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A 'HOW TO' GUIDE FOR

ONBOARDING IMMIGRANTS INTO THE WORKPLACE

BY: ALICIA PIECHOWIAK, M.A.

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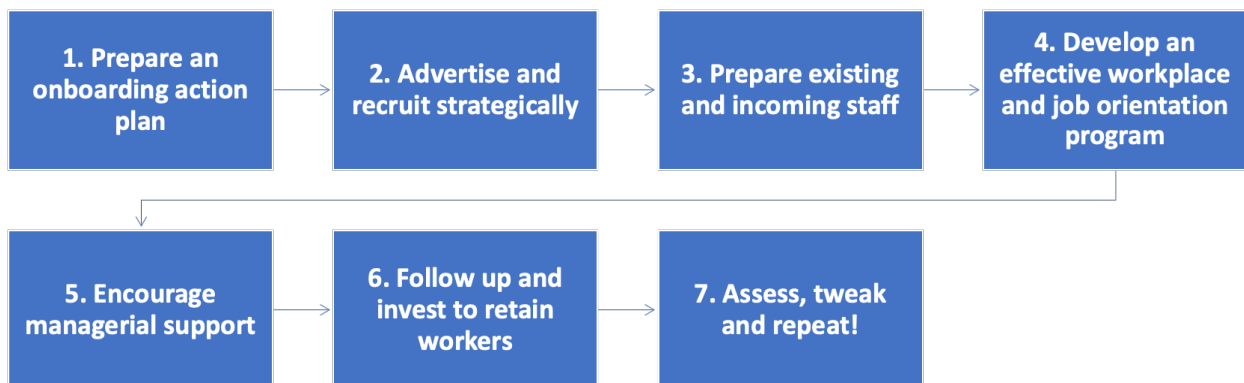
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7 Steps to Effective Onboarding

Attracting, integrating and retaining immigrant workers, or onboarding, is neither a one-shot deal nor a one-man show! Onboarding immigrants is an ongoing process that needs to be documented, continually tweaked and customized and requires employees from across departments and ranks to contribute. This document describes the seven steps of onboarding and provides practical tips on how to put those steps into action.



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Step 1: Prepare an onboarding action plan

Effective onboarding begins before you even think of recruiting workers.

This section specifically describes and breaks down five elements you should consider beforehand: i) build partnerships in the community, ii) prepare and share your strategic business plan, iii) work on your company culture and branding, iv) promote a continuous development environment and v) consider factors that make up good quality work.



Element 1: Build partnerships in the community.



As a small to medium enterprise, you cannot do it all on your own and you will need allies. Build partnerships with various stakeholders in the community so they can help with the integration into the community.

1. **Social service providers.** Connect with immigrant integration service providers, language training providers, health care providers, and schools and daycares where children of immigrant workers may be registered. These service providers may also provide new immigrant workers with information about how the local systems work.
2. **Community groups and non-government organizations.** Connect with ethnic community groups that may become a source of recruitment and support for immigrant workers you hire.

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3. **Local businesses.** Consider having partnerships in banks, grocery stores and real estate agents. They may help immigrants access services, obtain a loan to purchase a house or a car or consider expanding products to include popular ethnic foods.
4. **Local economic development agencies and chambers of commerce.** These organizations may provide certain services such as help finding appropriate housing, transportation and training services for your current employees.

★ **Special Tip**

Look at local municipal, Cégep and university websites. They often provide resources, links, support materials for citizens and international students.

🤝 **Added benefit**

These different alliances will be valuable resources for integrating immigrant workers into the community and contribute to identifying and addressing issues in the community such as a shortage of housing.

📖 **Added resources**

Jian, G. (2012). Does culture matter? An examination of the association of immigrants' acculturation with workplace relationship quality. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 26(2), 295-321. doi: 10.1177/0893318912440178

Element 2: Prepare and share your strategic business plan.



A long-term strategic business plan describes how the organization generates revenue, day-to-day operations and long-term goals. This plan communicates a collective goal, broader challenges, and executive decisions. For this reason:

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1. **Develop a long-term plan.** Describe sales, growth and organizational change objectives you wish to reach in 4-5 years.
2. **Identify short-term (annual) objectives.** Identify organizational development objectives and identify hiring needs, positions to be filled and budgets to be allocated.
3. **Hold regular meetings to keep staff informed.** Hold regular meetings to discuss the advancement of the annual objectives, challenges and solutions.

