The Essential Guide to
EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING SUCCESS
Build better connected, more engaged and higher performing teams.

SHARE THE GUIDE!
Employee Onboarding
For a New Generation

This Guide is for HR, People leaders and anyone looking to take their employee success to the next level.

Our Essential Guide to Employee Onboarding Success is a quick but detailed read on how you can use Employee Onboarding to Amplify your Employee Experience.

Here’s what you’ll learn....

WHAT IS ‘EX’?
WHY INVEST IN ‘EX’?
WHY ONBOARDING?
BUILD VS BUY?
HOW TO EVALUATE?
WHAT IS ‘EX’ MANAGEMENT?
An approach to deliver excellent experiences to employees through their interactions, engagement and connection with an organization.

It’s the journey of events, activities and development that they enjoy through their employee life-cycle.

Over the past few years, the corporate world has seen an emergence of Employee Experience management, which is now something that managers and leaders need to focus on to attract, retain and grow their talent base.

“After three years of struggling to drive employee engagement ... executives see a need to redesign the organization.”

Deloitte’s Global Human Capital Trends 2016 (link)
The world has changed. Today’s employees have a different outlook on what they expect from their employer. Employees are seeking jobs with purpose where they can co-create with colleagues, feel connected with the organization’s mission, embrace flexibility and be exposed to new development opportunities.

A Changing World...  
54% 
...of the U.S. labor workforce is comprised of millennials.¹

With A New Focus...  
92% 
... of executives see engagement, retention and building a meaningful culture – as a critical priority.²

And High Stakes.  
21% 
... of an employee’s salary to replace them after voluntary turnover.³

³ Center for American Progress - https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bx9p7Pu7rGbUM05BRXJacjVrRzA/view?pref=2&pli=1
WHY INVEST IN EX?
Sustainable and Scalable Return on Investment

Why invest in your Employee Experience?

One reason – sustainable and scalable Return On Investment.

And not just the ROI that makes the quarterly report to investors look good - the real ROI that improves the position of all stakeholders in your company - customers, employees, managers, suppliers and investors.

Investing in “EX” success makes employees more likely to be engaged, to stay and to prosper, and simultaneously achieve greater success for the company.
A company is only as good as the people that drive and implement the day to day game plan to execute the strategy. And employee commitment to their employer will only last as long as the employer is delivering value to the employee.

Employees are more informed than ever through online resources - they can quickly find out the culture, mission, values, leadership, salary levels and vision by completing a quick Google search.

Today’s Talent Market is Transparent

Here’s a quick search of software engineering salaries in San Francisco from Glassdoor (link).

If your job postings are offering Software Engineers in San Francisco less than $110,554 – you should be able and ready to justify it.

More Informed than Ever

Software Engineer Salaries in San Francisco, CA

- National Avg: $95,195
- San Francisco, CA Area Avg: $110,554

How much does a Software Engineer make in San Francisco, CA? The average salary for a Software Engineer is $95,195. Salaries estimates based on 22,902 salaries submitted anonymously... Show More
There are a number of factors an organization should consider in calculating the real cost of losing an employee including:

- Offboarding the departing employee
- Lost engagement as other employees see employee turnover and can disengage or get itchy feet
- Hiring a new employee (i.e. advertising, interviewing)
- Onboarding the new employee
- Lost productivity as the new employee ramps up
- Cultural impact when an employee leaves

Unfortunately, companies don't have the accounting systems in place to track employee turnover costs.

Employee turnover is the #1 challenge faced by human resource teams.... Followed closely by employee engagement and succession planning.¹
WHY
ONBOARDING?
Culture Is Your Most Important Asset….

The value of company culture has been vigorously debated from the Financial Times to the Rhode Island Herald. But what’s not debated is that company culture is mission critical to a company’s long term success.

High Priority…

95% ... of candidates believe culture is more important than compensation.¹

With A Lack of Support…

2/3 ... of Millennials feel the outlook and attitudes of management are serious barriers to growth.²

And Unclear Vision.

