

# Supervisor/HR Newsletter

Helpful Resources from your Employee Assistance Program

Public Employee Benefits Alliance

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## You Hired Them, Now Groom Them

An onboarding process that's efficient, effective and relevant to your newly hired team members is key to realizing a return on your recruiting and staffing investment. Here's a look at some of the most impactful ways you can tweak your onboarding to transform new hires into productive team members as quickly as possible.

1. *Focus on the human element.* Failure to establish key connections and build strong interpersonal relationships within the company is a primary reason newly hired employees fail to perform quickly, and ultimately, leave a new employer, according to experts at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and human resources consultants Saratoga.

Onboarding processes should include introduction/assignment to a mentor outside of the immediate team, weekly "one on ones" with you, and pairing the employee with at least one "buddy" on the team who will be a resource for questions and concerns.

2. *Connect their dots.* You hired the new employee because she successfully demonstrated how her professional experiences complemented your vacant role. Now it's your job to guide her in applying those skills. "Competent new hires can largely deal with the present—what they struggle with is the future," explains James Berkeley, managing director of Ellis Consulting. "Stay highly engaged with new hires. Help them understand how their own actions contribute to the speed and accomplishment of the firm's strategic goals—not just the next month's sales figures."

3. *Give them real tasks, and real feedback.* More than 40% of respondents to Bamboo HR's survey said on-the-job training is most lacking in today's onboarding processes, and that "review and feedback of early contributions" is one of the most important aspects employees need to feel equipped to contribute. Give new hires performance-related tasks that facilitate hands-on experience from which they can learn, as early as their second or third day on the job.

4. *Establish metrics for your current process.* The Centre for Economics and Business Research index reveals that a business hiring just one employee might invest more than \$55,000 into corresponding nonwage functions like administrative, facility and technology needs, benefits, payroll and taxes, while companies that hire 20 or more employees pay about \$15,000 less for those same expenses, thanks to economies of scale.

The same is true for your onboarding processes. Given that PwC estimates the average voluntary turnover cost of an exempt employee is \$106,000 a year, you can't afford not to know what's driving newly hired employees to stay or go. As you collect more feedback, you'll establish a benchmark for what's working in your onboarding, and what requires immediate attention.

5. *Don't assume they're ready to fly.* Respondents to a Bamboo HR survey who left a new job within the first six months said that having an onboarding process that extended beyond the first week was one of the most important aspects of onboarding; 33% said that a boss's involvement in onboarding is key to its success.

Source: <http://www.businessmanagementdaily.com/42901/you-hired-them-now-groom-them>

# Provide Support for your Employees During Times of Change



Don't underestimate the impact that workplace change has on your employees. All changes – even positive ones - can be stressful and have an impact on an employee's productivity. According to the Holmes-Rahe Life Events Scale, many of the most stressful situations that typically confront individuals are work-related. Circumstances like a promotion to new responsibilities, organizational changes, changes in income, trouble with a co-worker, and trying to catch up after being away on vacation create additional stress that your employees need to cope with and adjust to.

## ***Recognize the effects of stress on your employees***

Employees experiencing the stress of change can have increases in physical problems like headaches, upset stomachs, or fatigue. Emotionally, they may experience feelings of irritability, anger, and nervousness. Normally upbeat and enthusiastic employees may display a lack of motivation. Relationships among team members may become more difficult, including more conflict than usual. There may be increases in absenteeism.

Stress can also impact an employee's ability to be creative. When there's a lot of change going on in an organization, it can be harder for individuals to think outside of the box and respond to challenges in innovative ways.

## ***Supportive leadership can make a big difference***

With support, and time to adjust to change, most individuals will return to being fully productive. But Managers and supervisors who proactively provide support for their employees during times of change can be particularly effective in maintaining a positive workplace culture throughout. Support for employees can include the following:

- Minimizing any additional organizational changes until employees have had sufficient time to deal with previous changes;
- Encouraging employees to maintain greater work-life balance (i.e., encouraging hard-working employees to use their leave, promote the use of telecommuting when appropriate, etc.);
- Suggesting to employees who are obviously struggling in response to stress to access the EAP for support, resources, etc.

By:  
*Greg Brannan*  
*Director of Business Development & Training Consultant*  
*Deer Oaks EAP Services, LLC*

# Ask Your EAP!

The following are answers to common questions supervisors have regarding employee issues and making EAP referrals. As always, if you have specific questions about referring an employee or managing a workgroup issue, feel free to make a confidential call to the EAP for a management consultation.



**Q. Which one of these practices negatively impacts morale the most: failing to praise and reward employees, micromanaging, or poor communication?**

A. Any of these workforce management practices may contribute to morale problems, but poor communication consistently ranks #1 as the leading complaint affecting productivity in modern businesses around the world. Why is this? The answer is that managers either don't know what to do about it or they don't have systems in place to ensure better communication, or both. To improve communication, make sure employees and management are educated about the importance of communication, and how to communicate effectively. Learning how to give feedback, communicate in a timely way, and share information properly can improve communication. Creating ways that employees can cross-dialog with each other regularly is also very important. Consider rewarding good

communication. Make communication part of the work unit or workplace culture with systems that keep communication moving. Internal memos, company news, and special communications about executive management decisions are "nice to have," but they will not fill the intimate communication void that often exists in the workplace. Investigate getting some consultative help from the EAP about communication education or even ideas on strategic goals to advance your initiatives in this area.

**Q. What are the five most commonly perpetrated bullying behaviors?**

A. Research varies, but according to the Workplace Bullying Institute, the five most common bullying behaviors are 1) falsely accusing the victim of errors not actually made ("Oh, now look what you've done"), but refusing to show or prove any error. 2) Staring, glaring, or behaving nonverbally in order to intimidate, but clearly showing hostility. 3) Discounting the person's thoughts or feelings in meetings with peers ("Gee, duh, thanks for sharing, Susan.") 4) Using the silent treatment to "ice out" and separate the victim from others. 5) Making up rules on the fly that the bully himself or herself does not follow but has then imposed on the victim. Understanding the broad range of bullying behaviors can help you spot them. To learn more, visit [www.workplacebullying.org](http://www.workplacebullying.org).

**Q. I have a few employees who can't seem to break away from Facebook. They use their smartphones to keep up with it. This is getting ridiculous, and it is negatively affecting productivity. Telling people they cannot use a smartphone won't work, and I need to do something. Is this Facebook Addiction?**

A. Although Facebook Addiction is not a medically recognized disorder, there are plenty of accounts of Facebook users experiencing serious, adverse effects on their social and occupational functioning from being unable to stay away from Facebook. Your first step is to share your expectations and policy regarding the use or nonuse of smartphones during the workday. If a policy doesn't exist, then insist on three conditions that must not be violated: 1) technology devices cannot be used in such a manner that they bother others or become an annoyance, 2) technology device usage cannot slow down business or work flow, and 3) technology device usage cannot cause loss of an employee's focus on other matters important to the employer. You can then quantify violations of these standards and refer employees to the EAP who struggle to comply.

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