

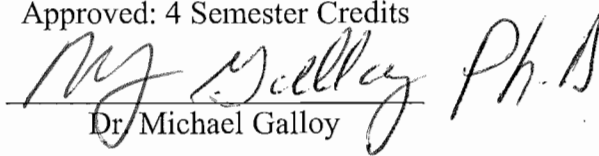
Onboarding: A New New-Hire
Orientation Process

by

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this research paper is to show how hiring practices have changed at a small Midwest organization. For this paper the name of the company will be changed to ABC Training Company, because management asks that the company not be identified. This paper examines the practice of hiring staff and not taking time to explain the inner workings of the company versus spending a few days to explain the operations of the company to new hires. This practice is called onboarding.

This research paper contains data and comments that express new employee's satisfaction with an extended new-hire orientation process that takes about two days to cover.

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Chapter I: Introduction

The focus of this study is to show how an onboarding process can impact turnover. Employee turnover of general staff can cost a company as much as \$32,226 per year (2000-2004 Keep Employees, Inc.). Depending on the position affected by turnover, the financial impact to the company can be crippling. According to Judith Enns, Ph. D. Executive Vice President, HR Solutions Search and Staffing, Designer Blinds reduced turnover from 200% annually to under 8%, and cut their recruiting budget from \$30,000 to \$2,000 (Enns, 2007).

According to information gathered through an in-person interview of Susan Boettcher, Human Resources Manager at Miles Kimball Corporation, the amount of recruiting and screening resources necessary for finding replacement staff can consume so much time that other duties and projects are left unfinished, resulting in those projects falling behind.

Many companies hired new staff and spent only a few hours going through the necessary legal forms, payroll paperwork, and introductions to department staff prior to having the new hire start their work. At ABC Training Company a new hire commonly complained that they did not know about the inner workings of the company, who the company's customers are, the function of the different offices, who are the critical people within the company, or even what the main purpose of the company is. Within one office location of ABC Training Company, there was a turnover rate of about 40% within a year. The top three reasons people left were: not getting along with their supervisor, workload being too demanding, and job burnout.

Turnover can be caused by many things, including something as simple as communication within the company. As people are brought into an organization, often times they are unaware of the critical functions of the organization. To help reduce these situations, it is

important that new hires understand the product that ABC Training Company offers, who the company's customers are, and the overall goals of the company.

To show that ABC Training Company was listening to its employees, one of the steps it took was to be more proactive in orientating new staff. This new approach included extending the new-hire process from a couple hours to a couple days, followed by three feedback sessions regarding what changes could be made to improve the orientation process. The new onboarding process included Human Resources meeting with the new hire to cover the employee handbook and legal paperwork. Then, the new hire is sent an information packet on the company's mission, vision, values and the company history and organization layout and roles. Upon receipt of this packet, the new hire partners with an experienced employee to review the materials and begin building staff relationships within the office. According to Judith Enns, PhD, Executive Vice President, HR Solutions Search and Staffing, Hunter Douglas, enhancing their onboarding reduced turnover from 70% at 6 months to 16% at 6 months (Enns, 2007).

History

During an annual company meeting (at ABC Training Company) the staff was asked to list the items that they thought would be helpful to them during their employment. They were told to not limit their responses and that the managers were looking for anything from changes in work hours, benefits, tools and/or equipment that could help them with your job tasks, or whatever else you think would help them in your daily activities.

Of the responses that were submitted, some of the top requests were:

- Knowing more about the company.
- Understanding how to advance through the company.
- Becoming familiar with the product that the company offered.

- Learning about how the company was formed.

In response to staff comments, the organization decided to create a method for staff to learn more about the ABC Training Company. This included creating an onboarding process for new staff, along with offering this information to existing staff.

Statement of the Problem

Large amounts of time and money are spent on recruiting and attracting candidates to fill positions within any organization. In a time when companies are in a battle among each other for top-shelf talent, turnover cannot be risked. To succeed with the acquisition of talent, employers must change the way they handle their orientation process of newly hired staff. So why only spend a few obligatory hours with new staff and try and force-feed them information at a fast rate of speed?

It has been a common practice to get candidates in the door and working as soon as possible with the belief that the sooner someone is sitting at their workstation, the sooner they will be productive. Unless new staff has done this exact job at another company, nothing can be farther from the truth.

People need to become engaged in the company that hired them. To become engaged, they need to feel that the company cares about the employees. This needs to occur from the top executive all the way down to the hourly employees. This means that everyone should be considered equal during the onboarding process. When a person is engaged in the company, there is a better chance of them remaining with the organization compared to a person that does not become engaged early in their employment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the new onboarding process at ABC for new hires. The onboarding process was developed based on the feedback from current and new employees.

The results from this study should demonstrate to employees that ABC Training Company values their feedback. Based on employee feedback, the ABC Training Company modified its hiring and orientation process. This study examines the effect of these modified practices.

Research Questions

Through this research paper, the follow questions will be answered.

1. From an employee's perspective, is the onboarding process helpful and beneficial for helping a new employee shorten their days to productivity?
2. From a supervisor's perspective, is the onboarding process helpful and beneficial for helping a new employee shorten their days to productivity?
3. How does the onboarding process help the new employee be successful in their job?

Assumptions of the Study

It is assumed that the information gathered from staff feedback (Appendices A, B, C, D, E, and F) is honest and accurate. Along with the information gathered from staff feedback, I also am going to assume that the research information gathered about the onboarding process is accurate and true.

Definition of Terms

Days to productivity (DTP): The number of days it takes for a new employee to be considered productive in a company

Return on investment (ROI): Being able to measure and see generated revenue from a person, process, or system

Onboard (OB): A process of spending time with an employee to help them understand the inter-working of the company, and allow them to get a sense of belonging

Limitations of the Study

The results of this study are limited a small Midwest company (ABC Training Company) and may not be transferable to others.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Because onboarding is a relatively new process, not much has been written in books in periodicals about the topic. Much of the information was found in white papers, marketing materials, and information gathered from various internet sites.

