

So, what's next?

a guide to onboarding and
new hire orientation

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About the editor

My name is Ben Eubanks and I am... Well, I'm a lot of things. My day job is a generalist role with a government contractor in Huntsville, AL. When I get off work, I have a few things that take up my time, whether it's volunteering with my local SHRM chapter as the Social Media Director or writing my blog about [HR, leadership, culture, and passion](#). I'm the 2010-2011 Chairman of the SHRM YP Committee. I cofounded an unconference event called [HRevolution](#). I've written a handful of [eBooks](#). Told you I did a lot! In my spare time I read, connect with other great HR pros, and play with my kids. Want to connect? I'm on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and you can always hit me [via email](#).

This book was put together with the support of Shauna Moerke, [HR Minion](#) and keeper of the [HR Carnival](#). I appreciate her willingness to assist!

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Introduction

When I decided to pull together this content about onboarding and new hire orientation, I had never participated in a good, solid onboarding experience. Maybe I was a little selfish and wanted this stuff for myself. :-) Since then, however, I have had a great experience with my current employer. In fact, their orientation process is even more amazing since this company has historically hired only five to ten people *per year*.

My orientation experience was ideal for me. I spent a lot of time with my manager (and still do). She got me connected to the people with the “real scoop” on what goes on day-to-day. I had a special meeting with the CEO so he could explain the culture and values that govern the organization. And that was just in my first few days.

Some of you laugh at the five to ten people per year statistic I mentioned. You're closer to 200 or 2,000 per year. That's fine. Just because you hire more people doesn't mean you can't try to do it just a little bit better. Think about it, if you're able to make a better impact in your onboarding process for just 10% of 2000 new employees, you have 200 people who are more likely to be engaged, productive, long-term contributors. *Not too shabby, eh?*

This guide is organized into a few loose sections. First we have the personal stories and experiences. Next we have some “how to” content to make you think differently. Finally we have a few pieces that are manager-specific, because with their higher levels of responsibility and authority, it's crucial that it's done correctly.

I hope you enjoy this guide and learn some new tips and tricks. **Note the wide margins.** I leave those so you can take notes, scribble ideas, and make connections between what you read and how things are at your own organization. By the end of this guide you should have a handful of ideas to follow up on. Have fun!

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Was It Something I Said? (Buddy's Lament)

Perhaps it was. Or maybe I just walked into the wrong room. I don't think so. It looks like the same room I was just in a mere four weeks ago.

In fact, four weeks ago, I was here and everyone I met was so nice. I met this person and that person. They were all congenial, handshakes and laughter. There were conversations about teamwork and benefits. By the time I left, my head was spinning so much I felt intoxicated. I couldn't wait to return. When I got the call that I was being asked to return for a permanent stay, I was beside myself. I called everyone I knew because I just landed a job.

That was when I was a "person".

Now it's two weeks since my first day. I am now an "employee". My noun is different. So is this place. My name is Buddy and this is my story.

On the morning of my first day, I walked into the office. I told the receptionist I was here to meet with the HR representative in charge of orientation. When the HR rep greeted me in the lobby, he indicated he had no idea who I was or why I was there. I thought this was weird. But I chalked it up to a small miscommunication.

Because the HR rep couldn't adjust his schedule for me, I sat alone in a small office with just a table and chairs. After sitting there for over an hour, I overheard my new boss outside the office speaking to the HR rep. I overheard my new boss say, "What's he doing here?" The HR rep replied, "It's his first day. Didn't you know?" I remember convincing myself I must be mishearing this.

My new boss came in. He was polite but noticeably bothered. His mood was quite

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different from the times we met during the interviews. All he said was, “Well let’s get you started.” No “hi.” No “how are you?” No “glad to see you.”

As we walked down the hall, my new boss mentions that there is no new workstation for me as of today. For the time being, he said I can sit in one of the project rooms. I asked when I will have my own space. The response was, “Soon.”

On my second day, I walked in feeling a little down. The day before was weird. But it did not prepare me for what was going to happen next. My boss walks into the project room and asks me if I have the memo ready for our meeting. I replied, “I didn’t know we had a meeting.” My boss looks at me with disgust and says, “You gotta be more prepared than this,” and walks out. I stood there in shock with my jaw on the ground. I had no idea what he was talking about. It's my second day and I'm already being scolded.