★ **Special Tip**

The type of information and extent of the business plan that is shared with employees may vary from one organization to the next.

🗣️ **Added Benefit**

Communicating the strategic plan builds trust and confidence, especially during difficult economic times.

❖ **Additional resources**

How to write a business plan, BDC

Investissement Québec- Preparing a business plan

PME Montreal how to write a business plan

Element 3: Work on your company culture and branding



Your company culture (the collective processes, beliefs and behaviours within the organization) and Human Resource branding (the corporate identity that is projected) shape internal behaviours and public perceptions of the company as an employer. For these reasons take time to:

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1. **Identify values that reflect your company's identity.** Limit the number of values to 3 or 4 to make them memorable.
2. **Display company values.** Find a shared space to display the values so that employees have a constant reminder.
3. **Promote your brand in the community.** This can be done in a number of ways such as connecting with community
 - Student outreach programs
 - Becoming a guest speaker in schools
 - Volunteering in local community centres, youth groups and nursing homes

❖ Additional resources

Understanding and developing company culture, SHRM

Company culture is everyone's responsibility, Harvard Business Review

15 Things HR Leaders can do to Help Build Strong Employer Brands, Forbes

Element 4: Promote a continuous development work environment.



A continuous development work environment is one where staff are encouraged and able to proactively take actions to meet organizational goals by improving processes and efficiency. It is commonly known as the Toyota model of management. Continuous development in an organization can take many different forms:

1. **Bottom-up problem-solving.** Leaders should meet with workers from across departments and ranks to gain multiple perspectives of a workflow problem, the source of the problem and to identify potential solutions.

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2. **Organize work groups and working committees.** Organize work groups and committees that employees may voluntarily join.
3. **Organize social activities in and out of the workplace.** Organize social activities in the workplace and outside of the workplace to give colleagues a chance to go beyond shop talk and connect. Some ideas may include:
 - Workplace activities: themed or international potluck luncheons, Happy hour Thursdays, outdoor BBQ
 - Outside of the workplace activities: apple picking, cabane à sucre, participating in soccer tournaments, marathons or other community sporting events or ski day with group discount rates.

★ **Special Tip 1**

To encourage participation in additional work groups consider compensating workers with added vacation days, cash bonuses a paid lunch or some other perk.

🗣️ **Added benefit**

Change of any kind is a slow and gradual process so adopting a continuous development culture helps build consensus.

❖ **Additional resources**

The Toyota way- 14 management principles from the world's greatest manufacturer, LinkedIn Egan, M., Yang, B. & Bartlett, K. (2004). The effects of organizational learning culture and job satisfaction on motivation to transfer learning and turnover intention. Human Resource Development Quarterly, 15(3), 279- 301.

Element 5: Consider factors that make up “good quality work”.



Different people will speak about different criteria to define “good quality work”, and salary is NOT a silver bullet. Consider the criteria below to see how your organization measures up.

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1. **Access to training.** Having access to training has been ranked highly as an important factor and one of the top factors identified in this study and even leads people to refuse higher paying positions in other organizations.
2. **Flexible work schedule.** Workers appreciate being able to start earlier, start later or catch up at another time so that they may take time off for personal appointments.
3. **Work-life balance.** Participants in this study said having enough money to pay your bills is all you need and that having time to spend with family and friends was more important to them.
4. **Safe, clean and quiet work environment.** Workers need to feel physical and psychological security in their workplace so providing safety and security training, robust processes and inclusive workspaces will be important to attract and retain workers.
5. **Job security and opportunities for advancement.** Participants that said they were satisfied with their employer's onboarding program felt confident that the company will continue growing and offering them opportunities to grow with it.
6. **Having an interesting job.** Participants repeated over and over, they love their work and would not trade it for a high-paying job doing a redundant task.
7. **Autonomy in the workplace.** Participants in this study relished in being able to make a difference in the workplace whether it was in their department,

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suggesting improvements in work processes or by participating in the working committees to achieve organizational goals.

8. **Workplace relations.** Participants appreciated having a workplace that offered opportunities to socialize, provide managerial support and promote positive relationships with colleagues.
9. **Salary, Healthcare and benefits.** Are your employees able to earn a living wage Do they have access to private healthcare insurance where the organization covers half of the fees? Do you have a retirement plan?

★ **Special Tip**

One of the top priorities for many workers is having a *flexible work schedule* where they can start earlier, start later or catch up at another time so that they may take time off for personal appointments.

🎯 **Added Benefit**

Having good quality work improves the retention of workers.