Employee Retention

Searching for, marketing and hiring new staff is very costly. Hiring staff becomes even more costly when staff choose to leave. If this happens, the cost of replacement staff is passed onto the employer. An expert states, “four percent of new hires don’t return to work after their first day of work, while 40% of senior managers hired from outside the company fail within the first 18 months” (OnBoarding with E-Signatures, 2005, p. 1).

Along with noting the percentages of employee turnover, Designer Blinds in Omaha, implemented an onboarding process for new-hire employees, and they reduced turnover from 200% to less than 8% annually. This resulted in being able to reduce the recruiting budget from \$30,000 to \$2,000 (Enns, 2007).

Another company, Corning Glass Works “found that employees who participated in a structured onboarding program were 69 percent more likely to stay with their company after three years than those who did not go through a program” (Brodie, 2006, p. 2).

Employee retention is a costly topic for many employers. A key factor that affects employee retention is the opportunity for advancement. Taleo Research found that “the opportunity to advance is a key motivator for 43 percent of those surveyed when deciding whether they will stay with their employer. In fact, the lack of such opportunity is the top reason 41 percent would leave, followed closely by a lack of competitive pay (40 percent)” (Gurchiek, 2007, p. 2).

Employee retention problems may be able to be traced back to the orientation process, or lack there of. What was covered, how was it covered, and who covered it. “Your employees are getting an orientation, whether you have a formal program or not. Unfortunately, it often isn’t the one you want them to get” (Galbreath, 2006, p. 1). If the wrong people get a hold of the new hire, they can plant poison and cause the new hire to develop preconceived ideas. These ideas can have lasting effects on the new hire, and that could lead to short-term employment.

Employee Productivity

Employee productivity translates to the bottom line of a Profit and Loss sheet, “Essential to employee productivity is the efficient execution of each stage of the onboarding process” (Webhire, 2005, p. 1). Employee productivity can be translated into the old saying “garbage in, garbage out.” This is apparent when companies don’t spend time with their staff. For Hunter Douglas, “prior to onboarding, workers received a ten-minute orientation before heading out to the shop floor.” It’s examples like this where employees get the impression that the company is not committed to their success (Lee, 2005, p. 4).

Just like the president of the United States, DTP for CEO’s are measured. “We used to say [executives] have 100 days [to make an impact], which is what the president is measured by, but the honeymoon period is more compressed” (Fox, 2009, p. 1). As executive reach and pass the unwritten 3-month period for employment, “Executives need to know: What should I keep doing? What should I stop doing? What should I start doing?” (Fox, 2009, p. 1).

When implementing an onboarding program, it is valuable to know the approximate DTP for different job positions. “On average, the time for new external hires to achieve full productivity ranged from eight weeks for clerical jobs to 20 weeks for professionals to more than 26 weeks for executives” (*Organizational entry*, 2006, p. 1).

Increased Employee Engagement

Employee engagement contains multiple meanings. For some companies, engaging the employee means getting them to openly interact with various departments of an organization. Employee engagement can also be considered “a direct result of time to productivity”. When onboarding processes are designed and executed effectively, employees are able to get to work faster. Getting to work faster means the employee is making an impact, which leads to higher levels of engagement. Furthermore, when employees are highly engaged, companies are more likely to retain them (Webhire, 2005).

Socialization can have an effect on employee engagement. This can be related to how the new hire interacts and reacts with situations at the company. Socialization is broadly defined as “a process in which an individual acquires the attitudes, behaviors and knowledge needed to successfully participate as an organizational member” (VanMaanen & Schein, 1979, p. 209-264).

A typical socialization process includes three phases: Anticipatory socialization: This stage occurs before new hires join the organization. Through interacting with representatives of the company (e.g., recruiters, managers), new hires develop expectations about the company and the job prior to organizational entry. Encounter: When new employees begin a new job, they start to learn about job tasks and receive training. Managers can exert their influence by helping new employees understand their roles and duties. Also, by understanding the stresses and issues that newcomers experience, managers can help cultivate a high-quality work relationship with newcomers. Settling in: New employees begin to feel comfortable with their job demands and social relationships. They will be interested in the company’s evaluation of their

performance and in learning about potential career opportunities within the company.

(Organizational entry, 2006, p. 1).

Ensuring All Necessary Tools Are Provided

As part of the onboarding process, employees who shows up at a work station without the necessary tools can easily question how committed the company is to their success. If a data processor was hired, and the employee's work station contained a monitor and keyboard, but no CPU, what would the person do? When new staff members start on their first day, any tool or asset that's required for them to succeed must be available to them. Turnover can be linked to not being prepared for new staff members.

One in 25 employees leaves a job after a disastrous first day. At a minimum, where are the business cards, all the equipment and supplies needed to get to work, and a 'welcome' lunch with new colleagues? Where is the inspiration that assures new employees they have made the right company and job choice? (Enns, 2007, p. 3).

Streamlining the Completion and Submission of Critical Forms and Documents

Recently, the federal government has allowed for some employment forms to be completed, signed and submitted online and electronically. By having this ability, people can begin to complete and submit their employment forms prior to their first day of employment. If a company does not have the infrastructure in place to offer these forms online, it should make a conscious effort to have all the necessary employment forms available so their completion can be quick and efficient. When it comes to doing the mandatory employment paperwork, make it a positive experience. “Prepare all forms to be completed on Day One. Mitigate the dullness of this task with a plant or flowers on the new hire’s desk” (Enns, 2007, p. 4).

Chapter III: Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the new OB process for new hires. The OB process was developed based on the feedback from current and new employees.

The results from this study should demonstrate to employees that the company values their feedback. Based on employee feedback, the company modified its hiring and orientation process. This study examines the effect of these modified practices.

