



# An Exploration of Effective Onboarding on Employee Engagement and Retention in Work Organizations

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## ABSTRACT

The high performance of work organization is predicative to effective recruitment and selection or strategic onboarding of the most valuable-asset, people who contribute individually or collectively to sustain an organization. This paper explores effective onboarding on employee engagement and retention in work organizations. The exploratory design was adopted because it permits an in-depth review and analysis of a phenomenon. It posed that an integral aspect of any successful organization is the adherence to key processes and procedures of onboarding new entrant into the company. This is a truism because a well planned recruitment and selection system will overcome the challenges of under or over staffing which would affect the manpower need of the organization. It matches the right quantity and quality of employees with the requisite knowledge, skills, talents and experience for proper placement and engagement. The study revealed that an effective onboarding strategy emphasizes the employee participation in achieving the organization's goals and desired long-term objectives, enhancing business performance through employee engagement and retention devoid of employee turnover. It was showed that socialization in a work place is enhanced, and employee turnover is reduced when onboarding processes are effective and taken into consideration the various learning styles and positional requirements of new employees. It was affirmed that Onboarding is a collaborative process spanning a few days to several months. As a result, organizations must ensure regular communication with new employees, starting when they accept the job offer and continuing even after the placement process is complete. The researchers conclude that leaders or managers need a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the

operational requirements in the system which plays a crucial role in the onboarding process and their expertise will help to ensure that potential employees are the right fit for the organization, intended to boost job performance and decreasing employee turnover. It was juxtaposed that onboarding processes are enhanced through effective and supportive leadership at every level.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent times, a successful recruitment process involving the right talent selection, proper onboarding, engagement, and retention of top talent serves as the strategic driver for an organization, such that getting it right at that stage establishes the organization on the right path. Following effective recruitment and selection, strategic onboarding is among the most important ways for organizations to enhance the efficiency of their employees' management systems (Maurer, 2018). Leaders of organizations align recruiting practices with strategic objectives through employee onboarding processes to increase employee engagement and retention (Meyer & Bartels, 2017). The onboarding process is very important if the organization's visions are to be achieved. As such, the process should be painstakingly thorough so that the required workforce the organization needs is properly onboarded to safeguard the organization's future. (Hommey et al., 2020) found that within the first two years after starting a new job, 57% of the new employees intended to leave. Organizations can lose.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 THE CONCEPT OF ONBOARDING

Onboarding refers to the systematic procedure by which newly hired personnel are integrated into the organization, equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively, and transformed into actively involved and efficient members (Lee, 2008). Onboarding also refers to the procedure through which newly hired personnel obtain the knowledge, abilities, and conduct required to function as engaged, productive members of their respective teams, departments, and the entire organization. They promote long-term retention, reduce the time between newly hired employees and productivity, and facilitate organizational socialization (Krasman, 2015). Employers bear the financial burden of hiring new employees. In management literature, onboarding is often referred to as organizational socialization. This process involves integrating newly hired employees into the company and transforming them into productive members of the organization (Bauer, 2010; Van Maanen and Schein, 1979). Organizational socialization refers to acquiring knowledge and skills and the methods used by new employees as they adapt to their roles within an organization. Becoming an effective team player includes exchanging information, learning new abilities, and adapting to the company's culture (Britto et al., 2018; Sharma & Stol, 2020). Organizational socialization is based on the idea that organizations and newly arrived workers view adaptation as a continuous process, with socialization and individualization interacting in various ways. The organization considers the ideal traits and social skills of newly hired employees, along with their professional competency and essential information. An employee's ability to adapt to their new workplace and become an integral part of the team depends on their level of organizational socialization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). An effective organizational socialization process will equip the employee with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours to integrate successfully into the new position, role, or workplace culture (Chao et al., 1994; Watchfogel, 2009). The onboarding process aims to facilitate the transition and integration of a new employee by acquainting them with the cultural norms and expectations of the organization (Becker & Bishb, 2019). According to Chillakuri (2020), new workers form long-lasting perceptions of the organization during their initial days of employment. Effective onboarding experiences can improve workers' knowledge of their assigned duties. According to Moon et al. (2021), an effective onboarding process can reduce turnover intentions while enhancing productivity and resilience. An efficient organizational socialization process can develop competent individuals with favourable work attitudes, increasing employee retention (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011). Conversely, inadequate socialization can result in early staff turnover or poor work performance, necessitating the organization to restart the recruitment and selection process and wasting time and resources.

