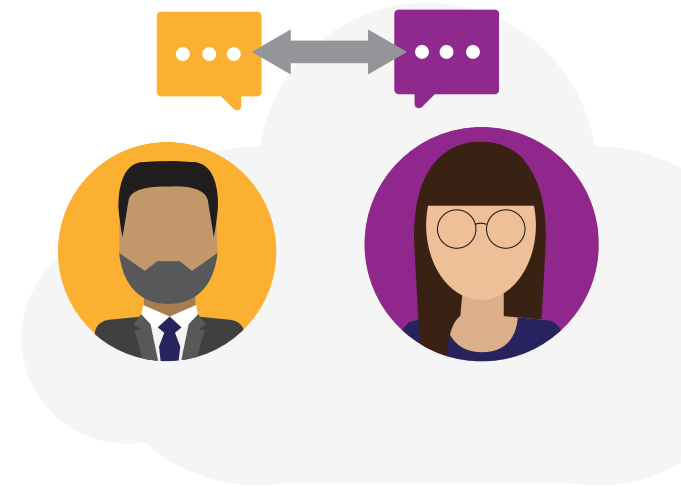
One final note: Be available—but don't hover. A little trust can go a long way toward a satisfied employee.

PRO TIP: Don't forget to train on company values, vision and goals. Introducing this information early in the onboarding process is a great way to help establish the right kind of attitude and culture.

6. Get Feedback

Even if your organization has an open-door policy, employees—especially new hires—may hesitate to use it. They may feel unsure if their input is relevant since they haven't been at the company long, or they may feel like they “don't want to make waves.” In any case, don't count on them coming to you with input. Make it a point to ask for feedback, both early in the onboarding process and later on, perhaps during the 30- or 90-day check in.

Feedback of any type can be valuable during onboarding and beyond but for measurable results, consider creating a survey within your company's LMS for easy access by applicable employees and those reviewing the responses. The following page outlines sample survey questions.



Make it a point to ask for feedback, both early in the onboarding process and later on, perhaps during the 30- or 90-day check in.

ORIENTATION SURVEY

1 Agree
 2 Somewhat Agree
 3 Neutral
 4 Somewhat Disagree
 5 Disagree

My new hire orientation was engaging and useful					
My orientation process was appropriate in length					
I have a good understanding of our company and its departments					
I have good understanding of our company's products/ services					
I know how to use the business portal (intranet)					
I know how to use and manage digital files and media					
My interactions with coworkers met my expectations					
The orientation accurately reflected the company culture and values					

Final Thoughts on Employee Onboarding

Remember that new hire onboarding is a process, not an event. It should unfold over the course of weeks or months, and it should change with the needs of your employees and your organization, as well as adjust based on feedback you receive. Your company should also invest in the right technology, like an intuitive LMS, to help streamline the onboarding process and more easily train all new employees.

If your onboarding process is well planned and well executed, it can lead to better informed employees who are trained and comfortable in their positions. More than that, it can help create satisfied employees who are looking forward to a long-term relationship with your business. That makes employee onboarding a business investment with great returns.

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About Konvert™

Konvert™ is your B2B LMS for comprehensive employee onboarding. The success of your company depends on educated, trained employees—and with the Konvert LMS, you can simplify training with customized learning modules and ongoing progress monitoring.

Rethink how you're using digital tools for employee onboarding. **Contact Konvert today.**

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