

Employee Retention Starts with Quality Onboarding



You sourced great candidates, kept communication strong, ran structured interviews, aligned with the hiring team, and landed on your top choice. Once the offer is accepted and the paperwork is signed, hiring's complete—right? Wrong.

This is where onboarding begins. And while it's often treated as an administrative step, onboarding plays a much bigger role. It shapes how quickly new hires ramp, how connected they feel, and whether they see a future at your company.

Too often, onboarding becomes a box to check instead of a strategic opportunity. We'll help you rethink onboarding and build an experience that sets employees up for long-term success, not just day-one readiness.

Review Your Existing Program

Before jumping to conclusions about where onboarding is working (or falling short), it's important to take a step back and review the full process.

82% of TA teams already track recruiting metrics, and those data points can reveal more about onboarding than you might expect. Metrics like new-hire retention, first-year turnover, and early satisfaction scores can help you understand how well onboarding sets employees up for success—and how that experience impacts engagement and retention over time.

Beyond the numbers, common onboarding breakdowns often show up in a few key places:

- Manual verification steps that eat up hours per candidate
- I-9 documentation errors that create compliance risk
- Admin bottlenecks that delay productivity from day one
- Disconnected first-week experiences that trigger early regret
- Rigid workflows that break down as organizations scale

These issues don't just slow the process down—they create friction, increase risk, and jeopardize your hard-won hires. Use this list as a starting point to identify where your onboarding experience is breaking down.

Ask for Feedback

Data tells part of the story, but feedback fills in the gaps. One of the most effective ways to evaluate onboarding is to go straight to the source.

Start by gathering feedback from new hires shortly after onboarding to capture their first impressions. Then follow up at 30, 60, or 90 days to understand how well the experience actually prepared them for the role. Hiring managers are another critical input—ask whether new hires felt ready to contribute, and where gaps may still exist.

You can even get ahead of issues earlier in the process by asking candidates about their onboarding expectations during recruiting. This is often a missed step—but when used intentionally, it gives you an early signal into what new hires need and value, helping you design an experience that feels intentional, supportive, and relevant from day one.

Use the charts below as a starting point for building onboarding questionnaires for both new hires and hiring managers.

New Hire Questionnaire

Audience	Focus Area	Sample Questions
New hire	Overall experience	How would you rate your overall onboarding experience so far?
	Clarity & expectations	Did onboarding clearly explain what success looks like in your role?
	Readiness	After onboarding, how prepared did you feel to start your job?
	Tools & access	Did you have access to the tools, systems, and information you needed on Day 1?
	Process & timing	Were onboarding tasks and paperwork easy to complete and clearly explained?
	Connection & support	Did you know who to go to with questions during your first few weeks?
	Engagement	What part of onboarding was most helpful? What felt unnecessary or confusing?

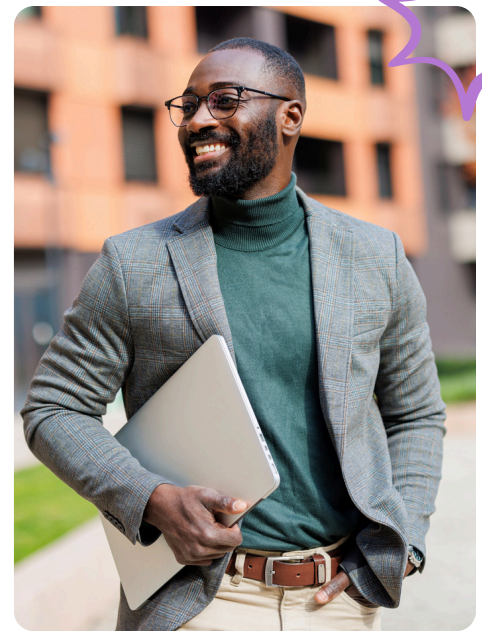
Hiring Manager Questionnaire

Audience	Focus Area	Sample Questions
Hiring manager	Role readiness	How prepared was the new hire to perform their role after onboarding?
	Ramp time	How quickly did the new hire begin contributing meaningfully to the team?
	Skills & knowledge	Did onboarding adequately cover the skills, tools, and context needed for success?
	Gaps identified	Were there any gaps onboarding didn't address that you had to cover later?
	Process alignment	Did onboarding align well with your team's expectations and workflows?
	Support & ownership	Did you feel clear on your role in supporting the new hire during onboarding?
	Improvement	What would you change to better prepare future hires?

Embrace the Power of Technology

At its core, onboarding is about people. Your team's time is better spent building relationships and setting new hires up for success—not chasing paperwork or managing manual checks. And yet, for many teams, onboarding still gets bogged down by administrative work that adds friction instead of value.

When the right processes are paired with the right technology, that dynamic changes. AI and automation can take care of the busy work, freeing your team to focus on what actually matters: connection, support, and engagement.



For example, Employ’s ATS solution, Lever, helps streamline onboarding with built-in automation that removes common bottlenecks:

- **Integrated E-Verify** takes manual verification off your plate while keeping you fully USCIS-compliant. No extra logins, no delays—just instant verification, built right in.
- **AI-powered form generation** automatically adapts to regulatory changes. And if you need something custom, our AI Form Builder will create it in minutes. Just describe what you want and watch it appear—no more waiting on legal reviews or wrestling with outdated templates.
- **Native tax document support** streamlines payroll onboarding and eliminates dependency on outside vendors, saving days in coordination and setup.

The result? Onboarding workflows that adapt to your business—not the other way around.

When evaluating onboarding technology, look for AI and automations that help your team spend less time on paperwork and more time engaging new hires from day one.

Apply Onboarding Best Practices

You know what metrics to track, which questions to ask, and how technology can help. Now it’s time to put it all together.

Below is a list of onboarding best practices informed by years of working with organizations of all sizes. Use it to assess how your current process stacks up—and to identify simple, actionable improvements you can start making today.

Onboarding Best Practice	Is This Part of Our Onboarding Process?
Remote-first orientation and training modules that can be completed on any smart device.	
Assign role ambassadors for new hires to help them integrate into the company culture; use engaged employees and incentivize them to participate.	
Survey new hires after they complete the onboarding program for feedback and ideas.	
Continuously monitor employee retention and turnover rates and report regularly.	
Start new hires on orientation, onboarding, and paperwork before their first day of work.	
Include information about the company’s dedication to DE&I and share employee resources and stories.	
Give new hires a virtual tour of the systems and let them know where they can reach out for questions.	