Virtual Onboarding with a Human Touch — Creating Connection, Culture and Community
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Introduction

THREE TRENDS DOMINATE MODERN ONBOARDING:

TREND 1
Leveraging recruitment and onboarding as a key area of expressing company culture and values.

TREND 2
Organizations are taking a more humanistic approach to onboarding.

TREND 3
Transparency and upfront ethics statements are the key now in data and analytics.

The goals of onboarding have not changed. Wishing you a successful onboarding experience.
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The Onboarding Experience for Dispersed Employees

The ongoing change to — pandemic-related ones and the ongoing move reliance on providers that can give them the tools they need to provide safety and cultural acceptance during the onboarding process.

Remote Work is Here to Stay

What Amount of Remote Workers are Current and Projected?

Remote, work-from-home and globally dispersed employees can also bring different viewpoints, an expanded talent pool and increased ability to grow at scale, which outweigh any additional onboarding challenges.

There are some clear workers and remote or some are less obvious. demonstrate greater and globally dispersed employees can also bring an expanded talent pool and increased ability there is a struggle to bring corporate values and culture to remote workers.

15% 75% 38%
Before Pandemic During Pandemic Projected After Pandemic

Distractions at home

Stress and anxiety

Managers’ inexperience in managing remote workers

Source: Brandon Hall Group New Realities of COVID-19 Study, July-September 2020
Successful companies are placing more emphasis on work/life balance. Candidate experience and onboarding are now considered more important by many employers than succession planning and performance development.

Dv«} βv]avê‡ noted the importance of fostering an understanding of company culture during onboarding. Tied directly to that understanding of company culture is Jao}vPyPv u}vPv{vZ]Z speak to the overall need (}ZvZvZ]ê in the modern workforce.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee Experiences</th>
<th>Corporate Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work/life balance</td>
<td>Employees believe in what the organization stands for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Experience</td>
<td>We have a diverse workforce that mirrors our community and customer base.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onboarding</td>
<td>Employees feel a strong sense of belonging.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Brandon Hall Group Employee Engagement Study

Remote work and employee experience place greater demands on the digital onboarding experience.

- Maintaining quality and culture when moving online
- Enabling connections at scale
- Expanding community and supportive networks

Source: NovoEd
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Onboarding matters not just because it is a good time to get employees situated and connected, but a failure to handle onboarding correctly can have a drastic effect on attrition, long- and short-term, and can lead to bad hires: those who stick around and are actively disengaged, not just unproductive but causing harm to the entire ecosystem.

Organizations Have Seen that Poor Onboarding Can Lead to Less-than-Optimal Results

Successful companies are placing more emphasis on work/life balance. Candidate experience and onboarding are now considered more important by many employers than succession planning and performance development.

- New-hire average voluntary attrition rate
  - 10.2%

- Bad hires in past year
  - 12.6%*

- Most new-hire voluntary attrition occurs during the first six months
  - 51%

- Of bad hires attributable to sub-optimal hiring practices
  - 28%*

*On average.
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Developing Strong Social Connections

When it comes to improving employee engagement: values and teamwork are the top three employee engagement issues. Trust is a core concept for fostering but how is this done?

Certainly not by running through paperwork as fast as and using software for efficiency instead of effectiveness. The takeaway is that the human and personal aspects of employee engagement need to be embedded into onboarding.

1. Create an atmosphere of trust.
2. Hold leaders more accountable for driving the organization’s mission and values.
3. Improve the effectiveness of leadership development.
4. Enable teamwork, collaboration.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Employee Engagement Study

Nearly six out of 10 companies overall say they want to improve their new-hire experiences, which is not surprising, but how do employers tackle this issue?

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Source: Brandon Hall Group Employee Engagement Study, July-September 2020
Companies seeking to improve their new-hire experience say they need to improve their technology, which shows a lack of connection between the business issues and their current onboarding technology. Onboarding, at least at scale, can’t be done manually. It must be accomplished through automation technology to complement process improvements.

The right process can have mentoring and coaching to onboarding. Although these two functions often reside in different departments in the organization, it is imperative to shift to the right mindset or philosophy, or build a process that links the two then have the right tools to make those connections happen seamlessly and quickly.

Currently use coaching and mentoring during onboarding

35%

Plan to use coaching and mentoring during onboarding in next 12 months

16%

Have no plans to use coaching and mentoring in onboarding

A Gap in Mentoring in the Onboarding Process

Source: Brandon Hall Group New Realities of COVID-19 Study, July-September 2020

New-hire experience

Collaboration (partners, vendors)

Assimilation into culture

Source: Brandon Hall Group and NovoEd

July-September 2020
How Technology Can Help: Case Studies

Maintaining Quality & Culture when Moving Online

SALES ENABLEMENT

Challenges
- Time to productivity
- Greater strategy and culture adoption
- Deeper learning

NovoEd Solution
- CEO Welcome Video
- Practice & review with peers
- Role-specific + divisional
- Easy to replicate for each new cohort

**Fortune 500**

An American data communications and telecommunications equipment provider was looking for consistent, high-quality onboarding experiences.