❖ **Additional resources**

Quality of work literature review, Future Skills Centre from the Government of Canada

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What are the most influential elements you should tackle?



- ✓ Preparing and sharing the strategic business plan
- ✓ Promoting a continuous development work environment.

REMEMBER: This is an ongoing process, do what you can and address the remaining points in the future.

✓ Step 1 Checklist

Build partnerships in the community	<input type="checkbox"/> Social service providers. <input type="checkbox"/> Community groups and non-government organizations. <input type="checkbox"/> Local businesses. <input type="checkbox"/> Local economic development agencies and chambers of commerce.
Strategic business plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a long-term, 4 to 5 year, strategic business plan. <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare annual sales projections, growth objectives and budget. <input type="checkbox"/> Share the plan and progression regularly with staff.
Company culture and branding	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish 3-4 company values. <input type="checkbox"/> Display the values in shared spaces. <input type="checkbox"/> Promote company brand and visibility.

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Continuous development work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Bottom-up problem-solving.<input type="checkbox"/> Organize work groups and working committees.<input type="checkbox"/> Organize social activities to promote networking.
Good quality work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Access to training.<input type="checkbox"/> Flexible schedule.<input type="checkbox"/> Work life balance.<input type="checkbox"/> Safe clean and quiet work environment.<input type="checkbox"/> Job security and opportunities for advancement.<input type="checkbox"/> Having an interesting job.<input type="checkbox"/> Autonomy in the workplace.<input type="checkbox"/> Workplace relations.<input type="checkbox"/> Salary, healthcare and benefits.

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Step 2: Advertise and recruit strategically

How do you make a job advertisement more appealing and improve your

assessment of candidates in interviews?

This section describes and breaks down three elements you should consider: i) advertise the position and promote your organization's best assets, ii) cast a wide net for recruitment and iii) interview strategically.



Element 1: Advertise the position and promote your organization's best assets.



There are standard elements of a job advertisement and then added benefits.

1. **Include the basics.** Basic elements to include are the position, title, location, number of hours, presence (in person, hybrid or remote) role and responsibilities, benefits (health insurance, paid vacation, retirement contribution, training opportunities), salary scale, accessibility by public transit (if available).
2. **Identify the value added.** Identify what “good quality work” criteria you tick off as well as the added benefits and perks offered such as amenities and social activities.

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3. **Indicate integration support.** Let immigrant candidates know how you will help support their integration and develop their skills from language training to up-skilling or helping them obtain equivalences for education credentials.

★ **Special Tip**

Go back to the list of “good quality work” in step 1 and be sure to list what your organization offers.

🕒 **Added Benefit**

Promoting the best assets of your organization may help attract more candidates as they can immediately see if what you have to offer corresponds to what they are looking for in a job and an employer.

❖ **Additional resources**

Writing an effective job description, Wright University Human Resources
How to write a job description, Indeed

Element 2: Cast a wide net for recruitment.



There are different places you can advertise but not all are as effective at generating interest.

1. **Use digital platforms.** Digital platforms should include: popular job sites in your area, your company website, university and college platforms, the organization’s LinkedIn page, other organizational social media platforms,
2. **Hire your best recruitment ambassadors.** Your best ambassadors are existing employees. Use digital or analog means to inform staff you are hiring and offer a bonus if they refer an employee.

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3. **Government-funded immigrant integration organizations.** These organizations have a pool of immigrant job seekers and they can pair you with those who match the position you are looking to fill.
4. **Local ethnic community centres.** Reach a large pool of immigrant workers by advertising in their community centres.
5. **Assess what works best.** After a recruiting period consider where most applicants saw your posting, consider which sites generated the most interesting candidates and focus on using those methods.

★ **Special Tip**

Advertise in common spaces such as the staff lounge so workers may see what positions need to be filled

🗣️ **Added Benefit**

This is an additional way to promote communication, rally existing resources and promote the job internally for those interested in the position.

Element 3: Interview strategically.



Design interviews to showcase your organization, the role and assess candidates' potential to succeed in it.

1. **Screen candidates' interest.** To save time call candidates to:
 - Ask if they remain interested.
 - Where they saw the job offer.
 - Schedule an interview if everything checks out.

