2019 JOB SEEKER SURVEY REPORT

Part 3: Preboarding and Onboarding

TRENDICATORS

HR Research & Insights by Engage2Excel™

INTRODUCTION

Surveys provide an important opportunity to benchmark internal policies and practices against the perceptions and expectations of a large, statistically representative group. In Part 1 of the 2019 Job Seeker Survey Report, we explored the role of recognition in the recruiting process. In Part 2, we examined candidate perceptions of the recruiting process. Here, in our final edition, we report on candidate perceptions of preboarding and onboarding processes.

As the results on the following pages demonstrate, the quality of preboarding and onboarding programs can have a profound impact on whether a new employee intends to stay with a company. Our survey respondents also provide highly actionable insights into what employers can do to improve the quality of the overall onboarding experience. And last, but certainly not least, our survey results underscore the importance of having a formalized onboarding program that gets every employee's career journey with your company off to the right start.

The results published in this report are based on a survey of 1,500 individuals, from all major industry sectors and demographic groups, including 802 active job seekers, 574 passive job seekers and 124 non-job seekers.

Trendicators is the research division of Engage2Excel, a leading provider of employee recognition, engagement survey and talent acquisition solutions. Trendicators provides original research, along with reports on insights and best practices from industry leaders and experts.

Survey Demographics

Number of Respondents: 1,500

Countries Represented: United States

Industries Represented: All major industries

Respondent Demographics: U.S. workers in all job types with proportionate representation of gender, age group and racial/ethnic origin

Margin of Error: 95% confidence level +/- 1.5%

Important or very important aspects of the onboarding experience:

Being recognized or praised 67%

Interaction with employees 72%

Percentage of respondents who said this was either important or very important.

Preboarding & Onboarding Expectations

The impact of the onboarding experience cannot be underestimated. Half of our survey respondents indicated that a poor experience on the first day of onboarding would affect their decision to stay with the company for more than a month. More than half said that the total onboarding experience would affect their decision to stay for more than a year.

When we asked respondents what activities they expected to occur during onboarding, the highest ranking responses covered the obvious topics. However, it is interesting to note that spending time with their manager and reviewing an onboarding plan were among the top seven responses.

Survey Takeaways: Carefully plan, organize and execute each employee's onboarding experience to avoid creating a negative first impression.

41% Percentage who said that a **poor onboarding experience** would cause them to immediately start looking for another job

How onboarding affects intent to stay:

50% My first day onboarding experience will affect my decision to **stay more than a month**

56% My total onboarding experience will affect my decision to **stay more than a year**

What are the most important onboarding activities on your first day of the job?

Completing paperwork	**89%**
Company orientation	**87%**
Review of benefits	**83%**
Job training	**81%**
Tour of facilities	**81%**
Time with manager	**78%**
Review onboarding plan	**71%**

The Onboarding Process

Onboarding is important because it directly impacts retention. However, it is a far from perfect process. According to a survey by Aberdeen, only 32% of companies have a formalized onboarding process. When we asked candidates how long they expected the onboarding process to take, only 8% said more than a month. When Career Builder asked the same question of HR professionals, 49% indicated that their onboarding process takes from one to three months or longer.

What matters most to employees? Our survey respondents said that being recognized for positive behaviors and interacting with employees is important before, during and after onboarding.

Survey Takeaways: Formalize onboarding programs if you haven't already and make sure to build in opportunities for recognition and employee interaction. In addition, set expectations about how long an onboarding program will last and what's included.

How long would you expect the onboarding process to take?

Up to two weeks	61%
Up to a month	21%
More than a month	8%

How important are recognition and employee interaction during each hiring phase?

Being recognized for positive behaviors		Interaction with employees
60%	Pre-offer	45%
61%	Post offer (before day one)	49%
67%	During onboarding	72%
73%	After onboarding	76%

Percentages indicate those who said this was either important or very important.

Welcome Gifts: Unexpected, but influential

As reported in Part 1 of this series, 46% of survey respondents said they would consider other offers if they didn't hear from someone at the hiring company between time of offer acceptance and their first day on the job. To build stronger relationships before day one, some companies are being creative by presenting a welcome gift at the time of the job offer. While more than three-quarters of respondents said they didn't expect a welcome gift, more than a third indicated that it would influence their decision to accept a job offer.

Survey Takeaways: Show your appreciation for a new recruit by celebrating their offer acceptance with a welcome gift branded with your company logo. It's a great way to make new employees feel like they belong even before their first day.

UNEXPECTED:
More than three-quarters said they did not expect a welcome gift at the time of the job offer

77%

BUT INFLUENTIAL:
More than a third said that a welcome gift at the time of job offer would influence their decision to accept the offer.

36%

As part of the onboarding experience, when would you expect a welcome gift to arrive?

Between offer acceptance and the start date — **35%**

First day on the job — **24%**

Shortly after my first day — **13%**

After completing onboarding — **28%**

Best and Worst Onboarding Experiences

Each of our 1,500 survey respondents provides insights on their best and worst onboarding experiences. Some were much more concise than others. The answers shown below for the best onboarding experiences reflect a common theme. When the onboarding process is well organized and includes interaction with the manager and coworkers, it is well received. The worst experiences varied widely, with many commenting on inadequate time or unpleasant interactions as underlying causes for the negative experience.

Survey Takeaways: Get every employee journey off to the right start with a well organized and engaging onboarding program.

MY BEST
Onboarding Experience

MY WORST
Onboarding Experience

The following are representative anecdotes from survey respondents:

"The company had everyone in a group meeting to get to know each other before we took a facility tour. We got to see the senior managers right away and many of the other employees greeted us during our tour. Very friendly atmosphere."

"A previous position I was interviewed and hired for did not include proper training or help in adjusting to the facility. As a result, I only worked there for one month and quit when I interviewed for another job."

"I was taken on a tour and introduced to everyone. Then I was taken to lunch by my two supervisors and we had a very down-to-earth, friendly conversation. They told me how much they appreciated having me. The hiring manager had a bowl of candy on my desk before I started as a welcoming gift."

"My worst experience was at a retail store at a shopping mall. The first 30 minutes seemed professional, but then you realize—while watching other current employees interact and the lack of interest in the hiring manager presenting the onboarding—that the whole process is a load of garbage that no one follows."

"When I showed up at the office, someone was there to meet me. I was on onboarded by HR, then met by my manager who showed me to my desk where my new computer and phone were waiting. We went to lunch so I could meet everyone. I was given a tour and then they had information waiting for me to review."

"Being called on the spot in front of a room of about 25 people and having to introduce myself and feeling forced into a personal discussion with a large group of people I did not know—all of this made me extremely uncomfortable."

Engage2Excel helps organizations create unique candidate and employee experiences from pre-hire to retirement. We understand what employees really want, because we look at the entire career lifecycle through a scientific lens. We conduct original surveys, validate best practices from our client base of 2,700+ organizations and rely on over three decades of groundbreaking research by our chief scientific officer, Jack Wiley, Ph.D.

Engage2Excel's industry-leading solutions for recruitment, employee recognition and engagement surveys are tailored to each client's unique business objectives and are designed to help clients increase competitive advantage and improve bottom-line results.

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