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NEWSLETTER

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New-Hire Orientation Checklist

The overall success of your new hires will likely be heavily dependent on their experiences during the onboarding process. As such, if the onboarding process of your company is incomplete or insufficient, it will show.

A low-quality onboarding process will also increase the chances of new hires leaving your company in favor of your competitors. In order for the onboarding process to positively impact your company, all steps of the onboarding process must be fine-tuned and effective.

Orientation is one of the onboarding steps, but before we focus on the orientation checklist, allow us to emphasize the differences between onboarding in general and orientation in particular. For starters, onboarding is a full-fledged, comprehensive process that involves multiple steps.

These steps typically include orientation, training and retaining new hires as well as long-term employees, which comes down to maintaining engagement and satisfaction levels. On the other hand, orientation is all about introductions between new hires and the rest of the company. This is also when new hires become acquainted with the company's administrative policies and procedures.



Alternatively, while orientation is a small step in the overall process, onboarding is the overall process. It's continuous, and most onboarding processes can last as long as one year, if not longer, but orientation is a singular event. Despite the short-lived nature of orientation, it is still very important to make sure that the orientation events are carried out properly.

If your onboarding process includes an unprofessional orientation experience, the event can derail the entire onboarding process and deter new hires from staying with your company. For these reasons and many others, establishing a new-hire orientation checklist is key.

To help you and your company create a new-hire orientation checklist that is suitable for everyone involved, we have included some suggestions about what your company's orientation checklist could include.

Start by introducing your company

- Overview of the company.
- Company mission, philosophy and vision.
- Workplace culture.
- Company structure and hierarchy.
- Warm welcome from team members.

If the position is on-site, give the new hires a tour of the office. For example, show them important locations, such as:

- Parking areas.
- Kitchen.

- Restroom.
- Mailroom.
- News or bulletin board.
- Emergency exits.
- Relevant departments.

Hand out paperwork

- Form W-4, for federal income tax withholding.
- State and local tax withholding forms, if applicable.
- Form I-9, to verify eligibility to work in the United States.
- Direct deposit form.
- Employee handbook.
- Confidentiality agreements.
- Acknowledgement and consent forms.

Explain the benefits program and the enrollment process

You'll need to let your new hires know about the benefits that they are eligible for and how to enroll in the benefits they would like to participate in through work, including:

- Medical insurance.
- Dental insurance.
- Vision insurance.
- Life insurance.
- Disability insurance.
- 401(k) plan.
- Flexible spending accounts.
- Employee assistance program.
- Bonus programs.

- Paid and unpaid leave.
- Wellness benefits.
- Workplace perks:
- Free snacks.
- Pet-friendly office.
- In-office coffee bar.

Make sure to discuss the policies and procedures of your company

- Code of conduct.
- Regular work hours.
- Overtime.
- Anti-discrimination.
- Anti-harassment.
- Safety guidelines.
- Break and lunch periods.
- Timecard submission dates.
- Payroll procedures.
- Performance evaluations.
- Disciplinary process.
- Grievance procedures.
- Injury reporting.
- Emergency procedures.
- Data security.

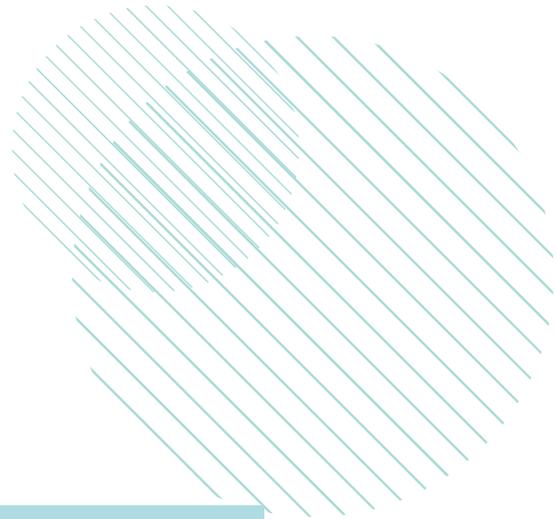
Give new hires access to relevant workstations and administrative support

- ID badge.
- Desk setup.
- Workstation setup.
- Stationery.
- Computers.

- Internet access.
- Email access.
- Employee self-service portal.
- Messaging applications.
- Videoconferencing tools.
- Company directory.

Remember that these are only examples and suggestions of what your new-hire orientation checklist should include. The specifics will be driven by various factors that are peculiar to your company, such as the business structure, the requirements associated with the

role, whether the job is on-site or remote, the benefits being offered and any legal requirements that apply to the position.



IRS Establishes Mileage Rates for 2023

The IRS has issued the 2023 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes. In a statement issued on Dec. 29, the IRS said that beginning on January 1, 2023, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) is:

65.5 cents per mile driven for business use, up 3 cents from the midyear increase setting the rate for the second half of 2022.

22 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes for qualified active-duty members of the Armed Forces, consistent with the increased midyear rate set for the second half of 2022.

14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations; the rate is set by statute and remains unchanged from 2022.

These rates apply to electric and hybrid-electric automobiles, as well as gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles, according to the Agency.

Where the numbers come from

The IRS notes that the standard mileage rate for business use is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile. The rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs.

