First Impressions Matter

RETHINK YOUR CANDIDATE & NEW HIRE EXPERIENCE

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First Impressions Matter

DELIVER AN IMPACTFUL CANDIDATE & NEW HIRE EXPERIENCE

There has been a lot of research done on the topic of First Impressions. A consistent theme has emerged - **it takes very little time to form opinions about people and organizations**. It is also clear that first impressions are remarkably persistent. Once attitudes are set, it becomes difficult to change them.

Increasingly organizations face this same issue. In the digital age of social media and employer review sites like Glassdoor, job candidates and new hires are rapidly forming opinions about your organization. **Without a clear employer brand strategy and an engaging candidate experience, your organization will find it increasingly difficult to attract the best candidates.**

The candidate experience is just the first step. How you bridge the gap between candidate and the employee lifecycle has a huge impact on engagement. Doing it well sets the desired tone for the relationship and makes it much easier for your new hire to be connected and productive.

> **FIRST IMPRESSIONS**
>
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>
> However, these first impressions are remarkably persistent.

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5 Key Considerations

STANDOUT FROM THE CROWD

In this eBook, we outline 5 key approaches to help you standout from the crowd while achieving that desired memorable first impression.

1   **Develop & Promote A Compelling Employer Brand**

2   **Move Beyond Transactions - Create Engaging Experiences**

3   **Craft the Desired Candidate Experience**

4   **Preboarding - Engaging Employees Before Their First Day**

5   **The 1st Day, 1st 90 days, 1st Year - Rethinking the New Hire Experience**

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1 Develop & Promote A Compelling Employer Brand

The expectations of today's workforce are changing rapidly. Monetary rewards are important but today's worker is also looking to find meaning, personal growth and work-life balance in their careers. They are not opposed to switching jobs on a more frequent basis if it means they can advance these personal ambitions.

Given these realities, **it is becoming increasingly important that organizations carve out and promote a clear employer brand**. An employer brand includes a description of tangible rewards like compensation, safe workplace and flextime. It also represents the intellectual and emotional experience one can expect: pride, engagement, social connection and personal recognition. Your employer brand signals to candidates who you are and what it is like to work there. Candidates pay close attention to an organization's reputation and are quick to compare it to others.

Employer brand is the foundation for attracting and ultimately retaining the right talent.

LEVERAGE YOUR HCM SYSTEM - To Deliver A Compelling Employer Brand

High Impact - Branded Career Sites
Deploy internal and external career sites that not only visually represent your brand but also deliver personalized messaging about your organization. Incorporate photos, video and impactful content to **tell your unique story**.

Employee Ambassadors
Be authentic. Leverage your current employees to tell candidates what it is like to work there. Embedded employee videos and live chat with a brand ambassador can set you apart from the competition.

Beyond The Hire Process
Focussing on your employer brand during the recruitment phase is vitally important. However, the experience continues throughout the onboarding phase. Leverage technology supported concepts like preboarding, pulse surveys, social networks and engaging communications **to carry forward your employer brand throughout the employee life cycle.**

2 Move Beyond Transactions

CREATE ENGAGING EXPERIENCES

One of the underlying challenges many organizations face is past practice — **traditionally, recruitment and onboarding programs were primarily administrative events**. They generally involved binders of information and mountains of forms to fill out. **Hardly inspiring.**

Applicant tracking and HR systems have largely perpetuated this situation - merely taking what was paper-based and making it electronic.

Top performing organizations recognize that it is time to **move beyond transactions to deliver**, with the support of technology, **engaging candidate and new hire experiences**. Candidate experiences that tell a story about what it is like to work there. Experiences that leverage rich media to leave an impression. New hire strategies aimed at making your new employee feel connected and comfortable. All vitally important factors that ultimately influence your candidate's decision to join and stay with your firm.