By the end of my first week, I still did not have an official workstation. I never met with the HR rep to discuss benefits or payroll schedule. Only a few co-workers introduced themselves. But worst of all, my boss had already expressed disappointment in my work. I didn’t know what was expected of me initially and so I was unsure of how to make sure it didn't occur again.

I’m at the end of my second week. I have a workstation now. But very little else has changed. My boss and the other co-workers barely speak to me. I’m not sure when I’m getting my first paycheck. I’m not really sure when my health insurance goes into effect.

Actually though there is something that’s changed. When I arrived here two weeks ago, I was so happy. Today, I feel like a fool that made the biggest mistake of his life.

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Note: I am not Buddy. But I know Buddies. Perhaps you know buddies as well. Maybe you were once a buddy yourself. The point is, when a “person” walks into your organization, they should walk out everyday as a “person”. If they walk out as an “employee” they may not come back.

Paul Smith is the author of [Welcome to the Occupation](#).

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Wanted: A positive onboarding experience

It's a great read and made me think about my own "first day" experiences. Unfortunately, I'm long overdue for a good one.

Job #1

My first job post graduation was at Margaret's Employment Service. I responded to a "Help Wanted" sign in Margaret's front yard and when I met her – a recruiter for 30+ years – she put down her phone only long enough to say "You're hired". I was provided a desk, chair, phone and the Yellow Pages and my training consisted of "Make calls". So I smiled and dialed. Within a couple of weeks, someone actually talked to me at a bank that was hiring and I scheduled an interview. For me. I don't think Margaret noticed when I left.

Job #2

My new job was an Internal Auditor position – a job typically filled by Finance grads and MBA's. Clearly, someone wasn't paying attention in the interview process. (*Me.*) My first day involved showing up in the wee hours of the morning to drive to a branch office where, like Ninja, our secret arrival was timed with the opening of the doors. Once inside, the auditors scurried off immediately to capitalize on the element of surprise. I was instructed to count and balance the cash drawers of the Tellers. And I had no idea how to do that. Left alone to count more money than I'd ever seen in my life, it wasn't pretty. One. Two. Three...

Job #3

After 18 months of terrorizing bank employees, I networked my way into an HR Manager position in a small company. On my first day, I entered the Plant Manager's office full of youthful hope and exuberance. He looked at me and said: "I don't know anything about HR. Don't expect me to help you. There's some books in your office."

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And he went back to smoking his cigarette. So I found my office and started looking at books. I was a little less hopeful, but thrilled to finally be working in HR. Even if no one else cared.

Job #4

A few years and a relocation later, I took an HR role with a new start up that was part of a bigger company. On my first day, I showed up at the main office as instructed, but since I'd been hired for the new company (still being built) and I wouldn't be located there, there was no place for me. My boss suggested I find an empty desk and make plans for recruiting and training the new employees that would be needed. I worked on that project (making plans) for the next 5 months at random locations before the new building was finished. During that time, I worked in a crowded office, but wasn't really part of a team – because there wasn't one for me yet. As a result, I attended lots of meetings with myself. They were very efficient.

Job #5

Eventually, I was recruited to a position at a company with a new CEO who'd been brought in for a turnaround and wasn't seeing eye to eye with the VP of HR. It was a confidential search, so once the current VP was notified of his unplanned departure, the CEO and I were supposed to meet with him the following weekend while the offices were closed so he could pass the torch and provide me with the keys to the kingdom. Except the CEO forgot to show up that Sunday so it was just the two of us.

Awkward. The next day I met with the HR team that had just been informed of my arrival the Friday before. They told me that because of the changes that had taken place and the way things were handled, they felt like outcasts. And I knew how they felt because I'd been there before. Thankfully, we were able to fix that.

So why the big FAIL when it comes to onboarding?

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All of the companies that I worked for were great places to work (except maybe Margaret's) and they were filled with smart and capable people. A couple of my bosses were even amazing and inspiring Leaders to work for who really challenged me and helped me to grow. But all of the companies I've worked for – both the small ones and those in the Fortune 500 – failed me as a new hire on my first day because they didn't plan effectively for my arrival or take the time to make me feel welcomed.

Research shows that [90% of companies believe that employees make their decision to stay at a company within the first six months](#), but many of us have experienced an onboarding process that started our career with the company off on the wrong foot. Things that make you go hmmm...

Do you have an awful new hire experience similar to or worse than mine? What was your worst (or best) first day/week on the job like?

