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Quotable Quotes

"Every day is a new beginning. Treat it that way. Stay away from what might have been, and look at what can be." ~ Marsha Petrie Sue

"Employee loyalty begins with employer loyalty. Your employees should know that if they do the job they were hired to do with a reasonable amount of competence and efficiency, you will support them." ~Harvey Mackay

"The first day, week and month of an employee's experience carries a lasting impression." ~ Scott Weiss

"We often say that the biggest job we have is to teach a newly hired employee to fail intelligently...to experiment over and over again and to keep on trying and failing until he learns what will work." ~ Charles Kettering

Dear Jean,

So ... you now have a new employee on board and ready to jump into their work. How do you really get them on board and from the beginning aligned to their new organization? In the last couple of years I have seen a resurgence of new employee onboarding initiatives. I have seen these efforts spend a lot of time focused on getting the right information to the

employees so they might understand the organization better. These efforts are all directed to ensure that the organization and the new employee are aligned. These efforts may become the first indicator as to whether an employee stays for a long time or begins looking to move to a new organization on Day 2. For some organizations, these efforts are significant and represent a shift in the organization's culture. My surprise is the introduction of a new term, 'mid-boarding.' This term and request from an employee asking if there is something out there for individuals who aren't brand new and need a reorientation to the organization. Surprisingly, a google search yielded not a hit on this term. Ahhh ... the world awaits for a person to take the mid-boarding concept on and run with it. What could this really mean for the organization and the employee? A bit more exploration follows ... join me.

With Joy,
Jean

Aligning the Organization and the New Employee

"You're hired!" "We would like to offer you a position in our company!" I have heard these words a few times in my life and every time, I know I smiled and my insides just jumped for joy. What was I thinking? "They like me." "They believe I can do the job." They really think I am a good fit for the job." And then ... there is so much to learn - not about the work I am going to do, specifically - I was hired after all to do what I know how to do. There is just so much to learn about who I am working for. What are their expectations, how do they really want me to show up and do the work?

My personal experience as a new hire was a walk to my classroom or my desk with my principal or the manager, a little bit of time with HR and an introduction to my co-workers. In more recent years, the Onboarding process, an organizational socialization, has become more than that with an intention to encourage a faster assimilation into the work environment. Most companies today set aside a specified period of time to acquaint the new hire into the workplace and the organization. I have witnessed onboarding programs that are designed for a half-day, multiple days, three/four months and a year. I have experienced and observed that it takes a full year for any employee - new or recently promoted into a leadership position - to land fully and completely into their new role. In a year's time they have experienced a full cycle of work to include scheduling, budgeting, production cycles, etc. It appears that the longer the investment in the onboarding process, the stronger and quicker the organization and employee align. A strong and intentional onboarding program can create a significant impression on a new employee.

One onboarding goal is to give the new hire the additional knowledge, skills and behaviors to become effective and productive members of the organization and insiders. The end result is to strengthen the alignment for the new hire to the organization and the organization to the new hire.



Current activities and strategies for effective onboarding may include formal meetings, lectures, videos, tours of facilities, checklists, promotional materials, or computer-based orientations to introduce newcomers to their new jobs and organizations. The key to having an effective onboarding process is to customize the experience to the work environment and design an onboarding process that goes beyond the new hire's first day or first week. If the company is large with hundreds or thousands of employees, there may be a need for a department onboarding process to accompany the organization's one-time centralized onboarding practice or event.

How important is the practice of onboarding for the new hire and the organization? Research has shown there are positive outcomes for new employees. Higher job satisfaction, better job performance, greater organizational commitment, and reduction in occupational stress and/or intent to quit are a few of the benefits. The research has also indicated benefits to an organization looking to retain a competitive advantage in an increasingly mobile and globalized workforce.

