

# Onboarding Matters

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I've spent several years building and growing remote teams. During this time, two concerns have been top-of-mind for me: productivity and data security. Absent the in-person interactions, I've looked to other methods and tools to build a high-performing team and keep critical data safe. One method I've found that produces results is a robust employee onboarding program.

## Why Onboarding Matters

- Studies show that a strong onboarding program can [boost new hire productivity by 70%](#).
- Employees who experience an onboarding program are [58% more likely to remain with the organization](#) after three years.
- A [talent acquisition study found that 78% of organizations who invested time and resources to improve their onboarding](#) process saw increases in revenue.
- [54% saw significant gains in employee engagement metrics](#), including employee turnover, absenteeism, productivity, and employee satisfaction.
- Studies have continued to demonstrate that [employee engagement is partially determined by the new employee's treatment and orientation](#) during the first 30 to 90 days of employment.

My managers and I are evaluating the new employee, but I'm also well aware that the employee is evaluating my organization and making judgements that will influence their output and their decision to remain. So getting the onboarding process right is extremely important to me. And it pays dividends in terms of productivity and data security.

## Set Productivity Goals During Onboarding

Onboarding is the time to share clear goals regarding expected output. These goals should ramp up over the orientation period to allow time for the various

onboarding tactics themselves and to give employees the opportunity to learn and master increasing challenges. Establishing 30-, 60-, and 90-day goals is a smart way to grow confidence and achieve wins.

Goals mean little without measurement. Software such as our [Teramind solution can provide in-depth productivity analysis](#) reporting, deliver insights into active vs. idle time, and help manage team scheduling. We even get insights as to highly-productive time periods during the day for individuals and teams. The 30-, 60-, and 90-day goal review periods are good times to discuss this data and highlight successes and opportunities.

### **Ensure Security Awareness During Onboarding**

Onboarding is also the time to deliver initial security awareness training to your new remote employee. This training should include identification of critical data and guidelines around its access and use, examples of ‘popular’ threats such as phishing and spear phishing, and the procedure to report an incident. Remote team members should also be required to sign off on your security policies and procedures, which should include guidance on how to securely connect to your network and use personal devices.

This is another area where our Teramind solution provides assistance by listening to user behavior that could signal a [negligent or malicious insider threat](#).

### **Frame Onboarding as a Journey**

Using a journey map is one way to plan and implement a robust onboarding process. You’re probably familiar with such maps for your buyer or customer experiences. Map out the employee experience in the same manner to determine:

- The emotional and physical experience on Day 1. What’s waiting in the employee’s email or collaboration space Inbox? What swag, such as company T-shirt or mug, could you send in advance? Has all hardware and software been delivered or setup?
- Who is on-call to address Day 1 and Week 1 questions, whether technical or procedural?

- What is the task progression during the first week to address required paperwork, goal setting, policies and procedures review, manager 1-on-1, and team member meetups?
- How have you structured required training in the initial weeks, and what is the process for discussion and follow-up on what was learned?

Finally, take advantage of your new employee's experience to evolve your onboarding. Revisit the experience of onboarding with the employee after a few months to find out what worked and what could be improved.

### **More Ideas for Remote Onboarding**

Tools such as Trello or Asana, Basecamp, DocuSign, Google Hangout, and Slack are all useful when it comes to onboarding remote workers. Here are some techniques you might borrow from other remote organizations:

- Fog Creek uses Trello to [create an onboarding board tailored to each new hire](#). The board has background about Fog Creek and lays out important tasks for the new hire to complete before the end of his/her first week. The end of week one includes a review of particularly important things on the Trello board and an opportunity for the new hire to ask questions
- Dell has all onboarding materials in a digital format, including a website, documentation, and video. Their [Day 1 success team is dedicated to providing support](#) via chat/IM, email, and calls during the early part of onboarding.
- Process Street gets [current employees involved in onboarding](#) and has found this not only gets existing team members to communicate and collaborate more with the new hires, but new team members are more forthright in stating their problems, which allows for faster fixing.

If you're interested in learning more about why onboarding is so critical - and some additional examples and techniques - SHRM provides a great resource in its [Onboarding New Employees: Maximizing Success](#).