Research Questions

Through this research paper, the follow questions will be answered.

1. From an employee's perspective, is the onboarding process helpful and beneficial for helping a new employee shorten their days to productivity?
2. From a supervisor's perspective, is the onboarding process helpful and beneficial for helping a new employee shorten their days to productivity?
3. How does the onboarding process help the new employee be successful in their job?

Population

The people that participated in the OB feedback survey were all staff hired into the company since July 2007 (Appendix A, B, and C). The type of people this included were directors, managers, and general support staff. Regarding the group of people that participated in this process, no personal data was collected. The only information that is known is the person's name, and gender, which is only known by speaking with or meeting the person.

All staff that went through the onboarding process were asked to fill out a four-week survey, (Appendix A) and a eight-week survey (Appendix B). Also, at the eight-week time frame, the new-hire's supervisor was also given a survey to fill out (Appendix C).

The surveys that were administered to new staff had questions that focused on the employee's understanding of the organization and how well prepared they felt for accomplishing the tasks that they were hired to do (Appendix A, B). The survey that was administered to the supervisors focused on finding out what extra information or assistance the staff could use, along with the supervisors opinion about how the OB process impacts the staff (Appendix C).

Instrumentation

The survey instrument was designed similarly to a rubric, as it contains questions that can be answered by selecting the appropriate response. Along with selecting an appropriate response, the respondent is provided the opportunity to leave comments that may support a selected response, or they may leave feedback information about other thoughts, questions, or concerns.

The three surveys used are designed to measure different criteria about the new hire's needs and knowledge they have gained at different points in a person's employment, along with comments from the supervisor. The survey that was sent to the supervisor is used to ensure all necessary information critical for a new hire in each specific position in the company is covered. The surveys that are administered to each new hire are identical for the timeframe it is designed to cover. The survey that the supervisor gets is also identical, and is administered for each new hire brought into the company. The purpose of this study is to analyze the effectiveness of spending extra time with new hires when they are brought into a company. Some key objectives of the surveys offered to the staff are to gather feedback regarding:

- Answering any questions the new employee may have.
- Their before and after knowledge regarding the reason for the company existing.
- An understanding of the mission and vision of the organization.
- The differences between the two different offices.

- The products and services the organization offers.
- The history of the organization.
- If the job they are doing is the same as they were hired for.
- What changes (additions/omissions) would they make to the OB process.
- Their comfort level with their job.
- Key objectives of the surveys offered to the employee's supervisor are to gather feedback regarding:
 - The need an HR or staff development representative to review specific topics again.
 - How the employee and supervisor communicates.
 - Identifying if the employee needs to build specific skills that are necessary for their job.
 - The supervisors opinion about how well the OB process helped the employee with being engaged and productive.

The surveys administered to the new employees have questions that focus on their understanding of the organization and how well prepared they are for accomplishing the tasks they were hired to do. The survey that is administered to the supervisors focuses on finding out what extra information or assistance the staff could use, along with the supervisors opinion about how the OB process impacts the staff.

Because there are two surveys administered to the new staff, and one survey administered to the supervisors, there is a key focus to the surveys administered to the staff, versus the supervisors. The initial survey that was given to the new staff was to gather data about:

- Ensuring all their questions were answered.

- Gauging the employees opinion about the amount of time spent on the orientation process.
- Assessing if the information and content that was delivered, was clearly understood.
- Understanding the role of the board of directors.
- Understanding the products and services offered by the organization.
- Understanding of the company's history.

In the survey that was given to the new staff at about six weeks of employment was used to gather data about:

- What additions should be made to the new-hire packet.
- What job they are currently doing versus what they were hired to do.
- Their opinion regarding their supervisor's commitment to the success of the organization.
- The assignment of their performance goals.
- Whether or not the OB process helped them become productive quicker than if the OB process did not occur.

When evaluating the survey-response data, each question has five possible selections. For these five selections, they were assigned a number value from 1 to 5, 1 being a more negative representation for the question, and 5 being a more favorable representation for the question being answered.

To see examples of the surveys being used, refer to Appendix A for the one-week survey that was sent to the new hires, B for the 4 to 8 week survey that was sent to the new hires, and C for the survey that was sent to the supervisors of new hires at about the 4 to 8 week timeframe.

Data Collection

The survey was sent to each newly hired employee by email. The survey was built in Microsoft Word, and sent to each individual as an attachment. Because of email being a way of tracking correspondence, this electronic delivery method was the preferred method of distribution.

When each survey was administered, each person was asked to return the survey within 7 days. The surveys did not require respondents to include their name or position, though some people did. Each survey did include a cover letter explaining how to answer the questions. The cover letter also stated “When finished, please complete and return this to your manager or Human Resource Services within 24 hours of completion.”

Though the staff had the option of returning the survey to the Human Resources department, or their manager, they commonly would just email it back to the researcher for processing.

Data Analysis

The returned surveys were added into a spreadsheet that created a weighted average, along with standard deviation. After the data was entered into the spreadsheet, the electronic copy of the survey was removed, and the paper copies were sent to the Human Resources department to be filed.

The data was compiled to see if there were responses that indicated some information was misinterpreted, or omitted. The information was also periodically reviewed by the director, and generalist of human resources to help decide what should be occurring in the OB sessions. To date, and in relationship to the information being delivered, all the feedback was positive. By

the values of the average scores (responses) and standard deviation, the organization is assuming that the information being delivered is helpful and understood by new employees.

To see examples of the survey responses, refer to Appendix D for the one-week survey responses that was from the new hires, E for the 4 to 8 week survey responses that were from the new hires, and F for the survey that were from the supervisors of new hires at about the 4 to 8 week time frame.

Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the new onboarding process at ABC for new hires. The onboarding process was developed based on the feedback from current and new employees.