According to the Brandon Hall Group, the most effective employee recruitment and onboarding programs go well beyond administrative to deliver personalized experiences. Their research suggests organizations that have invested time and resources to improve onboarding processes consistently outperform the rest in key business outcomes including revenue growth.
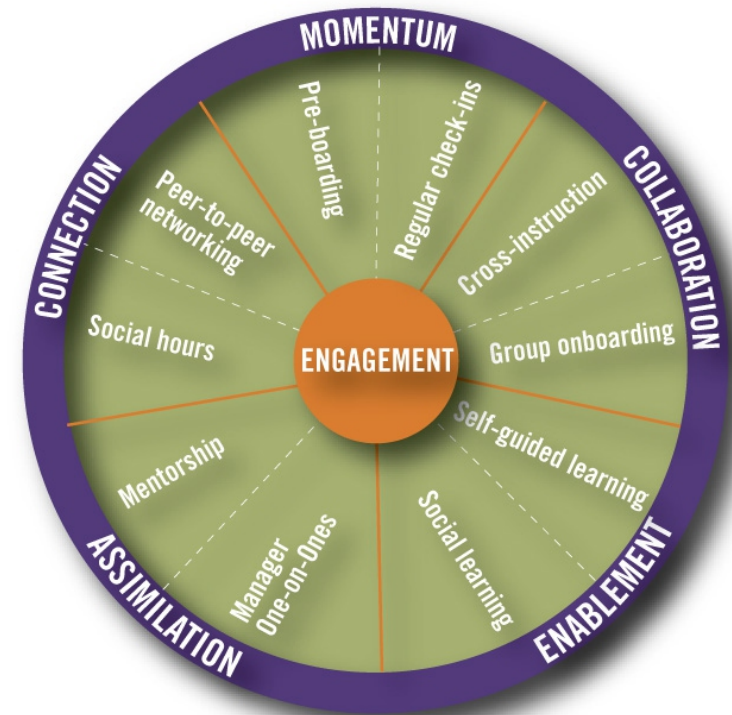
High-Performance Onboarding:
A New Model for Excellence (Brandon Hall Group)

While a compelling employer brand is a great way to attract the right candidates - complexity is the best way to lose them. Stay away from long forms and multiple sign-ins - both big factors causing high drop-off rates.

60%

60% of job seekers quit in the middle of filling out online job applications because of their length or complexity (source: SHRM)

In addition to complexity being a killer, pay close attention to the candidate experience on mobile devices.

86%

86% of candidates use smartphones to begin job search (source: Kelton)

LEVERAGE YOUR HCM SYSTEM
Crafting the Candidate Experience

U.S. HealthWorks
A Dignity Health Member

U.S. HealthWorks, one of country's largest operators of occupational healthcare centers, set out to reimagine their candidate experience. Their goal - to migrate from a complex transactional process to a socialization rich experience. Here's what they accomplished:

Redesigned Career Sites to Reflect Employer Brand
With 48% of their workforce being millennials, U.S. HealthWorks wanted a career site (internal and external) that reflected their workforce demographic. The result was an engaging, high tech site fully branded and personalized. As a fully integrated component of their HCM, candidate communications can be tailored by position, job family, internal or external and even geography.

Simple Yet Sophisticated
With many hard-to-recruit positions to fill, U.S. HealthWorks set an objective to significantly improve the candidate experience by dramatically streamlining the recruitment process. In the difficult case of physician recruitment, the application process was reduced from 50 clicks to less than 4.

Embracing Social
Social communities, employee profiles and rich media put the human element back into the recruitment process. Internal and external candidates can share postings across their social networks - increasing awareness. A generous internal referral program, tied to social sharing, delivered higher engagement and an overall positive impact on the recruitment process.

Engage Employees Before Their First Day

PREBOARDING

We've all heard preboarding announcements while waiting patiently to board a flight. You've probably thought to yourself: if I could sneak in line I could get comfortable before general boarding (and also make sure my roller bag fit in the overhead).

The premise behind an onboarding concept called preboarding is not all that different - to give your new employee a little extra help, a head start becoming comfortable and productive.

Preboarding refers to the time between a candidate accepting your job offer and their first day of work. It is something we can all relate to - being in the new hire's shoes. Feeling both nervous and excited, wondering if we made the right decision? In many organizations this stage is a lost opportunity to further engage your new recruit. An effective preboarding strategy can:

- **Create the desired "first impression"**
- **Ease your employee's socialization into your workforce**
- **Accelerate your new hire's time-to-productivity**
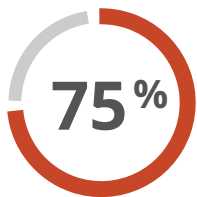
75%   **71** **Minutes**

75% of new hires voluntarily access preboarding spending an average of 71 minutes in the application (source: AdTalem)

LEVERAGE YOUR HCM SYSTEM

With the advent of rich media, enagement tools and social technologies it is now possible to create memorable preboarding experiences integrated with your HCM system.

Things to Consider When Crafting an Online Preboarding Experience

Tell Your Story
Use an effective blend of interactive experiences - welcome emails, preboarding hub, CEO/senior leader videos and personalized messages.

Foster Connections
Provide dynamic org charts with links to pictures and colleague profiles. Assign mentors while leveraging buzz or chat to answer new hire questions in real-time. Deploy "rookie" communities to support collaboration with all your new hires.

Drive Productivity
Deliver engaging online learning experiences and suggested activites (i.e. complete their profile, review benefits information, submit personal and payroll information).