Jennifer McClure is the author of [Unbridled Talent](#).

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New Hire Orientation—The Musical

If you've had a job in your lifetime then you've been subjected to new hire orientation of some kind. Whether that was someone putting a paper hat on your head and telling you to up-sell with fries on each order or if it was a more formal orientation program in a large organization, you've been through it. And, from most accounts, it is typically the most boring time you'll spend in your working career.

I have to admit that my current organization does a great job orientating new employees. The experience was factual, yet very personal. It kicks off with over an hour with the President. It includes lunch with your new supervisor, receiving a surprise delivery of your favorite candy or snack. See, early in the day they have you fill out a card that has your favorite drink, snack, candy, month/ day of birthday, how you like to be recognized, favorite store, etc. The card is about 4 x 6". You turn it in and forget about it. Then, when you're off having a nice lunch and tour with your new supervisor, the orientation facilitator runs out to get either your favorite candy or snack and it's waiting for you at your seat after lunch. For me, it was the perfect touch that let me know that I matter. It doesn't cost much and the feelings it generates are worth a million bucks.

Then we start acting out policies with skits. The skits are fun. No one really wants to do it at first, but once a group of three strangers takes on the dress code or confidentiality policy and acts it out, it's hysterical. We get crazy and people pretend to be Tom Cruise or reporters from the National Enquirer. It makes the more boring, dry policy part pretty memorable.

It not only made me feel immediately like part of the team, but showed me that fun is allowed and encouraged in the hospital. But what about all the companies that are still using a model of sign these papers, watch these boring Power Point presentations, etc?

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I joke at work that I would like to change our employee orientation to be like a Broadway musical since it's held in the auditorium and that would be a way to bring fun, creativity, and passion to the event. **Well, today you have the power to make changes to your organization's employee orientation program. What is one thing you would take away? Anything you would add, create or include?**

Trish McFarlane is the author of [HR Ringleader](#).

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Don't waste new hire orientation!

Let's see a show of hands: *Who has ever read an employee handbook?*

OK, I have, but only the ones I helped write. Mind you, I'm not implying that the employee handbook isn't useful or popular. And if your desk wiggles it makes a great wedge.

Now let's have another show of hands: *Who's attended a New Hire Orientation (NHO) that consisted mainly of walking through the employee handbook?*

Well, not surprising, really, since it's the only way to get people to read it.

Far be it from me to diss the employee handbook or argue with the need to familiarize new employees with its contents. After all, the employee handbook exists to protect the company from employee lawsuits so we have to have it.

And frankly, it's probably not even worth making it less boring, since most people still won't read it unless it's composed of Tweet-sized sound-bytes that pop up on their iPhone while they're updating their Facebook status.

My point is simply this: *If you're New Hire Orientation process consists of presenting the employee handbook and reminding new hires about deadlines for benefits enrollment you're missing a golden opportunity to create a feeling of connection to the enterprise.*

Connection is a feeling of belonging and is strongly linked with engagement. We talk about 'hiring for fit' but the real magic happens if you can create a corporate culture that brings diverse people together.

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Here are some ideas for creating a more meaningful NHO and onboarding experience:

New Hire Orientation

Welcome – Express how truly happy you are that these fabulous people have decided to join your company. Perhaps the CEO can say a few words, although depending on how often you hire that may not be realistic.

Who we are – There's no feeling like pride in belonging to something bigger than yourself, so tap into that and shake your great company booty! Connect the dots between your amazing company culture and how people can be part of it.

Start group – People who start together have a higher chance of building lasting bonds as they spread out over the company. Help your new hires define their first network at your company by assigning them to a start group.

Fun activity – This is a chance for the start group to get to know one another and begin identifying itself as 'us'. Mind you, it can go too far, as when my start group at a large consulting company had to run through the office singing, 'We Are Eager Beavers.' But it did break the ice.

Onboarding

Company email – Let everyone know about your fine crop of new hires. Send an email around, or post the information, introducing new hires with bio and pictures. Encourage employees to make them feel welcome.

Team lunch – Please don't just turn new employees loose with a vague introduction to

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their new co-workers. Nothing promotes team spirit like free food.

Buddy system – Every new hire should have a ‘buddy’ on their new team to show them the ropes.

Mentor – This is advanced onboarding but it’s a great advantage to new hires if they have someone higher up than their own manager in the organization that they can turn to for career support.

