Orientation Integration Mashup For Your New Employees



The word ‘orient’ means to ‘find one’s position in relation to new and strange surroundings.’ The word ‘integrate’ means to ‘bring people or groups into equal participation or membership.’ A new employee does need the opportunity to orient; however, to become a productive member of the team, integration is required.

Orienting New Employees

An orientation process is an important step. A good place to start is by offering a new employee a tour of the workspace, introductions to coworkers, and an overview of the rules, policies, expectations, and culture. However, overloading new employees with details, names, and rules can cause anxiety and decrease the odds of everyone making a good impression on the first day. Give your new employee time to get acquainted with the new work environment and save specific details for later in the week.

Balance orientation with the integration into the team and work culture. Health and safety rules are important to communicate on the first day, but make sure you establish priorities before dumping too much information onto a new employee. When planning an agenda for an employee’s first day, ask yourself: What can be shared ahead of time, what information is necessary for the first day, and what can wait to be shared until later in the week?

Integrating New Employees

Integration requires allowing a new employee to get into the middle of things more quickly. For integration to occur, create opportunities for your new employee so that he or she can immediately begin contributing to your organization. Lay some groundwork before the new hire arrives, including organization of technical and logistical details, such as office location, security, and computer access, and other information. You can save time and energy on the first day by drafting a brief, introductory bio for your new hire ahead of time, to be sent on his or her first day at your company.

Create a Balanced First Day

How often do you speed a new hire through an organizational power walk? Instead of running a new employee through the gauntlet of introductions and paperwork, consider creating more opportunities for social integration.
Before the new employee arrives, ask a few ice breaking questions on the first day:

Fun Questions to Ask PRIOR to Your Employee's First Day

- Do you bring your lunch, head out for lunch to a nearby restaurant, hit the gym, or go home?
- Do you prefer to meet and greet in a large groups, small groups, one-on-one, or no preference?
- Are you good at remembering names or do you need to use a scorecard?
- What's your favorite colour, food, or hobby?
- Do you prefer rock and roll, classical, pop, jazz, hip-hop, country, rap, or something else?
- Do you play or follow any sports?
- What's your favorite (or ideal) vacation spot?

Ask these questions of your existing employees and share responses when making introductions.

First Day Integration Activities

During the first day, set aside time throughout the day take a tour of the office and take advantage of the following opportunities for integration:

- Identify a project a new employee can begin working on day one;
- Let a new employee sit in with coworkers discussing a project in a brief meeting;
- Ask two or three employees to greet the employee upon arrival;
- Ask the new employee's core team/immediate colleagues to join the new hire for lunch or a power walk;
- Connect the new employee with a mentor on day one;
- Help a new employee understand the entire organization to create a sense of being part of something; and,
- Have employees, management, and company leadership record a brief video welcoming the new hire so the person feels 'everyone knows their name.'

Orientation and integration are not one-day events, but rather a series of activities and efforts that include ongoing training and opportunities for continuous feedback. An organization with a clear sense of culture and expectations that can be communicated clearly to new employees and reinforced on an ongoing basis can bring onboard new employees are more likely to stay engaged over time.