

## *On-boarding - More than Just a good Idea*

*By Bill J. Bonnstetter*

Forward-thinking companies are taking on-boarding of new employees seriously, because it's one of the best ideas to be refined in recent years. A superior on-boarding process initiates success in two areas: retention and performance. However, reaping the rewards of a comprehensive on-boarding program requires that you absolutely must make sure you use a selection system that only allows you to hire people who truly fit the job and the corporate culture. Imagine the consequences if you mistakenly hired an inferior performer and then implemented a process that will make sure they don't quit!

A proper selection process starts with identifying subject matter experts (SMEs) who really understand the job in question. The SME's first task is to identify the key accountabilities for the job. This process requires a facilitator to assure that key accountabilities are real and void of any individual biases. If the job could talk, it would identify the key accountabilities objectively and without bias.

Key accountabilities do a better job of demonstrating the reason the job exists than old-style job descriptions do, and they are a much more clear way to identify expectations to an employee, too. Once a manager sees how effectively they communicate the job to a new employee, they will see how obsolete job descriptions have become. In fact, since key accountabilities make it easy to recognize the skills, behavior, knowledge and motivators required to accomplish the job results, they make it easier to hire and train for superior performance, too.

This process empowers a company to define the ideal candidate for the job, including:

- Education
- Certifications
- Experience
- Ideal behavior, skills and intrinsic motivators

With a process in place to promote longevity within your company, you can once again address an on-boarding system. The best practice is to have the new employee complete all payroll, insurance, and company policy information prior to the actual start date. The new employee's work station must be ready on Day 1, with equipment such as their desk, chair, computer and phone in place. As much as possible, the work station should be prepared with access to the initial set up information they will

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need for tools such as voice mail, computer log in, and phone and email distribution lists. This assures that you get your new employee off to a positive and fast start, and the first day can be spent focused on establishing a foundation for performance.

The key components of the on-boarding process for their first day will be:

Introduction to management and colleagues

Manager and new employee discussion:

Key job accountabilities

Skills and behavior required by the job

Corporate culture

New employee's current skills and any skills that must be developed to do the job

How best to communicate and manage the new employee

Creating and prioritizing a personalized development plan

A plan to hold the new employee accountable for building necessary skills

Assign a mentor to the new employee to assist the on-boarding process

Schedule a meeting between the new employee and senior management

This on-boarding process was developed and refined over a period of years. It not only ensures a company's ability to select and keep superior performers, it also contributes to attracting top talent by helping to brand the company as the best place to work in its city or industry. Over a 24-month period, tracking the use of this system demonstrated impressive results: it filled 96% of open positions and retained 98% of those hired and on-boarded with this process.

For more information on the system, please contact Anita Sirianni 800-471-2619 or [coach@anitasirianni.com](mailto:coach@anitasirianni.com).