Have stuff ready – Every day a new hire sits around without a desk or wondering what to do or unable to get started because the new laptop hasn’t been configured yet is money wasted. Not to mention frustrating for the new hires, who are eager to dig in and start proving themselves.

Make admin easy – I once spent two weeks enrolling in benefits. I kid you not, it was so hard! Either offer a great online enrollment experience or have someone available to help people navigate the complexity. Don’t waste that sweet new hire momentum on kludgy administration.

Start group debriefing – After a few weeks have passed, bring the start group back together again to discuss first impressions before they are completely desensitized to your crazy inefficient processes. It’s also a good chance for the start group to meet up again, if they haven’t already.

One final show of hands: *Who still reaches out to people they worked with years ago, with questions or just to hook up for lunch?*

A feeling of connection makes people **want** to come to work. Don’t miss out on the

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golden opportunities provided by NHO and onboarding to help people feel connected from day one.

Laura Schroeder is the author of [Working Girl](#).

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Streamline and Improve your Onboarding program

Onboarding is one of the most critical times for new employees and their employers. In every company I've worked with, our highest turnover tenure was 0-6 months. Next is usually 2-5 years.

I've worked on projects that focused on improving our onboarding process and results. Here are a few things that have been implemented and how they turned out.

- New Hire survey: Short, online surveys at 1, 3 and 6 weeks. How is the job, does it meet your expectations, do you have what you need to succeed. Extremely low response rate, taken offline after three months.
- Company branded backpack designed for carrying laptops. Given to all employees, even those who work in a factory setting with no laptop. Discontinued after first batch.
- Company branded Carhartt jacket. Given to all employees, even those in office positions. In the south. Discontinued after second batch.
- Absorbent stone coaster and company branded pint glass. Used to gather dust on desks, as well as pencils. Discontinued after first batch.
- Online training for code of conduct, ethics, foreign corrupt practices avoidance, performance management system, expense reports, time and attendance, building layout, benefits, payroll, holidays, company profile, executive profiles, intranet, internet, email, network, help desk, phone system, cafeteria hours. All to be completed in first two days. Number of questions to HR in first week increased by 2048% (approximate).

Here are the things that worked well.

- Week one agenda planned to have employee meet team, key partners, and peers.

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- Program designed to ensure desk, computer and phone in place prior to day one.
- Online forms to allow taxes, benefits and emergency contact information could be recorded online at the employee's leisure, even before day one.
- Designated peer mentor for employee to shadow for first week to learn location, culture, norms, and bathroom location.

What's the difference? The first batch was waste. It is a group of unwanted, inappropriate or overwhelming items that interfered with the simple task of getting your bearings in a new home. The second batch was value, providing the things the new hire needed and wanted. So how did we figure out the difference?

We asked them.

So when you are designing programs and thinking of all the great things that can be done, don't forget to stop and ask the end user what their requirements look like. Find out what they need, and then be relentless in refusing to spend time and money on the things that don't.

Dwane Lay is the author of [LeanHRBlog](#).

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On Boarding – Are the Signs Clear?

Personnel has now become Human Resources and orientation has morphed into what is now called Onboarding. Anyone in HR in this century knows what Onboarding is supposed to be, but it really is unique to every organization. There is no one size fits all approach. Many approaches will contain most of the same elements, but a good program will be built to order for the organization. You just can't go to a vendor and buy a program off of the shelf or off this task to some perky contractor. If it is going to work you have to own it.

Each employer must develop and continually improve their onboarding process. It is like any other process though, you might have all of the right elements but if you don't assemble the thing properly it doesn't work.

So how does it start? Well, even prior to the first day, as the employee's new employer we are sending messages and expectations about our organization. How did you treat this employee in the interview process? Did you make them wait in a lobby for 30-40 minutes past the time they were scheduled for an interview? Was everyone who spoke to the prospective employee courteous? Did you follow-up with them in the time frames in which you said you would? Did you provide answers to all of their questions? See these are all things that you can't undo – and you have already laid this foundation whether or not this prospect is a hire or no hire.

Ok so I hope you did all of that stuff right – either way you are moving ahead with onboarding. Now it is time for all of the obligatory stuff; forms, policies, training, exits, fire extinguishers, rest rooms and so on *ad nauseam*. I am not going to delve into the proper aspects of this, because this is your stuff to get right – or wrong.

