

**AN ORGANIZATIONAL ONBOARDING MODEL: APPLICATION TO PROGRAM
DESIGN**

by

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Abstract

Organizations face a myriad of challenges when developing programs to support new employees' orientation. Welcoming new employees to an organization involves more elements of learning and integration than just handing them a manual and letting them sink or swim. This project provides a foundation for an on-boarding model and application of its program design that is firmly based in secondary literature.

Methods of investigation for this project are secondary data located in journals, articles and books and one organization's website with documents located in the public domain. The data will be assessed in order to design an onboarding program to support new employees' orientation in that particular organization.

It is imperative that an onboarding program ensures new employees are prepared to become productive members of an organization as quickly and efficiently as possible to ensure consistent services. A priority for many organizations is to become the employer of choice by making positive lasting impressions on new employees and affect its ability to reach its short and long-term goals. A blended learning delivery for the program will be created, incorporating the best practices of various onboarding, socialization and orientation programs. The goal of this project is to create an onboarding program that supports an organization's need to build a solid, productive, and lasting work relationship with newly hired employees.

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Introduction

The purpose of this project is to investigate best practices for new employee onboarding programs, including socialization and orientation methods, in order to develop an organization's onboarding program. This onboarding model includes blended delivery methods to recognize and address new employees' diverse learning styles, enhance employment outcomes and reduce costs. Position-specific training within the onboarding process is another area that will need to be address, but it is beyond the scope of this project.

The information described and developed in this project was based on one organization using its website, in the public domain, as the primary source for information. The observations and recommendations within this project are based partially in relation to this information. It is hoped that this information may further develop their onboarding program.

To support onboarding, six domains: "organizational goals and values, history, politics, language, people and performance proficiency," (Wesson, 2005, p. 1019) will be incorporated into the design of the program. Components of these domains are evident in each of the socialization, orientation and onboarding concepts researched for this project. The domains, with a phased implementation and a combination of the above concepts, including pre-socialization, will make significant contributions to the development of this onboarding model and applying it to the onboarding program.

There are differences as well as similarities amongst the orientation, socialization and onboarding programs, including pre-socialization, so they will be introduced as individual components first. Once the terms have been defined and introduced, they will be integrated

into one program and referred to as onboarding only. This process will ensure that important factors from each of the methods will be included in the onboarding model to develop cohesive understanding, consistency and clarity for the program.

Key terms

- Onboarding
- Pre-socialization
- Socialization
- Orientation
- Blended learning
- Mentoring

Definitions

Providing definitions will aid readers to develop a clear understanding of each of these dynamics. Additionally, the program utilizes numerous methods of blended learning and mentoring, so these terms will also be defined.

Onboarding

Onboarding is a "process that starts with the first contact of a new hire - building and establishing engagement earlier in the employment stage and continuing after the traditional orientation program ends" (Thomas, 2010). Additionally, "effective onboarding drives new employee productivity, accelerates delivery of results, and significantly improves talent retention" (Bradt, 2009, p. 4).

Pre-socialization

Pre-socialization includes a self-selection process where potential applicants research an organization and access a "realistic job preview (RJP)" (Saks, 1994, p. 310), in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the job's duties and how it operates within the organization (Cronshaw, 2013). This gives potential applicants the ability to make informed decisions on whether or not to continue the application process or pursue other opportunities (Ryan, 2000, p. 163). Pre-socialization also helps to ensure that recruited employees have realistic employment expectations.

Socialization

As Wesson (2005) points out, “**Socialization** is a term used to describe a process in which an individual acquires the attitudes, behaviours, and knowledge needed to successfully participate as an organizational member” (p. 1018). Furthermore, new employees gain a better understanding about how to perform their duties and adjust to an organization’s work environment and culture (Chapman, 2009). Socialization is a method to bring new employees into the social workplace atmosphere as a way to support their learning and understanding and give them a sense of belonging.

Orientation

New employee **orientation** is a method by which new employees are introduced to “health and safety issues, terms and conditions of employment and an organization itself” (Wanous, 2000, p. 436). Similar to socialization, portions of an orientation program supports new employees to become familiar and adjust to the workplace (Mestre, 1997). Orientation focuses on logistics and training to complete tasks and meet job expectations. Some aspects of socialization come into play here such as the practice of meeting co-workers and learning to navigate in the workplace.