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2. **Have a translator on hand.** If the candidates speak the target language as a second or third language have a translator on hand to make sure finer discussion points do not get lost in translation.
3. **Involve existing immigrant employees.** Invite staff that will work directly with the candidate to participate in all or part of the interview process.
4. **Introduce the interview team.** Begin the interview by introducing the interview team to their title, role and responsibilities to help situate the candidate.
5. **Assess candidates' values and growth mindset.** Ask candidates what competencies they would like to develop at your organization.
6. **Validate and complete candidates' understanding of the organization, the services offered and the role they are applying to.** Ask candidates to describe your organization, the services you offer and what they think the role they are applying to entails.
7. **Provide a job preview activity.** Provide candidates with a task that is reflective of the responsibilities of the position to assess their hard and soft skills and to validate if candidates are really interested in the position.
8. **Provide scenarios to assess work habits and ethics.** Present a real-life challenge the team dealt with and ask how candidates would deal with it to validate if their values align with company values and corresponding behaviours.

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9. **Reformulate questions and be patient.** Be prepared to reformulate questions and ask candidates to explain their understanding of the question to ensure you are talking about the same thing.
10. **Close the interview with the next steps.** Provide candidates with information about the next steps and an approximate timeline.
11. **Make an offer quickly.** Provide candidates with a positive or negative response within a week.

★ **Special Tip**

To optimize the process make the candidate feel comfortable, ask open-ended questions.

🗣️ **Added Benefit**

Candidates who feel comfortable will open up and share more allowing you to assess if they are the right fit for your organization.

❖ **Additional resources**

7 Top interview strategies for hiring candidates, Monster
Britto, R., Cruzes, D., Smite, D., & Sablis, A. (2018). Onboarding software developers and teams in three globally distributed legacy projects: A multi-case study. *Journal of Software: Evolution and Process*, 30(4). doi: 10.1002/smr.1921

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What are the most influential elements you should tackle?



- ✓ Interview strategically to ensure the candidate understands the role and responsibilities and if their profile is the right fit.

REMEMBER: This is an ongoing process, do what you can and address the remaining points in the future.

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 **Step 2 Checklist**

<p>What to advertise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Location <input type="checkbox"/> Position and department <input type="checkbox"/> Role and responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Number of hours per week <input type="checkbox"/> Salary scale (annual or hourly) <input type="checkbox"/> Benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Perks/added value of working for the company. <input type="checkbox"/> Indicate integration support offered. <input type="checkbox"/> Personalize the position.
<p>Advertise strategically</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Popular online job sites. <input type="checkbox"/> Company website. <input type="checkbox"/> Company LinkedIn and social media. <input type="checkbox"/> Employee referrals. <input type="checkbox"/> Government funded immigrant integration services. <input type="checkbox"/> Local ethnic community centres. <input type="checkbox"/> Assess where the majority of candidates see the advertisement.
<p>Interviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Screen candidates' interest. <input type="checkbox"/> Have a translator on hand. <input type="checkbox"/> Involve existing employees who will be the candidates' future colleagues. <input type="checkbox"/> Introduce the interview team. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask candidates what skills they want to develop. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask candidates to describe the company, the role and the responsibilities. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a job preview activity. <input type="checkbox"/> Reformulate questions and be patient. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide scenarios to assess work habits and ethics. <input type="checkbox"/> Close the interview with the next steps and timeline. <input type="checkbox"/> Make a decision and an offer quickly (within one week)

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Step 3: Prior to day 1

Do you remember having the jitters before starting a new job or wondering about what a new work colleague will mean for you as an employee? This section describes and breaks down how to prepare both existing workers and new workers for the change that comes with a new recruit. By front-loading both groups with information about what is required and expected of them will facilitate the transition for everyone.



Element 1: Prepare existing staff.



Arm existing staff with training and information so they understand their role and are equipped to answer and/or re-direct questions from newcomers.

1. **Inform managers and supervisors.** Verbally and/or in writing inform and advertise internally that a new employee has been recruited.
2. **Inform existing staff.** Verbally and/or in writing inform the immediate work team about a new incoming employee.
3. **Provide ongoing training to managers and supervisors.** Consider which staff members might require training such as: Human capital training, leadership training or maybe a series of co-development training sessions.

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4. **Identify and train buddies, coaches and mentors.** Select a buddy with experience in the new employee's position and inform them of their responsibilities and questions that should be re-directed to management.
5. **Explain how small talk can make a big difference.** Small talk makes a HUGE difference as it gives immigrant workers the opportunity to practice the language and learn about the local culture and systems (education, banking, tax system, health care, community activities etc...) and build relationships with colleagues.
6. **Organize opportunities to connect.** Find ways to have people connect and get to know each other.

