

## January 2005 – Drake Webinar Series: Onboarding & Orientation Volume 4

### Help Your Employees Become Effective Faster

Beginning a new job is one of the most stressful times in one's professional life. A myriad of emotions can strongly influence an individual's feelings about their new role and the company they are just getting to know. In order to avoid turnover which often occurs in the first few months of employment, employers are designing and implementing comprehensive systems to ease their employees into the fold, allowing them to become effective faster. This process is called onboarding and is both far more detailed and longer than traditional integration techniques.

Onboarding begins the moment the candidate first connects with the company. Although they are just beginning to learn about the organization, they are forming their first impressions which will carry over to every facet of the interviewing, hiring and employment process. Giving the candidate a positive and realistic 'day in the life' of their new role will provide them with the ability to adequately evaluate the opportunity. If they decide that the position is unsuitable, you have saved the time and costs associated with hiring and training.

When the offer is extended, the new employee should receive a package of materials relevant and customized to their position and the company. This package should include essential information such as benefits and insurance, policies and practices, an employee handbook, a detailed job description and performance metrics. The new employee should be introduced to their workplace, including a site tour, where they will work, and introduction to their new colleagues. This collateral and process will make them feel somewhat accustomed to their new place of work prior to their first day of orientation.

Former concepts of orientation are no longer relevant when an onboarding process is in place. Ideally, orientation programs are structured around an internal "Discovery Tour" intended to provide a well-designed learning session, consistently applied to all new employees and spread out over a number of days.

Orientation should be broken down into two sections. One that deals with the organization and another that deals with the unique elements of the job. All 'Discovery Tour' modules should be aligned and convey how the individual departments contribute to the overall company vision. Such an integrated approach will solidify organizational goals and familiarize new employees with company terms and concepts they will use when performing their job function.

Often orientation programs have as much as 50 – 80% of the total content delivered through innovative communication technologies. Using e-learning tools such as Pixion's Pictoretalk, and Drake's Interactive Messaging allows managers to cost effectively create and modify modules easily. New employees can watch recorded sessions followed by valuable question and answer sessions.

While the orientation stage may have finished for a new employee their onboarding process continues. The post-orientation stage increases positive morale and improves the likelihood of retention with a view to the long term. Paying close attention to the new employee during this time provides ongoing care, concern, and a sense of security in which the organization supports their success. It will clearly monitor performance against role expectations, and will actively demonstrate the company's commitment to the new hire through open dialogue with direct supervisors, team members and other cross functional contributors throughout the organization.

To gain the fastest and highest productivity and the greatest longevity with new hires, employers are engaging their people through a personalized, meaningful onboarding process, supported by contemporary technologies. The value to an organization ranges from avoiding and reducing costs, to faster productivity and return on salary costs, to increased employee retention.

If your company does not use a personalized, meaningful onboarding process, supported by today's technology tools, take steps today to immediately change that situation.

Learn insightful ways on how to maximize the performance of your new employees by registering for Drake's complimentary webinar, hosted Wednesday January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2005 from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., EST.

Contact Drake for further information on how a successful Onboarding and Orientation process can significantly reduce the time it takes your new employees to become effective within your organization. Call 1 800 GO DRAKE or visit: [www.drakeintl.com](http://www.drakeintl.com)