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Now you have a new employee at your Company. Do they now know everything they need to know? Oh yeah you gave them all of the stuff you can no longer be sued for, but did you give them any of the really useful information as to how to assimilate into the culture. Sometime some of the cultural fits are a little more subtle. Things like if you want to advance in this Company you will go with the Friday Night Gang down to the Pub and Grub for more the first than the later. Or maybe the successful people in this Company are the ones who rarely have a taste – just thought you would want to know. The people who succeed here almost always started out heading up a committee. Hopefully these lessons will come through in the buddy system, provided your buddies really want new folks to succeed. In summary, help them fit into your Company culture. This is an ongoing process.

Not everything a new employee needs to know is contained in the Company propaganda, because there is some stuff none of us would want published. So we need to help the new people find their way through the organization. HR must guide them showing them where to go and not to go. We must also make sure they know how to succeed – because if they don't – you will be doing this all over again!

Dave Ryan is the author of [HR Official](#).

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Five Tips To Onboard The Right Way

I have a good friend who is starting a new job this week. Being the interested HR person that I am, I always inquire about [the onboarding process](#). In the past, this was part voyeurism and part competitive intelligence. I wanted to know if they did anything worth using myself. Or, if they did anything spectacularly awful.

If you're like me, you have had all kinds of onboarding experiences. When I started one of my jobs in retail, I walked in and before I could do anything (fill out paperwork, orient myself), I was pulled back to start unloading the biggest truck I had ever seen. In another job, I was brought in with a cushion allowing myself to get comfortable with my new role, meet all of the people I would be working with, and start thinking about my objectives going forward.

I don't know if good onboarding practices ultimately lead to success ([it seems like it would](#)), but I do know it doesn't hurt to get employees started on the right foot. Here are some tips to consider as you examine any onboarding process:

Communicate early and often

Are daily phone calls to your new hire or promoted employee too much? That may be, but using the interim period between when the offer is accepted and when the person starts is a huge missed opportunity that many onboarding programs miss. Leadership blogger Dan McCarthy talks about [starting the onboarding process even before an offer is made](#) to an internal candidate. That can be true for external candidates as well. Getting a person used to and excited for the possibility (and then the reality) of their new position is an easy way to get started on the right foot.

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Feel out your newbie for pace

“Recruiter Guy” Chris Hoyt [blogged about his experience of onboarding](#) at his new position with PepsiCo. While your new employees blogging about their onboarding experience may not be for you, what Hoyt has done is show how the pace of his onboarding matched his experience and comfort levels. While many folks wouldn't be comfortable traveling on business right away, it was obvious that it helped energize him and maximize the overall experience. I don't know how intentional it was, but it shows that a rapid onboard isn't necessarily a bad one.

Intentionally expose them to culture

Amy Gallo at the Harvard Business Review writes of the [downfall of focusing on simply supplying information to new employees](#). You have to be intentional about exposing them to your culture, too. Her advice is to focus on bringing on the right people, getting them connected with the right people, and then getting them into their day-to-day routine as quickly as possible. There's no arguing that cultural changes are a big step in the right direction.

Use technology responsibly

We all love technology, right? Well, I did — until my onboarding experience where I sat in front of a computer for my first day to fill out forms, do mandatory training, and probably supply some clueless vendor with more validation data. I hated it. Many companies sell technology onboarding platforms as productivity drivers (like Taleo does [here](#)) but onboarding is more than just getting me up to speed and producing widgets for you in record time. It is also about your first efforts in retention and culture. You're not getting that from a computer.

Harness that new hire energy

Capitalizing on new hire energy is one of the most vexing things about the onboarding process. The problem is that all of these new people don't have the institutional

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knowledge necessary to use that energy constructively. If I can combine the point from Gallo's piece in HBR, partnering that boundless energy with some of your most experienced people can be a huge win. Of course, finding the right experienced person is as important as the decision itself.

Lance Haun is the author of [Rehaul](#).

