

90-Day Onboarding Plan – Starter Kit

A human-centric framework for rapid integration, cultural alignment, and long-term retention

Pre-boarding (Before Day 1)

Objectives

- Maintain enthusiasm and connection from offer acceptance to Day 1.
- Prepare the employee with clarity on logistics, tools, and expectations.
- Begin social and cultural integration.

Key Tasks & Activities

- **HR:** Send welcome package with offer details, benefits guide, employee handbook, and Day 1 agenda.
- **Manager:** Call the new hire to welcome them, share start-day details, and set expectations.
 - Assign a **Buddy** (peer mentor) to provide support during the first 30 days.
 - Provide access to the new hire portal (policies, company videos, glossary of terms).
 - Share a “Welcome to the Team” email internally.

Responsible Parties: HR, Hiring Manager, Buddy.

Success Metrics

- New hire completes paperwork prior to start.
 - New hire expresses excitement and clarity about Day 1 (survey or check-in).
 - Buddy confirmed and briefed.
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Week 1: Orientation & Initial Integration

Objectives

- Establish belonging and psychological safety.
- Provide organizational overview and role clarity.
- Build trust with the manager and team.

Key Tasks & Activities

- **HR:** Conduct orientation (mission, values, compliance, systems).
- **Manager:**
 - Host team welcome lunch/coffee (virtual or in-person).
 - Assign initial micro-learning modules (systems, policies).
- **Buddy:** Give office tour, tech setup, and introduce to team routines.
- **New hire:** Prepare a short introduction about themselves.

Responsible Parties: HR (orientation), Manager (team integration), Buddy (daily support), New Hire (active participation).

Success Metrics

- Completion of compliance & tech setup.

- First impressions pulse survey (clarity, belonging).
- Manager and new hire schedule weekly check-ins.

Weeks 2–4: Role Familiarization & Relationship Building

Objectives

- Deepen understanding of role expectations.
- Build key relationships across the organization.
- Gain early wins through structured tasks.

Key Tasks & Activities

- **Manager & New Hire:** Set **SMART goals** aligned to team and organizational objectives.
- **HR:** Provide learning plan tailored to role competencies (70/20/10 model: experiential, social, formal learning).
- **Buddy:** Continue informal check-ins and cultural coaching.
- **Manager:** Schedule cross-functional “coffee chats” or networking sessions.

Responsible Parties: Manager, HR, Buddy, New Hire.

Success Metrics

- SMART goals documented.
- New hire demonstrates baseline role competence.
- Reports feeling connected to at least 3–5 colleagues.

Month 2: Deeper Integration & Goal Execution

Objectives

- Move from learning to performing.
- Strengthen cultural alignment and engagement.
- Increase independence while maintaining support.

Key Tasks & Activities

- **Manager:**
 - Bi-weekly coaching check-ins.
 - Introduce mentor relationship (beyond buddy system).
- **HR:**
 - Host “Culture & Values in Action” session.
 - Conduct 45-day HR pulse check (engagement, support needs).
- **New Hire:** Deliver first project or early measurable contribution.

Responsible Parties: Manager, HR, Mentor, New Hire.

Success Metrics

- Demonstrates progress toward 30-day goals.
- Reports high confidence in role clarity (Gallup Q12 alignment).
- Manager confirms initial performance impact.

Month 3: Independence & Performance Evaluation

Objectives

- Transition from onboarding to ongoing performance cycle.
- Evaluate performance and cultural fit.
- Solidify retention drivers (growth, recognition, belonging).

Key Tasks & Activities

- **Manager:**
 - Conduct formal **90-day review** (self-assessment + manager feedback).
 - Establish Individual Development Plan (IDP) and career pathing discussion.
- **New Hire:** Present progress against goals and development needs.
- **HR:** Administer 90-day engagement survey.

Responsible Parties: Manager, New Hire, HR.

Success Metrics

- New hire rated “on track” or better in 90-day review.
- IDP created with short- and long-term goals.
- Retention risk flagged if any engagement concerns arise.

Ongoing Support & Feedback Loop

Objectives

- Ensure continuous engagement beyond 90 days.
- Maintain feedback-driven improvements in onboarding.
- Support growth and retention.

Key Tasks & Activities

- Establish **continuous listening**: monthly pulse surveys, quarterly focus groups.
- Leverage technology (AI-powered onboarding assistants, role-specific learning paths) for personalization.
- Celebrate milestones (100 days, first project win, birthdays).
- Keep buddy/mentor check-ins optional but available.

Responsible Parties: HR (feedback program), Manager (coaching), Leadership (recognition).

Success Metrics

- Engagement survey scores trend upward.
- Retention rate of new hires > industry benchmark (82% more likely to stay 3+ years with great onboarding).
- Feedback loop produces onboarding process improvements.