RETHINKING THE NEW HIRE EXPERIENCE
Employee Life Cycle Example

Top performing organizations are rethinking traditional administrative approachs to onboarding. The following illustrative example highlights how these leading firms leverage technology to create memorable, productive new hire experiences.

Milestone: The First Day

After participating in the preboarding program on Connect — the company's HCM system, Jennifer is ready to start her first official day on the job! Since she began filling out her profile on Connect days ago, Jennifer can focus on networking with several team members, she recognizes from their profiles and their previous online conversations. She chats a bit before logging into the virtual orientation moderated by the company's CHRO. She also watches videos of real employees talking about why they love working here.

At the conclusion of virtual orientation, Jennifer is directed to complete the rest of her profile and new hire forms in the Connect system. Jennifer feels completely at ease on her first day. She even jokes how it feels like her third week, since she's talked to so many people already on the company's social and chat communities.

Milestone: 90 Day Mark

Jennifer gets a notification on Connect congratulating her on her first three months, and it directs her to check out her personalized onboarding path for the next onboarding phase. She also receives a nice message on the system from a colleague in another department.

Jennifer is feeling confident in her role and is amazed that the first 90 days went by so quickly. A group of work friends meet her for lunch to celebrate. Jennifer later posts a message to the new-hire community board thanking everyone for their support.

Milestone: 1-Year Mark

Jennifer consistently gets numerous colleague endorsements on Connect's social platform. She has been one of the most consistent contributors to employee communities. Jennifer provides leadership in her boss's absence and joined a leadership training team, which she read about on Connect.

Jennifer even looks at internal job postings on the company's Connect job board. She finds a posting that interests her. Her mentor encourages her to apply. Jennifer is excited about her future with the company.

The Potential Business Impact

According to Brandon Hall Group's research into High-Performance Onboarding, the payoffs from rethinking your candidate and new hire experience can be significant.
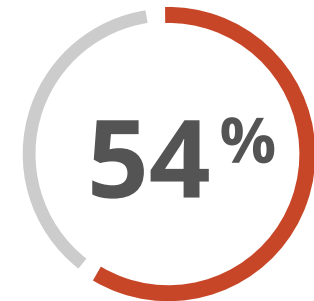
Those organizations that invested time and resources transforming their administrative recruitment and onboarding practices to productive, highly engaging experiences are consistently outperforming the rest:

78%
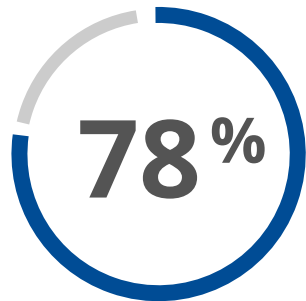
78% saw increases in revenue in the last fiscal year

64%

64 % saw positive gains in the majority of their organizational KPIs

54%

54% saw significant gains in employee engagement metrics, including employee turnover, absenteeism, productivity, and employee satisfaction.

(source: Brandon Hall Group High Performance Onboarding)

Ready to Get Started?

Diverse methods and channels for sourcing candidates combined with changing work expectations have dramatically shifted the talent acquisition world. **Traditional approaches to finding and onboarding new employees are becoming less and less effective** in today's digital age. An age proliferated by social media, online employer reviews and instant access to information. Organizations are scrambling to keep pace as they strive to understand where and how they can best interact with potential new employees.

Organizations that embrace bold new approaches will standout from the crowd, increasing their chances of beating the competition for the best talent. Given these new realities, organizations would be well advised to rethink their recruitment and onboarding strategies, paying attention to things like:

- **developing and promoting a strong employer brand,**
- **moving beyond transactions to create engaging experiences,**
- **crafting an impactful candidate experience,**
- **engaging new hires even before their first day,**
- **delivering a personalized new hire experience day 1 and beyond.**

GOOD LUCK CRAFTING YOUR OWN ENGAGING CANDIDATE & NEW HIRE EXPERIENCES.

AFTER ALL WHO DOESN'T WANT TO MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION!

We'd Love To Chat

We could write about recruitment, onboarding and the new hire experience all day long (we are geeks that way)! However, we like nothing better than grabbing a cup of coffee and launching into a spirited debate about all things technology, engagement and HR. If you would like to have a chat, just drop us a line. We'd love to hear from you.

www.vibehcm.com

ABOUT VIBE HCM

If you are eager to create the best employee experience, we should meet. At Vibe HCM, we build technology for organizations seeking a better way to deliver HR services and engage their people. Our unified platform opens new possibilities for replacing or enhancing existing systems — whether your goal is to strengthen culture, transition to new service models or transform internal communications.

Relied on by over 1 million employees worldwide, the Vibe HCM platform delivers HR, Talent, Recruiting, Onboarding, Engagement, Analytics and Payroll. Go beyond just automating HR. Visit us at www.vibehcm.com.

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