★ **Special Tip**

When selecting a buddy, coach or mentor consider if you want that person to be from the same cultural background as the incoming worker or a different cultural background, as both have advantages and disadvantages.

❖ **Additional resources**

Chapman, C. (2009). Retention begins before day one: Orientation and socialization in libraries. *New Library World*, 110(3-4), 122-135. doi: 10.1108/03074800910941329

Element 2: Prepare new incoming staff.



Newcomers have a lot to learn so starting prior to day one helps spread out the massive amount and prime people for learning.

1. **Offer a welcoming gift and message.** Send a welcoming message from an executive, management or supervisor and offer a welcoming gift with the company logo. This adds a nice touch to the overall experience.

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2. **Forward perfunctory paperwork.** Ask incoming employees to fill out and return administrative paperwork prior to their first day.
3. **Provide an orientation schedule, timeline and checklist.** Identify when their first day of work is, where they should present themselves, and at what time and send them an orientation schedule with a to-do checklist.
4. **Recognize education credentials and previous work experience.** If you are recruiting for a position that is not regulated by a professional order or some other group, consider recognizing immigrants' diplomas and previous work experience when determining their salary.
5. **Identify additional needs.** Identify the type of additional support needs they will have such as language training, ability to get to the workplace, information about acquiring appropriate housing, and additional information about the community (stores, daycares, schools, local festivals, events and community centres).

★ **Added benefit**

Providing newcomers with information prior to day one helps them feel less nervous and begin learning about their new organization and processes.

Additional Resources

Prepare for the new employee's arrival, University of Buffalo

Before the first day: Preparing for your new employee's arrival, University of California Davis Human Resources

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What are the most influential elements you should tackle?



- ✓ Prepare existing staff for the arrival of the new employee.
- ✓ Provide the new employee a schedule and timeline of their orientation

REMEMBER: This step is an opportunity to improve overall communication with your existing staff and to set the tone with newcomers.

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 **Step 3 Checklist**

Prepare existing staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Inform managers and supervisors. <input type="checkbox"/> Inform existing staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide ongoing training to managers and supervisors. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify and train buddies/coaches/mentors. <input type="checkbox"/> Explain how small talk can make a BIG difference. <input type="checkbox"/> Organize opportunities to connect
Prepare new incoming workers	<input type="checkbox"/> Offer a welcoming gift and message. <input type="checkbox"/> Forward perfunctory paperwork. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide an orientation schedule, timeline and checklist. <input type="checkbox"/> Recognize education credentials and previous work experience. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify additional needs.

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Step 4: Develop an Effective Workplace and Job Orientation Program

Orientation is a two-phase process: first, there is the introduction to the organization and second the role and responsibilities. This section describes and breaks down how to structure and document these two distinct procedures.



Element 1: Workplace Orientation.



Introduce new workers to their new environment and colleagues so that they gain a general understanding of the organization and work processes that are common across all departments.

- 1. Provide access to a translator, if necessary.** Ensure there is an employee who speaks the target language and that materials are translated if the immigrant is not proficient in the local language.
- 2. Re-introduce the organization.** Review the company history, mission, vision and values
- 3. Provide information about the work culture.** Explain even the information that may seem common to a non-immigrant worker.
 - Company policies
 - Employee manual
 - Paydays, pay stubs and deductions,

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- Legal holidays and vacation.
- Health insurance

- 4. Provide safety and security training.** Review elements that include: health and safety rules and policies, potential hazards, emergency procedures and forms and deliver job specific training.
- 5. Give a tour and meet and greet.** Show the newcomer the premises introducing colleagues as you go along but inform newcomers they will have follow-up meetings with key team members at a later date.
- 6. Identify and encourage proactive behaviours.** Inform newcomers of the type of behaviours that will facilitate their integration, such as but not limited to: asking questions, being outgoing and smiling, not being deterred by less friendly colleagues, speaking with employees who have been there the longest and asking for feedback on performance.
- 7. Help them connect with social service providers.** Double-check to ensure that the new worker has connected with social service providers and local community groups. If not, take the time to help them do so.

★ **Special Tip**

Consider assigning workplace and job orientation tasks to different individuals within the company.

🗣️ **Added benefit**

This decentralizes the many responsibilities of orientation from a single department and gives newcomers a chance to meet new colleagues within and across departments.

Element 2: Job Orientation.