Blended Learning

Singh (2001) explains that “**Blended learning** focuses on optimizing achievement of learning objectives by applying the right learning technologies to match the right personal learning styles to transfer the right skills to the right person at the right time” (p. 2). Blended

learning must ensure its methods are integrated to meet new employees' diverse needs in order for onboarding to be effective.

Mentoring

Anderson (1988) believes "that **mentoring** can best be defined as: a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development" (p. 40). Mentoring can be effective during the implementation of new employees' orientation, as it is an engaging process meant to support their integration and understanding of formal and informal rules, along with other important components of the onboarding process.

There are many viewpoints in regards to what these terms mean when assessing programs to support potential applicants and new employees. These definitions will provide clear understanding of the context in which these terms are used for this project and will assist in the development of the onboarding program.

1. Literature Review: A Rationale and Means for Onboarding

This literature review will examine processes and best practices in onboarding, pre-socialization, socialization, and orientation methods in order to develop an onboarding program with a blended learning model. These processes, including the phased implementation, will be incorporated into the onboarding model that will be proposed later in this project.

Onboarding

Onboarding should take place over the long term, which starts before the first day of work and continues for at least ninety days and up to a full year depending on new employees positions (Trahan, 2012). The program essentials include the basics such as tours, email and telephone use as well as more involved areas of the process revolving around developing competencies, networking and career planning (Brown, 2012; Trahan, 2012). New employees are assigned mentors to support their connections with colleagues and help them learn about “the history and culture of an organization, how things get done in an organization, information about the benefits, policies and procedures, the safety and security guidelines, how to access voice mail, email, file systems, job descriptions, department protocols, job expectations, and any other job-related duties during the first 90 days and beyond” (Giacalone, 2009, p. 38).

Reece (2005) points out that the “on-boarding process should be considered a partnership among the new hire, [a mentor], an administering HR professional, and a responsible manager who should be senior to or on the same reporting level as the new hire”

(p. 26). As noted, the preparations done in advance of new employees' start dates are vital to ensure that onboarding programs begin on a positive note and reduce anxiety before newcomers even walk in the door (Trahant, 2012; Wanous, 2000). Typical items needed for their first day of work include "office furniture and supplies, keys, internal phone directory and a map of the office/building" (Reece, 2005, p. 27) and the supplies and systems should be in place for new employees before they arrive for their first day (Chang, 2011).

The onboarding of hourly employees and salaried senior managers "need thoughtful strategies around introducing new people to an organization. It begins with how we bring them on board, who they meet early on, and what we tell them is important" (Peterson, 2005, p. 88). There will be variances in length with some position-specific topics during an onboarding process, but many components of this program will meet the needs of all new employees.

Developing an onboarding model and implementing each of the five implementation phases of the appropriate time demonstrates to the new employees that they are valued because an organization is prepared for them to begin their new jobs (Ferri-Reed, 2010; Derven, 2008; Wanous, 2000). The program will help to alleviate the pressures of managers, supervisors and mentors due to the development of a consistent and formal process. This being established will provide greater ease in monitoring the challenges new employees face when adjusting to the culture and completing assignments (Snell, 2006). With this in mind managers will be able to identify areas of training and support needed for new employees' successful integration into an organization (Bradt, 2009; Lowe, 2006).

Through onboarding newcomers will learn the language of an organization, accessible through a number of blended learning methods. Necessary information such as departmental plans, governance, organizational chart and policies and procedures will support new employees' understanding of how an organization operates. Supporting the learning of acronyms, committees, formal and informal rules, ethics and values and norms will assist new employees to understand the culture and adjust to the political atmosphere of an organization (Chang, 2011; Peterson, 2005; Reece, 2005). Consequently, individuals will be able to adapt to the work environment and have the ability to participate as productive members of an organization's community in a more efficient and effective manner.

Successful onboarding allows new employees to learn how to develop the necessary competencies to advance their careers with a clear understanding of the promotion process and how they can make contributions to support an organization's goals (Ferri-Reed, 2010; Lowe, 2006). In so much as "an effective onboarding program seeks to align a new employee's talents with the employer's business objectives" (Reece, 2005, p. 23), it also strengthens the employer's conviction that a newcomer has been hired for the right job (Reece, 2005).