Similarly, an employee's initial perception of the organization can significantly influence their subsequent performance and commitment to the firm (Chillakuri, 2020). During this stage, a new employee accepts the employment offer letter, receives more details regarding organization paperwork associated with the recruiting process, and is provided with pre-arrival information to familiarize them with the workplace. The company requests any necessary work tools and personalized equipment for the employee, announces the new employee's arrival, and sends a welcome packet to the employee. The employee meets other employees informally and becomes familiar with the new company's culture (Dávila & Piña-Ramírez, 2018). Informing the applicant who was chosen during the recruiting and selection process about the company and the role they are applying for is the purpose of the onboarding phase of the recruitment process. It might include more detailed information regarding departments and career advancement opportunities (Caetano and Vala, 2007). During recruitment, new employees' knowledge gaps are identified, and with an understanding of a newcomer's knowledge gap, the team lead could ensure the newcomer receives appropriate resources and assistance to help them successfully integrate into the organization (Gregory et al., 2022). Before employees start working for the organization, a good onboarding process determines whether they fit the position. Organizations and workers cannot afford high



employee turnover rates because of the associated investment expenses and salary losses (Vace

New employees may experience a dip in productivity due to the normal anxiety and stress of starting a new job (Bourne, 1967; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). During orientation, organizations usually inform new employees about the organization's background, structure, rewards, and policies. A more progressive approach would incorporate the organization's goals and ideals into the orientation process by communicating them to new employees, shaping their values, and integrating them into the organization's framework (Asare-Bediako, 2008). New employees who participated in orientation were more likely to become fully integrated team members than those who did not (Klein & Weaver, 2000). New employees are known to have a high degree of networking after orientation and an initial positive attitude toward the work, which leads to increased job satisfaction upon joining an organization (Boswell et al., 2009). Rather than viewing orientation as a one-time experience, Wallace and Trinka (2009) characterize it as an ongoing process, and they note that there is no consensus on how long orientation sessions should take. Wanous (1992) defined orientation as a series of short-term experiences that initiate the new employee into organizational information, such as paperwork, compliance, and any preliminary skills training needed, to minimize the stress of beginning a new job. During orientation, new employees get the necessary information to settle into their new jobs quickly and easily. It gives a clear picture of the organization and the department to which the new employee belongs. The new employee gets introduced to departmental goals, policies and procedures, customs, and traditions, and the employer's expectations are conveyed (Onochie, 2020).

## 2.3 SUCCESSFUL ONBOARDING OUTCOMES

Salau et al. (2005) noted that onboarding programs are essential for new employees and organizations. The benefits include a more engaged and productive workforce, lower turnover rates, higher morale, easier learning, and less uncertainty among new employees. The level of an employee's confidence in performing their job directly correlates with their motivation and, ultimately, their level of achievement, surpassing that of their less confident colleagues. Organizations should implement targeted onboarding programs to enhance employees' confidence as they traverse unfamiliar organizational environments.

### 2.3.1 ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

According to Mowday et al. (1979), when new employees are properly onboarded, they form a deep connection to the company defined by shared values, motivating them to stay and work hard for the organization's benefit. Developing organizational commitment is essential, as employees are the primary drivers of sustained success and performance. Al-Meer (1989) classified organizational commitment into three primary components: alignment with the organization's goals and ideals, active engagement through exertion, and steadfast loyalty. Meyer et al. (1991) identified three components of organizational commitment: affective, normative, and continuance. An employee's affective commitment can be described as their level of emotional involvement in the organization's success. The term "continuance commitment" describes how workers feel about the benefits and drawbacks of staying with their current employer. When workers develop an emotional connection to their employer and genuinely believe in its mission, values, and standards, they are more likely to stay put (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Glazer & Kruse, 2008). Van Maanen and Schein, (1979). Organizational socialization refers to acquiring knowledge and skills and the methods used by new employees as they adapt to their roles within an organization. Becoming an effective team player includes exchanging information, learning new abilities, and adapting to the company's culture (Britto et al., 2018; Sharma & Stol, 2020). Organizational socialization is based on the idea that organizations and newly arrived workers view adaptation as a continuous process, with socialization and individualization interacting in various ways. The organization considers the ideal traits and social skills of newly hired employees, along with their professional competency and essential information. An employee's ability to adapt to their new workplace and become an integral part of the team depends on their level of organizational socialization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). An effective organizational process can develop competent individuals with favourable work attitudes, increasing employee retention (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011). Conversely, inadequate socialization can result in early staff turnover or poor work performance, necessitating the organization to restart the recruitment and selection process and wasting time and resources.