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That burger looks tasty... I think

I love how fast food commercials – [Taco Bell](#), [McDonald's](#), [Burger King](#)...pick your favorite – blatantly misrepresent their fare. Never has a burger looked so damn good – cheese perfectly melted lettuce and tomato crisp and sparkling with dew drops, and pipin' hot steam rising from the patty. When you unwrap that cheap foil or open the box, though, you can't help but be terribly disappointed. **Talk about a good old fashioned case of false advertising (there's a [class-action suit](#) here somewhere).**

What do you falsely advertise in your new hire orientations? How much do you embellish or conveniently omit the whole story about a particular program or benefit? **I bet you do it more than you think...even if you're doing it inadvertently.** I bet you tell everyone that you have a performance management system and that you use it to develop your people, to help them understand what's expected of them, to evaluate them, and to ultimately pay them. But do you tell them that less than 50% of managers are actually compliant with it? Do you tell them that people complain about it being too cumbersome? I bet you talk about your awesome online coursework and learning management system. But there's no way you're telling them that they'll never find the time to use it.

Most of your new hires are smart enough to understand not everything is as good in practice as it is on paper (unless it's their first job). That's o.k., chances are your performance management or learning systems didn't really have that big an impact on their decision to join your company. **So why do we even take the time to lie to them? Why not be perfectly transparent with them from the get go?** Take time to identify the potential pitfalls and give them some tips for avoiding them (e.g. "you're probably going to have to kick and scream to get an evaluation from your manager, but ask early and ask often...and then tell us if you don't get one.") Be

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proud about what's good, but also share the bad and ugly. Tell them what you're doing to fix it and solicit their patience and support while you do so. Otherwise, they'll just be part of perpetuating the same old issues.

This ain't no fast food commercial – it's someone's job. **Give people the data they need to make good decisions, to contribute, and to make a difference in your organization.**

Charlie Judy is the author of [HR Fishbowl](#).

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Making it stick: The new employee orientation experience

I've worked at all sizes of organizations; some with just a handful of new hires per year and some where we HR folks conducted New Employee Orientation (NEO) for 25 – 40 people each and every week. So what have I seen, experienced, lived, and inflicted upon others at these NEO sessions?

- I've verified IDs and completed I-9's, by myself, for a room of 50 people (*not fun)
- I've played games – quite often as an unwilling participant
- I've had to complete paperwork for new employees who couldn't read or write
- I've had to terminate employees 2 hours into their 1st day of employment
- I've had people not return to the training room after the first break of the day
- I've made paper chains with 50 strangers – each of us writing and verbally sharing our dreams/aspirations and how they tied to the org's mission (and no, I didn't really like this one)
- I've sat through countless power point presentations with artfully crafted bullet points – *BENEFITS! *SAFETY! *YOU are #1!
- I've created those same power point presentations and subjected unwilling new employees to them

NEO is that part of the onboarding process where, for the 1st time, the organization likes to think it's giving the new employee a true sense of 'how stuff really works around here.' Personally, I've always found it easier from a "task" standpoint to develop and run a large-group orientation as opposed to planning for the one-on-one (large-scale economy and all that). However, I think that the one-on-one orientations are much more effective as they provide the opportunity for conversation – not lecture.

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But I think whether you are crafting a program for 1 new employee or a gaggle of them, there are a few key points to think about:

Your goal should be that at the end of DAY ONE each new employee has a sense of direction and a sense of purpose. You should aim to capture and nurture that feeling of excitement that your new employee had at the moment when you called and offered them the job. You should make certain that your newly hired employee is **THRILLED** that they've chosen your company.

While HR may be the architect of the plan, partnering with line managers is critical to success. Following are some things I believe must be at the forefront of any NEO program. Now these are not all the responsibility of HR as many should be the role of the manager, but HR should work to ensure these things are done:

- Make new employees feel as welcome as they did when you were courting them during the recruitment phase
- Orient them to the company and culture – pictures? stories? Be REAL!
- Find some way to minimize the stupefying (and yet necessary) boredom of new hire paperwork. Can you work towards harnessing technology to move your process online w/ electronic signatures? Can you mail paperwork ahead of time to the employee's home to complete and bring with them?
- Find ways to keep your program “fresh.” There's nothing worse than a burned-out HR Lady droning through a slide show week-after-week-after-week. What can you do to change up your presentation style? Can you (gasp!) do away with power point?
- Please, for the sake of all that is holy, do NOT make a roomful of adults read policies out loud. Please.
- Have a plan to make introductions to co-workers, team members and others.