12% ... of executives believes that they are driving the right culture.³

... With Big Upsides From Investment

Organizations with great culture enjoy significant benefits versus industry peers.  

- Happier employees
- Better financial performance
- Lower turnover

Employees report being recognized for their work as **20x more important than salary**

Companies that actively invest in **workplace culture** yield nearly **2x the return** over their competitors...

... and also report **65% less voluntary turnover**, saving an average of **$21,000 per employee in turnover costs**

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3. Based on employee earnings $100,000 per year [https://www.trysapling.com/resources/real-cost-of-employee-turnover](https://www.trysapling.com/resources/real-cost-of-employee-turnover)
The foundation and continuity of successful company culture builds on the success of Human Resources teams in one thing –

Effective Employee Onboarding (link).

They can be anxious, excited and eager to make a difference, but without an effective onboarding program – new employees can end up stagnating and not as productive as they want to be in the first few months.

Where Companies Fail In Employee Onboarding

1. LACK OF PROCESS
   The biggest failure in employee onboarding is often a lack of clarity around the process, and a lack of understanding of the way the new employee is experiencing the world.

   Without a clear framework for new employees to understand company history, brand messaging, core values, career trajectory, training programs or company policies - they can be overwhelmed, confused, and feel unsupported. Go figure!

2. NO TIME TO SHARPEN THE SAW, TOO BUSY SAWING
   We get it, everyone’s busy. A consistent theme in today’s professional world is ‘So much to do…. so little time’.

   Everyone can get stuck in a time crunch, but that’s a dilemma we are faced with every day. Everyone is super busy, but that’s no excuse.

   Be careful not to fall into making one of the Top Five Employee Onboarding Mistakes (link).
Measuring the Average New Hire Experience

Based on Sapling Benchmarks, July 2017

54 Activities per New Hire

3 Documents
Documents to be signed, uploaded or acknowledged by new hires

35 Tasks
Administrative items to be completed, including desk set-ups, hardware and day-one orientation

16 Outcomes
Learning outcomes around company culture, market knowledge and product understanding
Killer Process Around Simple Goals

There are big, easy-wins in onboarding:

▪ Start early and get paperwork completed before Day 1 - ideally with an online e-signature solution for compliance
▪ Provide employees with a deep understanding of company values, the product and future roadmap
▪ Teach them about the product, industry and competitors
▪ Leverage the key social trends to get teams working together
▪ Get everyone accountable and owning their goals to hit them faster

The goal for employee onboarding success should be to deliver best practices and institutional knowledge that employees can immediately put to use... meaning you’ll also generate ROI from your hiring programs sooner.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of New Hire Needs

1. **Productivity + Development**
   Onboarding Road-map, Check-ins, Training and Development, Coaching and Career Path

2. **Culture + Engagement**
   Mission Vision Values, Company culture, Workflows and Engagement

3. **Orientation + Payroll**
   Pre-boarding paperwork, Orientation, Payroll & Benefits

- Engagement
- Productivity
- Happiness

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HIERARCHY HERE**
Case Study: **Accelerating New Hire Success**

**1stdibs.** An online marketplace for vintage furniture, jewelry, and fine art

*With Sapling, I’m confident that everything needed to get a new hire set up for their first day is done.*

Eva Amesse | Employee Experience Associate

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**Challenge**

1stdibs lacked an efficient onboarding program, leaving new hires with inconsistent experiences and an unstructured first few months.

**Solution**

Sapling’s task management streamlines and scales administrative onboarding tasks, while its roadmaps provide 1stdibs new hires with a clear picture of the responsibilities and expectations for their first 90 days.

**Results**

With Sapling, the 1stdibs People Operations team developed a meaningful onboarding program that lets them spend less time on manual tasks and focus instead on making new hires successful.