Many companies feel forced to choose between upfront onboarding with checklists of things to do or local onboarding with paperwork and checklists from HR and role-specific responsibilities from the direct manager, which can lead to inconsistent information around company strategy, values, mission and culture.

What they found was that it was important to introduce culture and values consistently across their global organizations to provide opportunities for practice and application.

They implemented a system wherein new hires can quickly develop experiences to draw upon before fieldwork (e.g., sales calls). They partly did this by standardizing processes and engaging managers and mentors at the right time for a review of new-hire progress (e.g., approval of a sales deck).

**Telecommunications**

Source: NovoEd
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Enabling Connections at Scale

Nestlé PURINA NEW-HIRE ONBOARDING

Challenges
- Scale
- Standardization and consistency of both message & processes
- Global audience
- Networking

NovoEd Solution
- Linear & referenceable format with checkpoints
- Strategy alignment
- Personalized introductory activity
- Live webinar with SME
- Discussions

Fortune 100 Food + Drink 8,000 Employees in EMENA

Nestlé, the Swiss multinational food and drink processing corporation, is the largest food company in the world. Its subsidiary, Nestlé Purina PetCare, Europe, Middle East, North Africa, is the world's second-largest pet food company.

The challenge they had is the same as other global companies: a need for consistency across the onboarding experience. In implementing their successful program, they found that global connections are important so they set up cross-functional networking opportunities. There was also a need to stop recreating existing resources and programs. By automating and streamlining the process, they found they could more efficiently scale and start onboarding on Day One — no need to wait.

As a result, they could run their training either as a self-paced model, or cohort based weekly, monthly, quarterly, or whatever fits their hiring needs. New hires had a choice of self-paced training and weekly/monthly meetings with cohorts. This would allow cases where job orientation and culture assimilation can begin before the start date (e.g., firms that do intakes, college grads, etc.).

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Source: NovoEd
Expanding Community & Supportive Network

**Stanley Black & Decker**

**Sales & Marketing Development Program**

**Challenges**
- Formerly in-person model
- Knowledge retention of 40 hours classroom-based content
- Technical product & application-based training
- Limited class sizes, Dispersed field reps require travel

**NovoEd Solution**
- Asynchronous and referenceable
- Digestible content delivered in the flow of work
- Structured assignments to demonstrate proficiency
- Increased roster in virtual setting with added mentor support

**Fortune 100** | **Manufacturing** | **60K+ Employees**

Stanley Black & Decker is a Fortune 500 American manufacturer of industrial tools and household hardware and a provider of security products that used NovoEd for sales enablement and onboarding in a five-week program.

For new-hire sales trainees, Stanley Black & Decker moved a formerly in-person program online for the first time and designed an activity-driven learning experience with practice and feedback.

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**Teaching Teams**
- Facilitators, mentors, and teaching assistants

**Participant Groups**
- Cross-regional teams

**Peer to Peer**
- New hire sales trainees

**These combined support networks facilitate an organic experience that might not have been as effective in person, such as:**
- 24/7 access to facilitators and mentors
- Individualized feedback & evaluations on all assignments
- Diversity of learning content modality
- Immediately apply learning concepts within 24 hours
Key Takeaways and Best Practices

Best Practices for Virtual Onboarding

- **Put culture and context at the core**
  - Use storytelling and case studies to bring mission and values to life.
  - Encourage discussion and feedback.
  - Provide opportunities for practice and application.

- **Create activities that foster connections**
  - Get creative with collaborative ‘ice-breaker’ activities.
  - Use breakout groups to encourage conversations.
  - Organize new hires into teams to produce a common deliverable.

- **Engage current employees to establish community**
  - Bring managers and mentors into the onboarding process.
  - Provide peer support from buddies.
  - Encourage cross-functional and cross-divisional interactions.

Source: NovoEd

Some challenges to be sure, but there are many positive effects that go beyond the scope of this book. The most important thing is to begin immediately. Although the post-pandemic era may bring some of us back to the way things were, there is only one direction that onboarding is going: into the future. The future that needs to be created has to be digital because of the agility scope of this book. The most important thing is to begin immediately. Although the post-pandemic era may bring some of us back to the way things were, there is only one direction that onboarding is going: into the future. The future that needs to be created has to be digital because of the agility.

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Use breakout groups to encourage conversations.

Organize new hires into teams to produce a common deliverable.
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Authors and Contributors

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Emma Bui
About NovoEd

NovoEd’s collaborative learning platform empowers organizations to design and deliver experiential learning that accelerates business performance on a global scale.

learning connects diverse groups of learners, mentors, and leaders in a high-impact online environment.

Select Customers

Select Awards

To learn more, please visit: www.novoed.com
About Brandon Hall Group

With more than 10,000 clients globally and 27 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and and business results.

Some ways we can help ...