The results from this study should demonstrate to employees that ABC Training Company values their feedback. Based on employee feedback, the ABC Training Company modified its hiring and orientation process. This study examines the effect of these modified practices.

The results from this study should demonstrate to employees that the company values their feedback. Based on employee feedback, the company modified its hiring and orientation process. This study examines the effect of these modified practices. At the time this research paper was assembled, eight employees were involved in the OB process, and from those new employees, five supervisors or managers were involved in this process, as it was their direct-report employees that participated in the OB program.

To address this purpose, the following research questions were asked:

1. From an employee's perspective, is the onboarding process helpful and beneficial for helping a new employee shorten their days to productivity?
2. From a supervisor's perspective, is the onboarding process helpful and beneficial for helping a new employee shorten their days to productivity?
3. How does the onboarding process help the new employee be successful in their job?

Research Question 1. Research Question 1 asked: From an employee's perspective, is the OB process helpful and beneficial for helping a new employee shorten their DTP?

In regards to shortening the DTP, all staff that participated in the OB process agreed that the information gathered during the sessions helped set the stage for them regarding how their job was instrumental in the function and success of the organization. Some of the comments gathered from the follow-up surveys indicated that the OB process helped people understand how they fit as a piece in the big puzzle. By knowing how their job accomplished the mission of the organization, they are able to better understand what they are supposed to do, and why they are doing the tasks they are asked to do. Some of the feedback comments include:

- “It probably helped me understand why I do what I do”
- “It has provided me with a good day-to-day atmosphere of the organization”

Besides feedback comments, some data results include 1-week employee comments:

- “Use a test to verify retained information.”
- “Give more information about the facility in Appleton, Wisconsin.”
- “During on the job training, the mentor seemed too busy to adequately conduct training sessions.”
- “Jamie Boettcher seemed to make it as if our thoughts and opinions really counted.”
- “Co-workers had questions that I could answer with only weeks on the job.”
- “Jamie was friendly and went out of his way to provide answers when asked.”
- “Good amount of time spent for the amount of information being delivered.”

4-8 week employee comments:

- “Viewing the History of the Organization was the most beneficial with helping me understand the importance of the projects I have worked on.”
- “Could use help with processing my Diners Club card.”

- “More help understanding HR Pro.”
- “More information about NetForum would have been helpful.”
- “My supervisor is supportive of the orientation training.”

4-8-week supervisor comments:

- “Even with the OB, the employee manual is referenced.”
- “Include an organization chart that states who gets contacted for different situations.”
- “Specific training is needed for the new hire staff to learn their job quickly.”

Regarding the three survey checkpoints, their similarities were:

- Realizing why the reason the organization was created.
- Understanding how each person was instrumental in the success of the organization.
- To whom different issues and questions should be directed.
- Being productive sooner in their employment time.

Regarding the three survey check points, their differences were:

- There was some, though limited, feedback from people stating that they still did not understand the reason the organization was formed.
- One manager did not understand why OB was being done, or what its focus was.
- A comment stating that the events should be conducted over a series of days instead of one day.

Research Question 2. Research Question 2 asked: From a supervisor’s perspective, is the OB process helpful and beneficial for helping a new employee shorten their DTP?

In regards to shortening the DTP, many supervisors that provided feedback on employees that participated in the OB process agreed that the information provided during the sessions helped set the stage for explaining how the person's job was instrumental in the success of the organization. Some of the comments gathered from the follow-up surveys indicated that the OB process helped people understand how they fit as a piece in the big puzzle. By knowing how their job fits into the mission of the organization, they are able to better understand what they are supposed to do, and why they are doing the tasks they are asked to do. Some of the supervisor-feedback comments include:

- “The process helped with their opinion and view of the company”
- “More confidence, along with a better view and opinion of the company”

Research Question 3. Research Question 3 asked: How does the OB process help the new employee be engaged and successful in their job?

In regards to the OB process helping the staff becoming engaged and successful in the organization, some of the data gathered in the surveys indicated that the orientation packet, company phone numbers, and organizational chart were beneficial.

Some of the comments gathered from the surveys indicated that the OB process offered the staff some of the tools necessary for initial success. Some of the feedback comments regarding the explanation of the websites include:

- “I loved this part, I learned so much. I use this information everyday now”
- “I found this part of the presentation to be very valuable. Even though I was only in my current position for a few days, I was able to navigate my way around the sites and found some very useful information in terms of being able to help our customers in the future.

Summary

As the organization evaluated a different process for bringing new hires into the company, the new OB process was initiated. From the results gathered during the initial implementation of the OB process used by the organization, the staff that had participated provided positive results. From the organization opting to spend a little extra time and money on new staff, the staff became engaged sooner, realized why the company exists, and identified each person's role in the success of the organization.

The participants were asked for their feedback at different intervals after taking part in the OB process. From that feedback, a spreadsheet was created to track comments and trends. Overall, the feedback was positive from both the managers and staff. From this data, it was decided to continue the OB process.

Regarding the shortening of DTP for new staff (from the perspective of both the supervisor and the staff), and engaging the staff to be successful in their job, both staff and supervisors have offered comments about the benefits of the OB program. At this point, using the OB process for bringing new staff into the company, the feedback has yielded results that provide irrefutable proof that the staff is finding their time spent early in their employment to be a positive experience to the success of their employment.

Chapter V: Discussion

Conclusion and Recommendations

The focus of this research paper is to show how hiring practices had changed at a small Midwest organization. This paper examines the practice of hiring staff and not taking time to explain the inner workings of the company, versus spending a few days to explain the operations of the company to new employees. This practice is called OB.

Contained within this research paper is data and comments that express new employees satisfaction with an extended new-hire orientation process that takes about two days to cover.

Statement of the Problem

Large amounts of time and money are spent on recruiting and attracting candidates to fill positions within any organization. In a time when companies are in a battle among each other for top-shelf talent, turnover cannot be risked. To succeed with the acquisition of talent, employers must change the way they handle their orientation process of newly hired staff. So why only spend a few obligatory hours with new staff and try and force-feed them information at a fast rate of speed?