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- Set up and prepare the employee's workstation prior to their arrival. At one company, I found an employee sitting in her cubicle with a former employees' name on the nameplate... 3 months after she had been working there. No one "thought" to replace it and she was too afraid to ask!
- Take the new employee to lunch on day 1 (if a group meal is not part of the HR-run NEO) – or arrange for a group of co-workers to do the same. Very often, a new employee who may be a "brown-bagger" hasn't brought a lunch because they're not sure if they'll even have access to a refrigerator.
- Take the employee on a tour of the department, building or entire "campus." I've conducted NEO where we took an hour long walk after lunch (EEs could opt out if they had mobility concerns). It's fun to pay particular attention to those "secret" areas that the public never gets to see – the vault (in a bank), the morgue (in a hospital), and the special room where the "secret recipe" is concocted.
- Consider holding a re-orientation. At one organization I implemented a 90-day re-orientation program – all employees hired in the past quarter came back to ask the questions they hadn't thought of when they started. It was safe environment to ask the "silly questions" and they also got to connect with the colleagues from other departments with whom they had spent vast amounts of time on day 1, but didn't really interact with anymore.

Sometimes NEOs are a utopian HR-view of the day-to-day reality. We have some 'training' technique that we think works and we want to try it out. But then we memorialize it without stopping to consider if it ties back to our culture, our goals and what our organization is about.

Making paper-chains to hang around the room MAY fit your culture if you're a school or a day care, But think twice if you're doing this activity with a bunch of auditors and accountants. I've got to tell you, it was truly an awkward moment to watch a newly

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hired ~~big-wig-muckity-muck~~ VP from Accounting have an internal debate as to whether he should write his “dream” on a robin’s-egg blue or bunny-nose pink strip of paper...

Robin Schooling is the author of [HR Schoolhouse](#).

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The Final Step in the Recruitment Process – New Hire Orientation

Companies spend thousands of dollars each month recruiting top talent. They go to the ends of the earth (or the ends of the internet) to find the best of the best. If they feel that a hire is worth the money, they will spare no expense in wining and dining to get that “yes” upon offer. The potential employee will meet with a countless number of people and be given the best sales pitch available as to why they should join Company X. That potential employee then becomes an employee and is so excited for day one. They get a new hire orientation agenda and show up for work. And then it happens. They sit for a day, or two, or five and at least once, wonder if they have made the right decision.

So often, new hire orientation is viewed as something that has to be done to get paperwork filled out. In reality, an effective new hire orientation should be viewed as the final piece in the recruitment process. Sure, the offer has been accepted, but they aren't overly committed. A good new hire orientation seals the deal and paves the way for a good working relationship.

So what makes a good new hire orientation? In my experience there are a few key ingredients.

- Give the new hire something to brag about. New hires, especially those who have been out of work, are super excited about their new jobs and want to tell everyone they know. Why not feed those discussions with a few cool facts or success stories. Then they can shout to everyone they know, “I got this job at Company X and did you know that they...”
- Give the new hire face time with top leadership. Even if their day job will never interact with the CEO, it is important that they see his/her face during their first

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few days. People want to feel connected with those at the top of their organization. Leaders should spend time with new hires and talk about stuff other than work a little too. It establishes a sense of caring and trust that every employee longs for.

- Give the new hire something to be excited about. If your company is launching a new product or strategy in the next year, tell them. If there is big news that most of your other employees know, make sure it is shared with the new hires as well. Again, it makes them feel connected. Connected employees stay with their employer's.
- Give them Q&A time. There is nothing worse than a new hire orientation where someone vomits information for hours or days with no interaction. New employees have questions and allowing them time to ask and receive answers will go a long way in making them feel appreciated early on.

There are countless ways to make a new hire orientation effective, but these few simple ingredients make a great base for any program. Is it time to revamp your new hire program?

Sabrina Baker is the author of [Humanity, Inc.](#)

Having a New Manager Orientation Process is a bright idea

If you are a human resources manager, then you want to be reading this. I am sharing a link that will take you to a 2000 word document that I guarantee will help you make your organization more effective and productive. There is no charge, no sell, and strings – just the steps of a very simple, not very time consuming process that will literally save your new managers and their employees months of time spent on productive courtship rituals. Courtship rituals, you may say? What the heck is he talking about now? I am talking about a proven process for shortening the time it takes for a new manager and their staff to become familiar with each other and function effectively as a team. You can do this quickly, cheaply and effectively with this classic process developed by General Electric. It is called the New Manager Assimilation process.

The New Manager Assimilation Process can be an extremely effective intervention for any level of manager entering a new organization. Its objectives are quite straightforward and the steps to follow are uncomplicated and relevant in any business environment or culture.