Kahn (1990) defines engagement as the process of developing employees' commitment to their respective work. In this view, engagement means giving undivided attention to the task at hand and using mental, emotional, and physical resources as needed. According to Schaufeli et al. (2002), engagement is a state of mind associated with work that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and focus and is experienced as positive and fulfilling. Vazirani (2007) has considered employee engagement as a tool to measure a person's association with the organization, and that strategy helps to attract, develop, and retain a skilful workforce. Employee engagement enhances employees' morale by fostering a dedicated workforce committed to their employment, leading to increased productivity and eventually enhancing organizational performance. According to Kumar and Swetha (2011), employee engagement is a significant factor in establishing an



organization's image, fostering customer satisfaction, and impacting employee loyalty, productivity, and retention. Alternatively, when workers are not engaged in their work, it shows in the organization's performance metrics, such as low productivity, high turnover, and absenteeism (Prajapati, 2022). Employees actively involved in their work boost organizational performance by analyzing external factors and engaging in positive peer interactions.

### 2.3.3 PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Perceived organizational support (POS) relates to the individual perception of an employee that their contributions are valued and that the organization places a high priority on their welfare (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). It is the degree to which an organization is perceived by its employees as providing sufficient working circumstances, motivating them to work, and compensating them fairly for their efforts (Eisenberger et al. 1986). Perceived organizational support might include aspects of work, such as training and willingness to help the new employee adapt to new situations. Perceived organizational support positively influences employee performance when employees are strongly identified with the organization and weakly identified with their profession (Shahzad et al., 2018). Perceived organizational support is the employee feedback response through the organization, shown with high commitment and involvement in organization goal achievement (Saks, 2006). Perceived organizational support is the perception among employees that the organization values and invests in them and cares about their well-being. Perceptions of justice, supervisors' support, financial incentives, and favourable working conditions are all potential antecedents (Eisenberger et al., 1986). While not all of these factors are necessary for an employee to feel supported by the organization, they all help shape their attitude toward the organization.

meaningful work from the beginning, providing them with correct and relevant information, and delivering continuing assistance and growth are all part of this (Jeske & Olson, 2022). It can also improve morale and job satisfaction among new employees, positively impacting retention rates.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The process of onboarding staff is often overlooked in numerous organizations. Employee retention and performance can be improved through a well-structured onboarding program, regardless of duration. Organizations with effective onboarding programs achieve faster integration of new staff, foster improved alignment between their responsibilities and the organization's requirements, and experience reduced employee turnover rates (Onochie, 2020). Coaching, mentoring, 360-degree feedback, and organizational support should comprise the next phase of the onboarding process (Gilmore & Turner, 2010), following the completion of paperwork and an informative introduction to the organization during orientation. To help new employees settle in more quickly and easily, onboarding handbooks are a great resource. According to Godinho et al. (2023), every company should provide new employees with an onboarding book to help them integrate into their new role and "guide" them through the organizational process. The onboarding program should include cultural and organizational training for the employees to understand where they fit into the organization. Based on these findings, organizations should put greater emphasis on onboarding in order to foster an engaged workforce. Organizations should prioritize fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion among their workforce by encouraging them to engage in social activities and providing opportunities for teamwork and collaboration. By fostering a cordial and inclusive work environment, organizations can facilitate the integration and acceptance of new employees, thereby improving employee relations, increasing job satisfaction, and increasing employee retention rates. Furthermore, by facilitating mentorship and networking opportunities, organizations can enable new employees to establish professional networks and access necessary resources and support to contribute to their success (Patel & Mohanty, 2023). Successful onboarding is a key component of employee retention, which allows organizations to cultivate a robust and skilled workforce that propels growth and success in the long run.

the job offer and continuing even after the onboarding process is complete (Peltokorpi et al., 2022). According to Skelton et al. (2020), leadership that possesses a comprehensive understanding of operational requirements plays a crucial role in the onboarding process. This expertise helps ensure that employees are the right fit for the organization, boosting job satisfaction and decreasing turnover. Onboarding processes are, therefore, enhanced by the support and involvement of leadership at every level.



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