It has been a common practice to get candidates in the door and working as soon as possible with the belief that the sooner someone is sitting at their workstation, the sooner they will be productive. Unless new staff has done this exact job at another company, nothing can be farther from the truth.

People need to become engaged in the company that hired them. To become engaged, they need to feel that the company cares about the employees. This needs to occur from the top executive all the way down to the hourly employees. This means that everyone should be considered equal during the onboarding process. When a person is engaged in the company,

there is a better chance of them remaining with the organization compared to a person that does not become engaged early in their employment.

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Research Questions

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2. From a supervisor's perspective, is the onboarding process helpful and beneficial for helping a new employee shorten their days to productivity?
3. How does the onboarding process help the new employee be successful in their job?

Conclusions and Recommendations

Research Question 1 asked: From an employees perspective, is the OB process helpful and beneficial for helping a new employee shorten their DTP? Based on the data, it can be concluded that new hires felt that they understood the purpose of the organization better after being involved in the new-hire orientation process.

It could also be noted that the new hires found that the time spent during the new-hire OB process was a good investment in time and money. Because of what the company did, the survey responses indicated a positive reaction from the one-on-one personal attention that they received, and this also translated into a better understanding for the employee as to how they were a key piece of the organizational puzzle.

Based on the conclusions, it is recommended that when bringing new staff into the organization, feedback has shown that employees have found the information provided in the OB process to be very helpful. It is this information that helps create the “buy-in” into the organization regarding what the company does, who their external customers are, and why the new employee’s job is important to the overall success of the company.

From the feedback data and responses that pertain to Research Question 1, it is my recommendation that the OB process for new employees be continued for all newly hired staff. Looking at the received feedback, this new type of enhanced orientation process may help employees become more productive sooner, more positive attitude at work, and reduced turnover.

To effectively carry out this part of the OB process, a specific person should be dedicated to maintaining and delivering the new-hire employee OB program. To do this effectively, I recommend that a veteran employee of the organization be empowered with the task of administering the OB process.

Research Question 2. Research Question 2 asked: From a supervisors perspective, is the OB process helpful and beneficial for shortening an employee's DTP? Based on the data, it can be concluded that the supervisors viewed the OB process to be instrumental in helping for positive opinions and views of the company. From comments provided by the supervisors, they perceived the newly-hired staff to have greater confidence when compared to people that have gone through a traditional hiring process. These newly-hired staff also appeared to have a good opinion of the company.

Based on the conclusions, it is recommended that if the new-hire OB process is going to continue, the supervisors and managers should become an instrumental part of the process. Even though the new employees that have gone through the process have provided positive feedback, it is their feedback along with the supervisors that makes this process the most educational and enjoyable.

To help the supervisors feel that they are a stakeholder in the onboard process, their opinions should be heard in regards to what employees should learn about the company. By involving the supervisors, they will be more aware of what information is being presented, what the staff have been told, and where supplemental information would be helpful.

Research Question 3. Research Question 3 asked: How does the OB process help the new employee be engaged and successful in their job? Based on the data, it can be concluded that from the information provided about the company web sites, people made comments about how “they learned so much, they use this information everyday now.” New hire persons also expressed that they found this part of the presentation to be very valuable. One person even commented, “Even though I was only in my current position for a few days, I was able to navigate my way around the sites and found some very useful information in terms of being able to help our customers in the future.”

Based on the conclusions, it is recommended that continuing the OB process results in employees having the ability to be more productive in less time by knowing how to effectively use the company’s website. By knowing the information contained on the organization’s web sites, employees will be able to answer questions without seeking as much assistance from other staff. This has been expressed as a problem that contributed to a long learning process.

In regards to lessening an employees DTP in regards to using the company’s web site, it was common for staff to ask other veteran employees where information could be found on the website. By not needing to go to other staff for many of these answers, more staff can be of assistance to the organization’s customers, and keeping people satisfied.

From employees that I have personally worked with, very few of them are actually aware of all the information, support documentation, and links contained within the website. It was only upon working with some of the new staff, did they express comments about how helpful this information would have been, had they known about it.

Recommendations for Further Study

This organization did experiment with implementing an OB process for newly hired staff. One of the challenges of implementing this process in a small organization is the limited turnover, which makes it hard to justify one person being dedicated to working on this project. This project was basically spearheaded by one person, though supported by many others in the organization.

Due to limitations of time, money, departmental priorities, and having offices separated by 200 miles, challenges were a common occurrence. I recommend that if this project is to continue, there are a variety of questions and considerations that should be studied.

The staff turnover rate prior to implementing the OB process should be determined. At what rate were employees turning over within the organization, in each department, and at each office. Going back about five years, what was the rate of turnover across the organization? Knowing this information can help identify areas where specialized company knowledge may be necessary.

The Customer Service Index scores of scores of individuals that did not participate in an OB process, and the scores of those who did participate in the OB process need to be evaluated. This information could help serve for the justification as to why the OB program should or should not be continued. This can also help justify the costs associated with the program.

The cost associated with hiring new staff without utilizing the OB process should be identified. This data should also include calculating the cost in days, and lost productivity of other staff in relationship to what is required for new staff to become productive at a level relative to a staff member who participated in an OB session. That cost can then be weighted against the costs associated with new staff being hired and participating in an OB session.

Key information must be identified that would be important for new employees. This information would be most valuable if it were gathered from employees of less than one year of employment, though comments from veteran staff would be welcomed. These employees would be most aware of what information they feel they should have been told. Managers should also be asked what they feel would be important information that new staff should be told. From this collected data a group of veteran and new employees should filter through the information so that new staff receive an appropriate amount of information in an appropriate amount of time.