- **Hours Saved**: 600
- **Activities per employee**: 36
- **Employees Onboarded**: 40
- **Total ROI**: $90K
BUILD VS BUY?
Building vs Buying an Onboarding Solution

So now that we understand the importance of investing in employee onboarding success, we’re going to take a look over the options on HR teams can deliver a best-in-class experience for your employees.

Like most business decisions, you need to decide whether it makes sense to build or buy the solution you need.

But the questions is that given your company is growing fast and everyone is already juggling multiple responsibilities, how do HR leaders expect build an effective employee onboarding experience from scratch?

Investing the right resources for getting into the flywheel of employee success early will increase the chances that staff will continue to invest themselves in these efforts.

Great onboarding experiences for new employees will encourage those hires to extend the same warm welcome to new teammates who come after them, creating a cycle of warmer staff engagement.
Building and maintaining internal employee onboarding systems can be a great way to encourage new employee success.

By giving staff a native technology solution designed to help them succeed, this can greatly improve employee engagement and ultimately, company success.

It typically takes eight months for a newly hired employee to reach full productivity.¹

People Management leaders need to balance Quality, Cost and Speed.

Why Purchase an Employee Onboarding Solution

To truly capitalize on the benefits of providing a best-in-class employee onboarding, companies should seek to leverage purpose-built technology into their organizations.

It's not rocket science…. knowledge workers, such as HR teams, spend an average of 41% of their time on unimportant tasks!¹

That’s an extra 16 hours per week you could focus on the people, not the process.

Balance Quality, Cost and Speed

QUALITY: FOCUS RESOURCES ON YOUR CORE OPERATIONS
While your company's competitive advantages may stretch across many domains, implementing and driving growth in employee experience success is likely not on the list.

Just as engineering teams use ticket tracking software (like Atlassian's Jira) and marketing teams use analytics software (like Google Analytics), Human Resources teams should leverage the best systems in the market.

COST: IN-HOUSE COSTS MORE TIME AND MONEY
It's not just people's time and effort that you will be using - Employee Experience success requires resources from nearly every company function to be successful.

Ask yourself - are you ready to invest the time and money in continuing to adopt the best practices of tomorrow - or could you reduce overhead by leveraging a dedicated 3rd party solution with continued product development to achieve your EX Goals.

SPEED: PATCHING LEAKS OR CHANGING VESSELS
Leaders can often fall trap to focusing their creative efforts on doing the best with what you have, doubling down on the old school method of Powerpoints and playbook manuals.

If your boat is sinking, it can be more productive to focus your energy on changing vessels rather than patching leaks. Quickly adapting a technology based employee onboarding solution can be the best, most effective and scalable answer.

When Speed Matters: Acquisition Onboarding

Ellation builds premium video experiences for passionate fans and provide sustainable business models for content creators.

“Sapling allowed us to collect all the data we needed to stay compliant, while delivering an engaging welcome to our new 115 team members.”

Desiree Therianos | Head of People Operations

Challenge

After completing an international acquisition, Ellation needed to quickly onboard 115 employees while maintaining compliance and creating an engaging experience.

Solution

A company branded onboarding portal introduced Ellation’s company background, values, team, and culture to their newest acquihires. With Sapling’s workflows and task management, all required new hire paperwork could tracked and managed with ease.

Results

Sapling helped Ellation automate onboarding documents and workflows for organization, ensuring all new hire data was pushed into their system of record.

The People Operations team were able to view and track all activities from their dashboard, ensuring nothing slipped through the cracks.
HOW TO EVALUATE A SOLUTION?
Ready to investigate buying an employee onboarding solution? Great.

But before we get started - it’s important to know that to get buy-in from the CEO and other key decision makers, you’ll need to convince them that an employee onboarding solution makes sense on ROI basis.

1. Determine Needs and Identify Success
2. Research Vendors
3. Create and Implement Plan
4. Manage and Track ROI
1 Determine Needs and Know What Success Looks Like

If you aren't clear on what key the needs are - you may end up selecting the wrong vendor, or even worse - trying to change your definition of success to fit to the new employee onboarding feature set!