The major objectives in utilizing the New Manager Assimilation Process are really threefold:

1. First, to provide direct reports with the opportunity to “get to know” their new manager in a very short period of time.
2. Second, to begin to build the basis for a longer-term working relationship between the manager and their team of direct reports, and
3. Third, to lay the foundation, very early on, for open communications, work planning and problem-solving between the manager and their direct reports.

The process itself consists of five sequential phases:

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1. Data Collection
2. Feedback to the New Manager
3. Response Preparation
4. Assimilation Meeting
5. Follow-up

The process begins with the help of a consultant, either internal or external, who is viewed by the Manager and the direct reports as an objective third party. The credibility of this consultant is extremely important to the process since they will be used to gather highly confidential data from both the manager and the direct reports. The willingness of the people participating to share such data can be enhanced significantly if the consultant is viewed as objective, able to handle confidences, and competent in organizational development processes.

Follow this link to find the document describing the full process and steps for the [New Manager Assimilation Process](#).

Michael Vandervort is the author of [Human Race Horses](#).

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Train your middle managers on people management basics

Here is a simple idea: Whenever you have a new manager (project manager/departmental leader) joining in your organization, put him/her through a simple training program on how to manage people. Train existing managers as well. The premise: Most project managers/team leaders get work done through teams. I have also seen that a lot of people become managers because of their seniority in technical positions. But we know that managing people is far more than just technical skills. *Most managers fail because they don't know how people are managed.*

Here are a few things (the bare minimum) that **MUST** be included in the training:

1. Leadership basics, traits and core expectations from a leader
2. Setting a vision (for their projects/initiatives) and long-term thinking
3. Fundamentals of dealing with people (and best practices therein)
4. The art of effective delegation and empowerment
5. Communication skills (oral and written), listening and non-verbal communication
6. How to connect with people (team members, peers and clients)
7. Leading with confidence
8. Presentation skills
9. Awareness about identifying and influencing impact of their actions on others
10. How to coach and mentor people
11. Kindness, care, humility and compassion at workplace
12. A primer on vision and values of the organization and how it translates into real actions.
13. Personal effectiveness and self-management
14. [Managing meetings](#)
15. Managing conflicts and understanding differences in personality types

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16. Basic fact finding and interviewing skills
17. Expectations Management at all levels
18. (You can add more depending on your organization's context)

Two critical points:

- Include a lot of real-life examples/stories for each of the above to make it interesting. To complement this effort, give them the URL's of some of the best leadership blogs out there. Share other useful resources like free presentations, eBooks, podcasts and videos that would help them get into a leadership mindset.
- To ensure that this training translates into meaningful actions, it is crucial to have a 'leadership development program' that continuously organizes trainings, inducts new people/aspiring leaders, conduct brainstorming and discussion sessions, seek feedbacks from people periodically to maintain the momentum and mature over a period of time.

Middle managers are the glue that joins the strategies at the top with actions at the bottom. Induction trainings like these are a small investment that goes a long way in setting the precedence and ensuring that you find the right channels to effectively transfer your strategy/values to all layers within the organization. It has a direct impact on overall employee morale and your effectiveness as an organization.

Tanmay Vora is the author of [QAspire](#).

So, what's next?

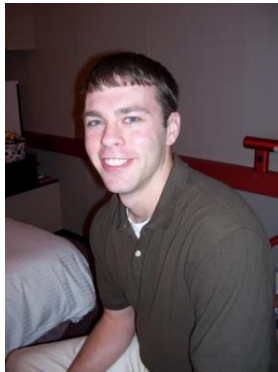
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So, what's next (really)?

You have a few things to do now.

- First, share [this book](#) with anyone who might find some value in its contents. It doesn't help anyone if it's not being read, digested, and put into action!
- Second, look back through any notes you might have made while reading and see what you can start exploring in your own organization. I'd enjoy hearing if you were able to put some of these ideas in motion.
- And finally, keep your eyes peeled for [more guides](#) coming throughout the year. The easiest way to do that is to [subscribe for free email updates](#) so you never miss a thing.

If you enjoyed this guide at all, I'd love to hear about it. My contact info is below. Have a topic you'd like to see covered a future guide? Let me know!



Rock it,

Ben Eubanks

[upstartHR](#)

[HRevolution cofounder](#)

[Twitter-@beneubanks](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[NASHRM Social Media Coordinator](#)

Google Voice: 256-778-1236

Email: ben@upstarthr.com