



LESSON 1

FROM CANDIDATE TO TEAM MEMBER: THE IMPORTANCE OF ONBOARDING

Introduction: The Bridge to Success

The hiring process doesn't end when the candidate accepts the offer. In fact, in many ways, it's just the beginning. Onboarding is the critical process of integrating a new employee into your organization and ensuring they have the tools, knowledge, and support they need to be successful. A strong onboarding program is the bridge that turns a promising new hire into a productive and engaged long-term employee. A weak or non-existent onboarding program, on the other hand, is one of the fastest ways to lose a great new hire.

Onboarding vs. Orientation: What's the Difference?

- **Orientation** is a one-time event that is focused on completing paperwork, reviewing policies, and providing a basic overview of the company.
- **Onboarding** is a long-term, strategic process that can last for several months. It is focused on integrating the new employee into the company culture, building relationships with their colleagues, and setting them up for long-term success.

The Four C's of a Successful Onboarding Program

A comprehensive onboarding program should be built on four key pillars:

1. Compliance:

This is the baseline of any onboarding program. It involves ensuring that all the necessary paperwork is completed, that the new hire understands the company's policies and procedures, and that they are set up with the necessary tools and technology.

2. Clarification:

This is about ensuring that the new hire has a clear understanding of their role, their responsibilities, and the expectations for their performance. This should include a review of their job description, a discussion of their key performance indicators (KPIs), and a clear plan for their first 30, 60, and 90 days.

3. Culture:

This is about immersing the new hire in your company culture. It involves teaching them about your company's history, its values, and its unwritten rules. This can be done through storytelling, through interactions with long-tenured employees, and through participation in company events.

4. Connection:

This is about helping the new hire to build relationships with their colleagues and to feel a sense of belonging on the team. This can be facilitated through a buddy system, through team lunches and social events, and through regular check-ins with their manager.

The High Cost of Poor Onboarding

- **Higher Turnover:** Employees who have a negative onboarding experience are twice as likely to look for a new job in the near future.
- **Lower Productivity:** It can take a new hire up to a year to become fully productive. A strong onboarding program can significantly shorten that time.
- **Lower Engagement:** A poor onboarding experience can lead to a new hire feeling disengaged and disconnected from the company from day one.

Activity: The Onboarding Experience Map

Think about your own experience of being a new hire.

- What was your onboarding experience like?
- What did your company do well? What could they have done better?
- Create an “onboarding experience map” that outlines the key touchpoints of your first few weeks on the job. What were the high points and the low points?

Share your map and your reflections in the discussion forum.