Introduce new workers to their new role and new group of colleagues so that they gain a general understanding of the functioning of the unit they work in and the specific responsibilities in their role.

1. **Review the company strategic business plan.** Review the long-term and short-term plan and explain how this will impact your department, individual team members and how the newcomer will contribute to helping the organization achieve its goals.
2. **Introduce evaluation criteria.** Review with employees' performance evaluation criteria, which should reflect organizational objectives and values.
3. **Assign a buddy, coach or mentor.** Introduce the newcomer to their buddy/coach/mentor and explain that person's role.
4. **Allow time for job shadowing.** Before assigning a task to a new worker give them time to follow a colleague or their buddy to understand the processes and routine.
5. **Customize training to new workers' abilities.** Some new workers learn quicker than others, adjust accordingly so they are not bored or overwhelmed.

★ **Special Tip**

Space out the delivery of information over the first two weeks or even a month.

🕒 **Added benefit**

By spacing out activities newcomers have more time to absorb the information.

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❖ **Additional Resources**

Job orientation best practices in 2023, Forbes

Korte, R., & Lin, S. (2013). Getting on board: Organizational socialization and the contribution of social capital. *Human Relations*, 66(3), 407-428. doi:10.1177/0018726712461927

What are the most influential elements you should tackle?



- ✓ **Assign a buddy to help the new worker learn about their new job and organization.**

- ✓ **Ensure the new worker fully understands the evaluation criteria.**

REMEMBER: It can take up to a year for a new worker to be fully proficient in their position.

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 **Step 4 Checklist**

Workplace orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to a translator, if necessary. <input type="checkbox"/> Re-introduce the organization. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide information about the work culture. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide safety and security training. <input type="checkbox"/> Give a tour and meet and greet. <input type="checkbox"/> Help connect with social service providers.
Job orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Review the company strategic business plan. <input type="checkbox"/> Introduce evaluation criteria. <input type="checkbox"/> Assign a buddy/coach/mentor. <input type="checkbox"/> Allow time for job shadowing. <input type="checkbox"/> Customize training to new workers' abilities.

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Step 5: Provide Managerial and Support

If you want to focus on doing one thing and doing it right providing managerial support is it! This section describes and breaks down three elements of how managers and supervisors may support newcomers and encourage support from colleagues. This can be done by i) equipping managers and supervisors with orientation tools, ii) promoting managerial communication and iii) managers supporting the workflow.



Element 1: Equip Managers and Supervisors with orientation tools.



Managers and supervisors play a key role in integrating newcomers but also need support in understanding how to do that.

1. **Provide supervisors with an orientation checklist.** Ensure supervisors have a checklist of what needs to be covered as part of job orientation and when so they may keep track.
2. **Inform managers and supervisors of special needs new workers may have.** Keep managers and supervisors informed of strengths and areas for improvement previously identified in workers during the recruitment process and in the pre-boarding phase.

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3. **Offer ongoing training.** Take time out to schedule training and support for managers and supervisors on how to promote communication and support the workflow.

❖ **Additional resources**

Employee orientation checklist sample, Government of Canada

Tahrenou, P. & Kulik, C.T. (2020). Skilled migrants employed in developed, mature economies: From newcomers to organizational insiders. *Journal of Management*, 46(6), 1156-1181. doi: 10.1177/0149206320921229

Element 2: Promote Managerial Communication.



Managers and supervisors set the tone when it comes to communication and needs to take the lead so as to promote it within their work group.

1. **Hold weekly or daily SCRUM meetings.** These are short meetings held at the outset of the day with teams, particularly those working on a tight deadline.
2. **Get to know your people.** Small talk helps you to get to know your team on a personal level. Asking how their family is doing or how a special personal project is coming along humanizes you, creates a connection and gives you insight into their behaviour at work.
3. **Listen actively to your team.** Be an active listener by being mindful of your body language, paying attention to the speaker's body language, looking at the person, nodding, smiling, saying “uh-huh” to show you are listening.

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4. **Encourage participation in social activities and working committees.**

Extend the invitation to participate in a social activity to individual team members and/or highlight how their knowledge or skills may be helpful to a specific working committee.

Added benefit

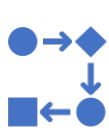
Communication within and across teams helps employees understand how their work has a direct impact on others, on organizational goals, it creates a sense of community and improves job satisfaction.