Mid-boarding - an interesting concept or position for an employee and the organization to be in. The employee who asked about mid-boarding had started with the organization in an intern-like position and was now becoming a regular employee. If we considered mid-boarding, would we look at it from a part-time or irregular employee now being hired into a full-time position requiring different alignment to the organization? Or is it the employee that is mid-career, seeking additional support from the organization for future development opportunities? Or is it an opportunity for the organization to breathe new life and energy into their staff who have been with them for 10+ years? What would this look like - if an organization required all of its employees to participate in a mid-boarding series of events at their 10 year anniversary with the company? What are the organization's needs for the employee who has served for 10 years and looking to continue with the company? Is this even a reality with our youngest generation of employees in today's work force - will they stay 10 years?

If you are the new employee, what is your company doing for you that makes your new position and place in the workplace comfortable and engaging? What are they doing to ensure you are successful? What additional expectations do you have of your employer? What more do you need from the organization?

If you are the employer that has recently hired new employees into your workplace, what are you doing to align them and integrate them into your culture effortlessly? What expectations do you have of your new staff? How long are you investing in the onboarding - is it long enough? What more do you want for your new staff or need from them?

Are these conversations happening? Maybe your onboarding process isn't really complete.

Tools and Resources

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

[Love 'Em or Lose 'Em: Getting Good People to Stay](#) by Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans (2013)

[The First 90 Days](#) by Michael Watkins (2013) Proven strategies for getting up to speed faster and smarter

[Successful Onboarding: Successful Strategies to Unlock Hidden Value Within Your Organization](#) by Mark Stein and Lilith Christiansen (2010)

[Creative Onboarding Programs: Tools for Energizing Your Orientation Program](#) by Doris Sims (2010)

[Onboarding: How to Get Your New Employees Up to Speed in Half the Time](#) by George B Bradt and Mary Vonnegut (2009)

THE INTERNET CONNECTIONS

[Onboarding ToolKit for Managers](#), University of Minnesota New Employee Orientation

[Best Practices for New Employee Onboarding](#) (2012)

[A New Trend in Training - Pre-Boarding](#) (2009)

[New Employee Onboarding Checklist](#), Northwestern University

Reflection

As a new employee, what have you learned about your organization and you? Consider taking a few minutes to finish the following statements ...

1. My organization/company's strengths are ...
2. My strengths that align to my company are ...
3. I still want to know if the organization
4. The conversation I most want to have with an organizational leader is ...
5. I knew when I completed my onboarding I still needed to ...

As an employer with a formal onboarding process, take a few minutes to complete the following statements:

1. We have learned from our new staff that when they come on board they need these 5 things immediately ...
2. In addition to our new employees' strengths, I want the new employee to know that our values are and we are interested in their values and how we align.
3. The conversation(s) we most want to have with our new staff is/are ...
4. Our employees define success as ...
5. We define success as ...

Choose To

Employer Choices: Review your onboarding process ... determine one thing you can add to make it more successful ... identify one thing you can take away from the current onboarding process that allows it to be stronger ... schedule the conversations ... share your experiences ... your expertise ... know what a new employee and organization aligned look like, sound like ... clarify your expectations.



New Employee Choices: Participate fully into the onboarding process ... seek out a mentor - formal or informal ... provide feedback to the appropriate persons to let them know what is going well and what is not ... know where you are aligned with the organization and where you are still looking for the alignment ... share your successes ... clarify your expectations.

May Joyful Observances

Arthritis Awareness Month
Creative Beginnings Month
Get Caught Reading Month
National Moving Month
[Personal History Month](#)

[National Post Card Week](#) (May 1-7)
[National Nurses Day and Week](#) (May 6-12)
[Reading is Fun Week](#) (May 8-14)
National New Friends, Old Friends Week (May 15-18)
National Polka Weekend (May 27-29)

National Day of Prayer (May 5)
Blame Someone Else Day (May 13)
International Virtual Assistants Day (May 20)
Neighbor Day (May 22)
Brother's Day (May 24)

Administrivia

My Constructive Choices Audience...

- * Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work,
- * New managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities,
- * Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, live their voices, and...
- * Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - YES, it IS all about YOU!

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