It should be determined if there is a benefit to having new staff meet staff at the other office. Would this action be beneficial enough to outweigh the costs associated with the required travel time and staff time? These costs also need to be evaluated against an employee's DTP. Will visiting an outside office actually make a person more efficient?

To help evaluate the OB process, creating a professional network with other companies to review their OB process and evaluate their program against ours can help justify modifications and implementation strategies. What have other companies done as part of their OB process to validate their programs existence and keep the process active with their newly hired staff?

Defensible data must be compiled to prove that the DTP has been reduced because of the OB process, and the cost savings must be enough to continue the program. As this data is evaluated, the entire footprint must be examined.

When looking at each department, there should be positive change regarding employee turnover or dissatisfaction. When looking per department, what was the average employee employment lifespan? What types of concerns were commonly heard, and how long did it typically take for complaints to arise?

If an OB program were to be implemented, it must be determine if the program could justify having a dedicated staff for the project. If so, would that person be a full or part-time employee?

Though this organization is in the initial stages of using an OB process in, there is still more research that needs to be done before a conclusion can be drawn about continuing the OB process. The participants enjoyed the program, but is it cost effective to the point that the company can justify the funding? Is the employee satisfaction and gained knowledge enough to see measurable differences regarding staff DTP?

If this project continues, the decision makers within the company need to remember that when information is delivered, it should be like drinking from a garden hose, not a fire hose. Like any other project that an organization takes on, this program requires a process to be set in place for all parties in the organization to measure its successes and failure

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APPENDIX A

One - Two Week Post-Orientation Checkpoint

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help ABC TRAINING COMPANY create an orientation process for new staff members that is useful, helpful, and provides an easy-to-understand view of the organization of which they will become an integral part.

As stated during the orientation process, we will be asking for feedback from you four times within your first 90 days of employment. When completing this questionnaire, please understand that your responses will help us modify the structure of future new-hire orientations.

Directions

To complete this Checkpoint survey, read each statement/question, and then select the best statement that fits the situation. Please select only one response for each statement/question, but if deemed necessary, you may clarify your responses by providing written comments.

When finished, please complete and return this to your manager within 24 hours of receipt.

Human Resource Services

The HR representative was:

- Not friendly or open to my questions
- Friendly but not open to my questions
- Friendly but rushed through the presentation
- Friendly and open to my questions
- Friendly, open to my questions, and made me feel welcome

What specific behaviors or comments (if any) made you feel this way?

Comments: _____

Was the HR representative knowledgeable about the information they were presenting/discussing with you?

- HR representative read directly from the presentation/orientation materials
- HR representative had difficulty following the presentation/orientation materials
- HR representative demonstrated strong knowledge in only a few areas of the presentation/orientation materials
- HR representative clearly understood the presentation/ orientation materials and added additional information throughout

Comments: _____

Was the HR representative able to either answer (on the spot) any questions you had, or in a timely manner find the answer for you?

My questions were not answered

My questions were eventually answered, but not in a timely manner

My questions were not answered very clearly or quickly

My questions were answered clearly and quickly

My questions were answered clearly and quickly, sometimes from a different source (i.e., my manager; co-worker, etc.)

I didn't have any questions

What specific questions did you have that were not answered?

What questions did you have that were answered by someone else?

Are there any additional questions that you would still like to have answered?

Comments: _____

Regarding the time spent with the HR representative:

We were unable to finish the materials

The entire presentation/orientation was covered but not in enough detail

We moved too quickly through some areas of the presentation/orientation

There were too many interruptions during the presentation/orientation

The amount of time was right for the amount of information covered

Comments: _____

Assistance (if needed) for filling out the necessary forms and documents:

Not applicable (no assistance was needed)

I was not offered any assistance with filling out the forms

The HR representative directed me to find them if I had questions

The HR representative followed up with me to ensure that I returned all paperwork

The HR representative was available or present while I filled out my forms

Comments: _____

In your opinion, what could the HR Services department have omitted during their time with you? (What did not seem to be necessary or useful at the time?)

Comments: _____

In your opinion, what could the HR Services department have included during their time with you? (What now seemed to be missing from the presentation?)

Comments: _____

Staff Development

The Staff Development representative was:

- Not friendly or open to my questions
- Friendly but not open to my questions
- Friendly but rushed through the presentation
- Friendly and open to my questions
- Friendly, open to my questions, and made me feel welcome

What specific behaviors or comments (if any) made you feel this way?

Comments: _____

Was the Staff Development representative knowledgeable about the information they were presenting/discussing with you?

- They read directly from the presentation
- They had difficulty following the presentation
- They did not add additional information on the presentation
- They demonstrated strong knowledge in only a few areas of the presentation
- They clearly understood the presentation and added additional information from each slide

Comments: _____

Was the Staff Development representative able to either answer (on the spot) any questions you had, or in a timely manner, find the answer for you?

- My questions were not answered
- My questions were eventually answered, but not in a timely manner
- My questions were not answered very clearly or quickly
- My questions were answered clearly and quickly
- My questions were answered clearly and quickly, sometimes from a different source (i.e., my manager; co-worker, etc.)
- I didn't have any questions

What specific questions did you have that were not answered?

Comments: _____

What questions did you have that were answered by someone else?

Comments: _____

Are there any additional questions that you would still like to have answered?

Comments: _____

Regarding the amount of time spent with the Staff Development representative:

- We were unable to finish the materials
- The entire presentation was covered but not in any detail
- We moved too quickly through some areas of the presentation
- There were too many interruptions during the presentation
- The amount of time was right for the amount of information covered

Comments: _____

Was too much information delivered in too short of time?

- Yes
- No

Do you have any suggestions on how the format of the presentation could be improved?

Comments: _____

Please help us understand how we did explaining the following topics, and how well you understood the information.

The information helped me understand the function of ABC TRAINING COMPANY.