Additional Resources

Five steps to great workplace communication, Forbes

Goh, Y.S. & Lopez, V. (2016). Job satisfaction, work environment and intention to leave among migrant nurses working in a publicly funded tertiary hospital. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 24, 893-901. doi: 10.1111/jonm.12395

Element 3: Managers and Supervisors' Should Support the Workflow.

 Managers and supervisors play an important role in helping newcomers gain proficiency in their roles and building confidence and relationships with colleagues.

1. **Promote Team-Work.** For employees to feel integrated they need to feel they belong to a team that is working towards a common objective. Grouping people to problem-solve together whenever possible promotes this sense of community.
2. **Stop and make frequent comprehension checks.** When assigning a task to a worker instead of asking if they understood ask them to summarize/re-explain to you what they have to do.

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3. **Re-direct the worker to the right person who can help them.** When employees have a question re-direct them to the right person to answer them.
4. **Provide positive feedback.** A simple thank you or a job well done can go a long way to help employees feel appreciated and boost motivation.

❖ **Additional resources**

Filstad, C. (2004). *How newcomers use role models in organizational socialization.* Journal of Workplace Learning, 16(7), 396-409. doi:10.1108/13665620410558297

What are the most influential elements you should tackle?



- ✓ **Promote communication and teamwork so workers feel they are part of the team.**
- ✓ **Support the workflow so that new workers feel secure in the learning process.**

REMEMBER: This is an ongoing process, do what you can and address the remaining points in the future.

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Step 5 Checklist

Equip managers and supervisors	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide them with an orientation check-list. <input type="checkbox"/> Inform managers and supervisors of special needs workers may have. <input type="checkbox"/> Offer ongoing training and support.
Promote managerial communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold weekly or daily SCRUM meetings. <input type="checkbox"/> Get to know your people. <input type="checkbox"/> Listen actively to your team. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage participation in social activities and working committees.
Support the workflow	<input type="checkbox"/> Promote team-work. <input type="checkbox"/> Stop and make frequent comprehension checks. <input type="checkbox"/> Re-direct the worker to colleagues who have the answer to their question. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide positive feedback.

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Step 6: Follow up and Invest to Retain Workers

Recruiting and integrating workers requires time and effort so make sure you take the time needed to ensure you retain them long-term and avoid the high cost of turnover. Two ways to do this is by checking-in on them regularly and investing in training and career planning.



Element 1: Schedule Regular check-ins.



Things get busy and fast so schedule a time to give and receive feedback.

1. **Check-in frequently.** Schedule brief 15-minute meetings on day 1, 5, 30, 45, 60, 90, 120, 180, 270, 365. It is better to schedule a meeting and cancel if all is well than to have a problem fester for extended periods of time.
2. **Decide on the level of formality.** Due to the frequency of meetings decide which will be formal performance evaluations held with Human Resources personnel and the others may be less formal conversations with supervisors.
3. **Remind workers of achievements and progress.** Ask workers to take a moment and identify what has worked well, progress that has been made and achievements they are proud of.

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❖ Additional Resources

Onboarding new employees: Maximizing success, SHRM Foundation.

Raghuram, A., Luksyte, A., Avery, D.R. & Macoukji, F. (2012). Does your supervisor stress you out? How support influences sex differences in stress among immigrants. *Journal of Career Development*, 39(1), 99-117. doi: 10.1177/0894845310377499

Element 2: Support immigration paperwork and social integration.



See if they need help with complex paperwork and accessing services in the community.

- 1. Access to obtaining equivalences for education credentials.** Provide information and support about the process of acquiring recognition or equivalences for their education credentials.
- 2. Help filling out immigration paperwork.** Some immigrants arrive alone or are still processing paperwork for children and spouses, verify if they need support or information with the process.
- 3. Provide information and support for immediate family members.** Validate if any immediate family members are struggling to find employment or access services in the community and help connect them to the right information or people.
- 4. Encourage immigrants to be active in the community.** If immigrants are struggling to socially integrate or want additional opportunities to practice the local language encourage them to join a community group and volunteer.

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Element 3: Invest in training, career development and the organization.



Employees in middle-level positions who master their responsibilities quickly will require a challenge to keep them motivated so investing in training and career development will help with retention.

