

# Onboarding Oversight: Are Transferees Left to Sink or Swim?

**Onboarding new employees is something that is always done, but often not done well. Sometimes confused with orientation, onboarding is a comprehensive process involving management and other employees that can last up to 12 months.**

A Gallup study showed a correlation between engaged employees and a company's profitability, turnover rate, safety record, absenteeism, product quality, and customer ratings. An effective onboarding plan offers an ideal opportunity to boost employee engagement, such as fostering a supportive relationship between a new hire and management, reinforcing the company's commitment to helping employees' professional growth, or proving that management recognises the employees' talent.

When onboarding is done well, it lays a foundation for long-term success for the employee and the employer. But, when an employee relocates for the position, should the onboarding process support the employee beyond the four walls of the office?

## Relocation and The Onboarding Process

As an HR leader, your goal is to get the right people to all the right places to grow your business. But, it's important to realise you're not moving goods – you're moving people! Amidst the trials, chaos, and excitement of moving, what matters most to their relocation success? Unique challenges face each employee and family. If unaddressed, these challenges can threaten their ability to thrive – derailing momentum.

Employees are overwhelmingly relocating to progress their careers. In a recent survey of 3,078 IMPACT Group customers<sup>(1)</sup>, 51% of transferees indicated the primary reason they accepted the move was for Personal Career Development.

## Relocation Motivators

- 51% Personal Career Development
- 22% Promotion/Necessary for Promotion
- 15% Other
- 7% Fear of Job Loss
- 5% Spirit of Adventure



They're eager for career growth – yet, they likely need more support than new hires. They just uprooted their home, their family, and their life. While getting to know new faces at the office and learning a new role, they're also getting to know new neighbours and learning a new city. All of this change at once is jarring.

**Does Your Onboarding Plan Make It Worse?**

Onboarding is a difficult task to master; in fact, 70% of leaders rate their internal transitions as difficult<sup>(2)</sup>. When it holds such weight on how quickly the employee will jump in and deliver results, it deserves more than a few training sessions and an employee manual. Many assume transferees already understand the business, so they'll instantly transition into the role. This assumption may leave them floundering.

**Good Intentions Don't Guarantee Good Results**

Companies have very good intentions, but rarely is a process created to walk the person through the first few months on the job with a set plan. The reality is 45% of companies don't evaluate their onboarding programmes<sup>(3)</sup>. While the employee struggles in the beginning, their engagement, productivity, and satisfaction may wane.

In our survey, 75% of relocating employees reported being Highly Engaged at work after the relocation<sup>(1)</sup>. Seventy-three percent (73%) reported being more productive at work when their family's needs are properly supported during the move<sup>(1)</sup>. However, a poorly focused onboarding plan can cause both of these numbers to slip rapidly.

During the ramp-up period in the new role, importance needs to be placed on setting goals, prioritising projects, getting to know stakeholders, and determining how success will be measured. This is so valuable because it sets transferees up to be engaged and show their value.

**Win at Onboarding**

When done right, structured plans deliver results well past the immediate onboarding period. A 100-day plan can turn into a 6-month plan, which can turn into an annual plan. Think of the domino effect this has for future success.

Less than a third of leaders believe they have meaningful support during their transition into a new role<sup>(4)</sup>. Effective onboarding requires an action plan to address:

- Organisational culture and priorities
  - Purpose of the new role
  - Stakeholders and strategies to build productive relationships
  - Manager expectations, priorities, and style
  - Goals for personal development
- Are you letting the return on your relocation investment slip through the

cracks? Sixty-nine (69%) of employees are more likely to stay with a company for 3+ years if they experience great onboarding<sup>(5)</sup>. Having an onboarding plan gets paperwork done – having an integration plan maximises your business return.



**References**

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