Yes

No (If NO, please give some examples of the issues and what could have been done differently)

Examples: _____

Was the ABC TRAINING COMPANY and Education Foundation Vision and Mission statement clearly explained?

The Vision and Mission statement were not clearly explained

The Vision and Mission statement were explained but I'm not sure I understand them

The Vision and Mission statement were explained well enough to understand

The Vision and Mission statement were explained and I understand how the Vision and Mission affect the organization

Comments: _____

Was the function of the World Headquarters and the Tech Centre clearly explained?

The functions of the two facilities were not clearly defined

The functions were explained but not clearly identified

The functions were explained and I have a general sense of what each location does

The functions were clearly defined and I understand how the two facilities work together

Was the Organizational Chart explained and easy to understand?

The information was confusing

The presenter jumped around and went out of order and I don't feel it was clearly explained

The information was adequately explained and I understand the organization structure

Comments: _____

Were the ABC TRAINING COMPANY web sites covered enough for you to understand what function they serve?

- The web sites were not covered
- The web sites were briefly covered
- The web sites were shown and briefly discussed
- I have a good understanding of the web sites

Comments: _____

Was the difference between a For-Profit versus a Not-For-Profit organization clearly explained?

- This information was not explained
- The information was confusing and I still don't know the difference
- The information was understandable but I still don't know why ABC TRAINING COMPANY is Not-For-Profit
- The information was presented in detail and helped me understand why ABC TRAINING COMPANY is Not-For-Profit

Comments: _____

Was the function of the board of directors clearly explained?

- The information about the board was confusing and did not seem to make sense
- The information about the board was explained, but its function was not clearly defined
- The information about the board was presented in an orderly manner that made sense
- The information about the board helped me understand their function with ABC TRAINING COMPANY

Comments: _____

Were the products and services of ABC TRAINING COMPANY explained in a way that was understandable?

- The information was confusing, and the presenter did not appear knowledgeable
- The presenter jumped around and went out of order and I don't feel and it was clearly explained
- The information was presented in an orderly manner and explained the reason for the different products
- The information helped me understand how my job is instrumental with the current products and services

Comments: _____

Was the History of ABC TRAINING COMPANY easy to understand?

- The information was confusing
- The presenter jumped around and went out of order and I don't feel it was clearly explained
- The information was presented in an orderly manner
- The information helped me understand the purpose of ABC TRAINING COMPANY

Comments: _____

APPENDIX B

Week 4 - 8, Post-Orientation Checkpoint

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help ABC Training Company evaluate the orientation process for new staff members. This brief survey is designed to provide the onboarding team with feedback from a newly hire employee on their orientation experience.

As stated during the orientation process, we will be asking for feedback from you different times within your first 90 days (approximately) of employment. When completing this questionnaire, please understand that your responses will help us modify the process and structure of future new-hire orientations.

Directions

To complete this Checkpoint survey, read each statement/question, and then select the best statement that fits the situation. Please select only one response for each statement/question. Writing comments in the spaces also help us understand how we can be more efficient and effective in administering the orientation process.

When finished, please complete and return this to your manager or Human Resource Services within 24 hours of receipt. E-mailing the form back is also acceptable.

Your Name: _____

Current Position: _____

Human Resource Services Specific

1. **What information provided by the HR department was the most useful to you:**

2. **Are there any issues or concerns that you would like to further discuss with an HR representative?**

Yes, I will contact HR to discuss further

Yes, I would like HR to contact me

No

Comments:

Staff Development

3. **What information provided by the Staff Development representative was the most useful to you regarding your job function?**

4. **Are there any issues or concerns that you would like to further discuss with the Staff Development representative?**

Yes, I will contact the Staff Development rep. to discuss further

Yes, I would like the Staff Development rep. to contact me

No

Comments: _____

5. **At this point in your employment, has there been any information that was delivered that you thought was not useful or not helpful to you in your current job function?**

Please be specific

Comments: _____

6. **At this point in your employment, what other information would you have liked to have received during your new-hire orientation process?**

Please be specific

Comments: _____

7. Have you used your new-hire reference packet since you began working in your daily job?

Yes 1 to 2 times

Yes, 3 to 4 times

Yes, 5 times or more

No

Please be specific

Comments: (If "No," Why not?): _____

8. What additions to the new-hire packet would you recommend?

Please be specific

Comments: _____

General Employment Information.

9. Is the job you are doing today the same job you were hired for?

Yes

No

If you answered No, please describe what duties you were hired to perform versus what duties you are currently performing.

Examples: _____

10. If you answered No, what is your comfort level of the job you are currently performing?

Examples: _____

11. Do you feel your supervisor is committed to your success at ABC Training Company? (Check all that apply)

Yes, he/she often checks in with me to get a feel about how I am doing.

Yes, he/she is actively training or coaching me to learn the job, or has designated a team member to train me.

Yes, he/she provides timely feedback on my performance.

No, I don't see my supervisor unless I have a need or question for them.

No, no/she appears too busy with other projects and/or is not approachable.

No, my supervisor isn't providing sufficient guidance.

Comments: _____

12. Besides the distribution of general information, how does your supervisor communicate with you? (Check all that apply)

- E-mail
- Phone
- In person

If in person, where is the communication done?

- In their office
- At your work area
- Both

Comments: _____

13. Have formal goals been assigned to and discussed with you for the current fiscal year?

- Yes
- No

Comments: _____

14. If Yes, were you given a copy of these goals for your records?

- Yes
- No

Comments: _____

15. Do you perceive ABC Training Company staff to be friendly and helpful?

- Yes
- No

Comments: _____

16. Are you performing tasks in your job that require skills in which you could use more training?

Yes

No

If Yes, please list the training you are interested in receiving. Comments:

17. Has participating in an Onboarding process helped you perform your daily tasks?

Yes

No

If Yes, please provide some examples of how the process helped you.