1. **Formal career planning.** Use scheduled check-in meetings to identify what skills employees are interested in developing that align with company needs and develop a timeline to carry out the plan.
2. **Keep in mind over qualification.** Some immigrant employees may be overqualified for their current position so provide a career plan that will allow them to work towards obtaining equivalences and opportunities to work in the field of expertise, if possible.
3. **Offer academic training.** Offer employees the opportunity to gain academic certifications in areas that align with the role and eventual roles they may hold in the organization.
4. **Subsidize private language classes.** Are immigrant workers too advanced for government-funded courses but desire additional language training? Subsidize private conversation courses for immigrant workers. Consider building a network with active and retired teachers who may be looking to make some additional money or keep busy.
5. **Support inclusive workspaces.** Promote diverse groups of workers to that the management/leadership team reflects the diversity of the workforce.

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★ **Special Tip**

Support a return to school by giving time off to attend classes, offering additional vacation days for time spent studying outside of work hours and/or paying for courses successfully completed.

🎓 **Added benefit**

Staff who receive training or feel there are opportunities for lateral movement or advancement are more likely to stay as they work towards a specific goal with the support they require.

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What are the most influential elements you should tackle?



- ✓ **Schedule regular check-ins to see how the new employee is doing and if they have any additional support needs in or outside of the workplace.**
- ✓ **Help workers gain equivalences for education credentials.**
- ✓ **Provide Formal career planning.**

REMEMBER: Every worker has different learning needs and understanding what makes them tick will be key to retention.

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Step 6 Checklist

Schedule regular check- ins	<input type="checkbox"/> Check-in frequently. <input type="checkbox"/> Decide on the level of formality. <input type="checkbox"/> Remind workers of achievements and progress.
Support immigration paperwork	<input type="checkbox"/> Help acquire equivalences for education credentials. <input type="checkbox"/> Help with immigration paperwork. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide information and support for immediate family members. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage immigrants to be active in the community.
Invest in training and career development	<input type="checkbox"/> Formal career planning. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep in mind over qualification. <input type="checkbox"/> Offer academic training. <input type="checkbox"/> Subsidize private language classes. <input type="checkbox"/> Support inclusive workspaces.

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Step 7: Assess, Tweak and Repeat

The development of your onboarding program should be seen as an ongoing process that requires continual adjustments. This section explains how to assess onboarding and use the same marketing and technology tools we do for clients and apply them to our workforce.



Element 1: Assess the onboarding experience



- 1. Develop a short questionnaire.** The questionnaire should be short, three to five questions, with closed and open-ended options. Consider using a scale from 1 to 4 to quantify satisfaction.
- 2. Ask new employees about their experiences.** Gauge new employees' satisfaction with the onboarding experiences to continue refining the process.
- 3. Verify existing workers' experiences.** Assess the experience of those who provide support onboarding and how they can be further supported.
- 4. Compare onboarding experiences of immigrant and non-immigrant workers.** Compare responses given by new workers who are immigrants and non-immigrants to see if your program is balanced to meet everyone's needs.

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5. **Assess immigrants' progression.** Track and compare the progression of immigrant and non-immigrant workers to ensure your promotional practices are aligned with equity and diversity policies.

Element 2: Consider marketing tools and automation.



Take onboarding strategies and materials to the next level, boost the employee experience and automate redundant tasks.

1. **Create visually appealing onboarding materials.** Spice up onboarding support materials using online graphic design platforms, such as managerial checklists, new employee checklists, and employee manuals.
2. **Partner with the Marketing department.** Human Resources know what support their people need and marketing knows how to sell an idea or a product. Having them work together has the added benefit of cross-departmental interactions.
3. **Automate the process to reduce your workload.** Online questionnaires and poll software or your company customer relationship management tool can collect, store and tabulate results for you over time.

Special Tip

Ask what worked well, challenges they faced and what were irritants or sources of frustrations they experienced.

Added benefit

Assessing the onboarding process may give you an idea of areas that require the most attention or what to tackle next.

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What are the most influential elements you should tackle?



- ✓ Ask new employees about their experiences to see what areas require improvement.
- ✓ Verify existing workers' experiences to ensure they are equally satisfied.

REMEMBER: Assessing the onboarding experience helps identify areas to tackle next and initially may be done through informal conversations with different stakeholders.

✓ Step 7 Checklist

Assess the onboarding experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a short questionnaire. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask new employee's about their experiences. <input type="checkbox"/> Verify existing workers' experiences. <input type="checkbox"/> Compare onboarding experiences of immigrant and non-immigrant workers <input type="checkbox"/> Assess immigrant workers progression.
Consider marketing tools and automation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create visually appealing onboarding materials. <input type="checkbox"/> Partner with the Marketing department. <input type="checkbox"/> Automate the process to reduce your workload.