The key questions that you should ask yourself are:

▪ What problems am I trying to solve?
▪ Which of these problems hurt the most?
▪ How immediately do these problems need to be solved?
▪ What support services will we require for implementation and on-going basis?
▪ Which features are the deal-makers, and which are deal-breakers?


Know Your HR Tech Roadmap, and Understand What Your ‘HRIS’ Can and Can’t Do.

SHARE THE GUIDE!
Once you have a strong idea of what you need from your employee onboarding solution, start researching online for products that could suit your needs.

In today’s world, it’s easy to scope out different offerings and schedule demos with companies that align with your business goals, and the needs you have defined.

So now you’ve decided on the right vendor for your employee onboarding solution; now comes the fun part - creating and implementing the plan for employee success.

*An effective roll-out will come down to getting buy-in from the key stakeholders*, confirming the budget, aligning expectations, understanding if there are any customization requirements and when the key features are needed to be in action... and most important - ensuring it's the right product for your organization.
Monitor and Track

ROI

The positive impact of investing in and implementing an employee onboarding solution can be massive, and what gets measured, gets improved.

The principal focus on monitoring and tracking ROI should be to identify trends and opportunities, and use these to improve the process.

Regardless of how impressive some employee onboarding solutions appear to be, data rules!

Make sure your Employee Experience success is measured in quantitative terms.
## A Framework for Evaluating Onboarding ROI

### Identifying the Costs
- Identify and track all the relevant factors that contribute to program costs
- Understand where, when and how your organization is incurring employee experience costs
- Include both explicit and implicit costs
- Take the time to think through the real opportunity cost.

### Assessing the Benefits
- Assess the benefits by understanding the employee experience journey and the influence on their success

### What to Consider

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Where to From Here?

When assessing the ROI of your employee onboarding solution, **aim high!**

Compare your performance to the leaders in the industry and seek to develop it as a competitive advantage.

Humans can often be complicated, thorny and messy - but those qualities make the magic happen.

By creating the **right process and frameworks for getting your people confident, happy and productive** - you can help build and support long-term employee success.

**Have patience...**

Employee experience success will positively impact the effectiveness and performance of your employees and organization.

Make the investment and take the time to get it right.
Employee Experience Success: Benefits of Onboarding

**New Hires**
Engaged with curated content and onboarding plan

"Best onboarding I've had at a company yet"
Laura | New Hire

**People Operations**
Consistency, Visibility + Data on transitions

"Amazing way to enhance the overall Employee Life Time Value"
Lauren | Director of People

**CEOs**
Cost savings, efficiency and ROI

"Sapling solves an often hidden pain-point from senior leaders"
Nicolas | CEO and CO-Founder
We hope this guide helps you implement a great Employee Onboarding Program.

Want to See How Sapling’s Onboarding Solution can Amplify your Employee Experience?

REQUEST A DEMO
ABOUT SAPLING

Sapling enables companies to provide a simple, intuitive and consistent Employee Onboarding experience.

We’re focused on providing Employee Onboarding experience that amplifies the Employee Experience (EX). EX is the way people in organizations engage and relate with the organization and each other. It’s the journey of events, activities and development that an employee experiences through their life-cycle with the company.

Over the past few years, the corporate world has seen an emergence of EX, which is now something that managers and leaders need to focus on to attract, retain and grow talent. Decades ago, few companies invested in the EX, because the power was retained firmly in the hands of employer.

Times have changed. The world has become more agile, more mobile and more connected than ever, and employees now recognize that their skills and networks provide today’s job security, not corporations. The new frontier of People Management is employee engagement, satisfaction and development, that drives company success. This all starts with Employee Onboarding.

Sapling’s software supports HR teams to build the foundation of scalable EX success, through supporting better connected, more engaged and higher performing teams.

Learn more at www.trysapling.com