The IRS is reminding taxpayers that under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, they cannot claim a miscellaneous itemized deduction for unreimbursed employee travel expenses. Taxpayers also cannot claim a deduction for moving expenses, unless they are members of the Armed Forces on active duty moving under orders to a permanent change of station. Taxpayers always have the option of calculating the actual costs of using their vehicle

rather than using the standard mileage rates.

Taxpayers should work with their tax advisors to make sure they are taking full advantage of the tax breaks, consistent with IRS regulations.



Hiring Temporary Help at the Office

Approximately 3 million temporary and contract workers are hired each year in the U.S., and managers have long relied on temps to keep their businesses humming. How can they make the most of this layer of cover and support?

Temps keep the machine oiled and running

Managers are likely to turn to temporary resources for added flexibility. Permanent employees inevitably go on leave and sometimes quit. Most businesses' staffing needs are likely to fluctuate, especially as seasons ebb and flow. Companies may not be sure how many productive hours they will require for a particular project or a new initiative. A short-term engagement can help them assess their needs realistically.

Using temps in place of regular workers can save firms money. For instance, an employment agency may pick up health care or other benefits. Or if companies later decide to convert their temps to permanent status, they may be able to negotiate a lower compensation package. (But note that while using temps, you may be paying from 15% to 50% extra in hourly terms once you add in agency fees.)

Temporary relationships also reduce transition frictions. When the business no longer requires additional help, there is no need to formally fire temp workers or deal with unemployment insurance benefits. Using interim employees can also save money, but remember they are there to learn, not just to perform grunt work.

Consider some advantages of using an agency rather than hiring individuals directly. Agencies' core functions include:

- Matching skills with job requirements.
- Administering tasks of recruitment and hiring.
- Managing payroll.
- Evaluating candidates.
- Keeping a shortlist of good candidates on file.

However, an agency will not be steeped in a company's own business culture and may be less sensitive to finding the right fit.

Through a temp's' eyes

A temp is a person, not a Band-Aid. Managers can generate more value from relationships with them if they make efforts to understand their temps' motivations and drivers. Take a moment to consider why they are choosing impermanent work. Tap their experience and seek their input. They can offer fresh outsider perspectives.

Some enjoy the flexibility of managing their own schedules, or they actively like the variety of learning new industries and seeing different office environments. Perhaps they are looking to learn new skills or just fill in a space on a patchy resume. They may seek another reference. Especially if they are temping in an industry they already care about, they may view temping as an avenue to forging new networking contacts.

A large number are temping out of sheer necessity to bring home the bacon when they have not been able to land a permanent position. They, in fact, might prefer the stability, compensation benefits and career mobility conferred by a steady job. Those wannabes are likely to jump ship as soon as they receive a better offer.



Practice the golden rule

Managers can encourage loyalty and productivity from temps while drawing the most out of their talents and experience:

- Inclusivity.
- Training.
- Extra pay.
- Clear instructions.

Treat your temps with civility, and include them in any nonconfidential meetings or correspondence related to their projects. The goal is to make them feel a valued part of a team. Introduce them formally to colleagues and never, ever call them "the temp"! Don't forget to invite them to group events or activities like lunches or birthdays. They are not second-class citizens.

Create an abbreviated temp training program, or perhaps spend a half day per month in training for each month they are on staff. Rather than a traditional performance review, give constructive feedback and pointers. Pair them initially with a team member to show them the ropes and office layout. But manage their expectations honestly, and do not dangle a long-term future with your company if that is unrealistic.

Keep in touch with your best temps after they leave. You might one day be happy to have them back for another round.

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Is This Your Situation: Handling Workforce Reduction

Have you had to cut jobs for functions that can no longer be supported? You can do right by your laid-off employees by offering them outplacement services, which may help your remaining staff feel more secure in their positions.

Communications are important to maintain the morale of retained employees and the goodwill of the discharged, who may come back. Workers appreciate a clear statement as to why they're being terminated and like to have as much

notice as possible. Early notice may actually improve productivity during the period employees anticipate layoffs due to feelings of uncertainty. Let your workers know that you intend to provide help for those you're laying off.



- Outplacement services from employment outsourcing agencies include:

- How to file for unemployment benefits.
- Counseling to help prepare good resumes.
- Providing leads and contacts.
- Preparing letters of recommendation.
- Reminding workers that you're happy to act as a reference.

Consider other options

Maybe you shun the whole idea of downsizing your productive workforce due to economic downturns. Here are some other ways to deal with a downturn:

- Cross-training employees to be able to shift from job to job.

- Reducing hours to share common hardships.

- Implementing hiring and wage freezes.
- Postponing wage increases.
- Decreasing fringe benefits.
- Offering incentives for early retirement.

Whatever strategies you choose, know that outsourcing some business functions like office management is always an option. Outsourcing can reduce costs by allowing you to pay for only the services you need and avoid many of the overhead costs related to bringing on additional employees.

By outsourcing, you'll have support when you need it, including providing coverage during gaps and on demand with team members who follow your existing processes,

as well as helping with managing email, social media and customer onboarding.

The team structure of outsourcing means increasing or decreasing the number of people and the time spent on projects: You pay only for the services needed and not for unproductive time.

Outsourcing scales with your business as it changes

Outsourcing can mean bringing in a team of experts in their respective fields. By using the latest technologies and practices, they can work faster, cheaper and with fewer resources, adjusting to the changing needs of your business. At the end of the day, what is right for you? Give us a call so we can help you figure out what your next step should be.

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