18. Do you feel you can be more productive after attending the Onboarding program

Yes

No

Please take a moment to list any other thoughts or comments you might have about your experience so far at ABC Training Company (good or bad). We appreciate your feedback!

Appendix C

Week 4 - 8, Post-Orientation Checkpoint

(Supervisor Feedback)

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help ABC Training Company evaluate the orientation process for new staff members. This brief survey is designed to provide the onboarding team with feedback on your perspective as the supervisor of a newly hired employee in your department. When completing this questionnaire, please understand that your responses will help us modify the process and structure of future new-hire orientations.

Directions

To complete this Checkpoint survey, read each statement/question, and then select the best statement that fits the situation. Please select only one response for each statement/question. Writing comments in the spaces provided will also help us understand how we can be more efficient and effective in administering the orientation process.

When finished, please return this survey to Jamie Boettcher or Human Resource Services within 48 hours of receipt. E-mailing the form back is also acceptable.

Date:**Supervisors Name:****Staff Members Name:**

Human Resource Services

1. **Are there any issues or concerns that you would like an HR representative to further discuss with the new staff member?**
Yes, I will contact HR to discuss further
Yes, I would like HR to contact me
No

Comments:

Staff Development

2. **Have you received any feedback regarding the usefulness of the information provided by the Staff Development representative relevant to the new staff member's job function?**
Yes
No

Comments:

3. **Are there any issues or concerns that you would like to further discuss with the Staff Development representative regarding what information was covered?**
Yes, I will contact the Staff Development rep. to discuss further
Yes, I would like the Staff Development rep. to contact me
No

Comments

4. **Is there any specific information that you would like your new staff members to receive during the new-hire process? Please be specific to your department.**
Yes
No

Comments:

5. **Are you aware if the new-hire orientation packet is used/referenced by the new staff member?**

Yes

No

6. **Have you seen the new-hire orientation packet?**

Yes

No

General Employment Information

7. **Is the job that the new staff member is doing today the same job they were hired for?**

Yes

No

If you answered No, please describe why.

Examples:

If you answered No, what do you perceive their comfort level to be for the job they are doing?

Examples:

8. **Do you feel your staff member is committed to the success of ABC Training Company?**

Yes

No

Comments:

9. **How does your staff member communicate with you? (Check all that apply)**

E-mail

Phone

In person

If in person, where is the communication done?

At their work area

In your office

Both

Comments:

10. Have formal goals been assigned to and discussed with the new staff member for the current fiscal year?

Yes

No

If No, please explain why.

Comments:

If Yes, were they given a copy of these goals for their records?

Yes

No

Comments:

11. Are they performing tasks that require skills in which they could use more training?

Yes

No

If Yes, please list the training that would be helpful.

12. Has participating in an Onboarding process helped your new staff member better able to perform their job?

Yes

No

If Yes, please provide some examples of how the process helped you.

13. Do you feel new staff members are more productive after participating in the Onboarding program?

Yes

No

14. In your opinion, have employees who participated in the Onboarding program appear better prepared than those who have not participated?

Yes

No

If yes, by what basis? **Select all that apply.**

Confidence.

Taking on new tasks/projects

Their opinion and view of the company

Other _____

15. **Please take a moment to list any other thoughts or comments you might have about the ABC Training Company orientation process (good or bad). We appreciate your feedback!**

Appendix D

Week One - Post Orientation Checkpoint

Week One - Post Orientation Checkpoint												
1)	The HR representative wasÉ (1-5)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0.00	1 = not good 5 = good
2)	HR rep knowledgeable about information they were discussing with you? (1-4)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4		4	0.00	1 = not good 4 = good
3)	HR representative able to answer questions in a timely manner? (1-6)	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	6	4.5	0.76	1 = not good 4 = good 5 = dif. source 6 = NA
4)	Regarding amount of time spent with the HR Representative (1-5)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5		5	0.00	1 = not good 5 = good
5)	Assistance (if needed) for filling out necessary documentation (1-5)	1	1	4	1	3	4	4	1	2.375	1.51	1 = NA 2 = not good 5 = good
6)	What could HR have omitted?	None			None	None		None	NA			
7)	What could HR have included?	Nothing			None	None			NA			
8)	Staff Development rep wasÉ (1-5)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0.00	1 = not good 5 = good
9)	Staff Development rep was knowledgeable about info? (1-5)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0.00	1 = not good 5 = good
10)	Staff Development representative able to answer questions in a timely manner? (1-6)	4	4	4	4	6	4	5	6	4.625	0.92	1 = not good 4 = good 5 = dif. source 6 = NA
11)	Regarding amount of time spent with the Staff Development Rep (1-5)	5	5	5	5		5	5	5	5	0.00	1 = not good 5 = good
12)	Too much info in a short time? (1-2)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0.00	1 = yes 2 = no
13)	Information interesting & helped understand function of I-CAR? (1-2)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.00	1 = yes 2 = no
14)	I-CAR & EF Vision & Mission Statements clearly explained? (1-4)	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	3.75	0.71	1 = not good 4 = good
15)	Function of WHQ & TC clearly explained? (1-4)	4	4	4	4	1	4	4	4	3.625	1.06	1 = not good 4 = good
16)	Organizational chart explained and easy to understand? (1-3)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	0.00	1 = not good 3 = good
17)	I-CAR websites covered & understood what function they serve? (1-4)	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	3.75	0.71	1 = not good 4 = good
18)	For-Profit vs Not-For-Profit clearly explained? (1-4)	4	2	4	3	2	3	3	4	3.125	0.83	1 = not good 4 = good
19)	Board of Directors function clearly explained? (1-4)	4	4	3	4	2	3	4	4	3.5	0.76	1 = not good 4 = good
20)	Products & services of I-CAR explained & easy to understand? (1-4)	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3.625	0.52	1 = not good 4 = good
21)	History of I-CAR easy to understand? (1-4)	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3.875	0.35	1 = not good 4 = good