Pre-socialization

Pre-socialization, through a self-selection process, provides an opportunity for potential applicants to examine RJPs. This will enable potential applicants to gain a deeper understanding of an organization and assess their skills and abilities to make well-informed decisions about job opportunities. Potential applicants will be able to determine if there is "a

good or poor fit between the individual and the job requirements and organizational values” (Ryan, 2000, p. 163). New applicants will have the ability to determine if their values, goals and “adaptive skills are integrated as the values, attitudes, and manner of responding to the physical, social, and environmental circumstances in which persons find themselves” (Cronshaw, 2005, p. 46).

In other words self-selection is a part of the pre-socialization process where potential applicants have the option to review RJP and assess their competencies, values and adaptive skills. These applicants will begin to understand the organization and its goals to gain understanding of what to expect before they even apply for positions (Cronshaw, 2013). With this done in advance potential applicants can assess whether they are compatible with that organization (Cronshaw, 2005; Ryan, 2000; Saks, 1994).

Conflicting evaluations of RJP result in Rynes (1991) belief that RJP lower the number of potential applicants and their acceptance of a position whereas Wanous’s (1992) research shows that the RJP provide a practical recruitment tool ensuring a screening process that does not lower the number of potential applicants. Premack (1985) stated that “RJP tend to lower initial job expectations, while increasing self-selection, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, performance and job survival” (p. 706).

This project operates under the assumption that RJP help vet applicants who are unqualified or unsuited for a job, which produces applicants prepared to promote an organization’s goals and values (Premack, 1985). With pre-socialization supporting the self-selection of potential applicants, it facilitates the continuation of the design to ensure a synced process is in place to strengthen an organization’s efforts to onboard new employees.

Socialization

Socialization is a valuable method for introducing new employees to the culture of an organization by sharing information about the mission statement and values (Bradt, 2009). Socialization makes the very process of sharing stories and providing opportunities for new employees to observe other employees' behaviours and attitudes worthwhile (Chang, 2011; Bradt, 2009). These experiences will help new employees develop a more in-depth understanding about their workplace, provide answers to why performance of their duties are important and help them to navigate the political culture of an organization.

Wesson (2005) has found through his research that "newcomers are affected by initial socialization experiences in ways that will affect their perceptions, behaviours, and attitudes for the rest of their time in an organization" (p. 1018). Ensuring that the process is strategic and thorough will support new employees' immersion into a culture and could have a positive effect on those who work with them and an organization as a whole.

Korte (2012) points out the "critical importance of the initial experiences on the job for new employees and consequently they realize the need to actively manage, facilitate and support how newcomers transition into contributing members of an organization" (p. 1). Furthermore, supporting new employees through a socialization process can have a significant impact on their ability to adjust to their new working environment (Chang, 2011). New employees' ability to build relationships through networking and ongoing formal and informal connections with colleagues will enhance their performance and commitment to an organization.

Orientation

The orientation design should convey a warm welcome and a clear message to new employees that they are valued, along with the goal that they will remain with and become dedicated to their work and organization (Wanous, 2000). One major concern with most orientation programs is that “new employees may be bombarded with so much information in a short period of time, that comprehension and retention of what they are learning can suffer” (Hooker, 2012, p. 31). In addition, vital information required to do one’s job is inadvertently overlooked (Hooker, 2012; Wanous, 2000). In many organizations orientation is done inconsistently, inefficiently or not at all for many reasons. The employer may be short-staffed or no process may be in place (Hooker, 2012; Vernon, 2012). In addition there may be too much information and not enough (Hooker, 2012; Vernon, 2012).

A solid orientation process should include supporting new employees in finding their way around the workplace, locating resources and reference materials and environment (Schmidt, 2007). This includes using office equipment, receiving training, meeting colleagues or learning about an organization’s mission and goals (Schmidt, 2007).

Blended Learning

Blended learning can facilitate onboarding through “varying dimensions of interactivity within computer-based training, the most popular form [of which] is multimedia training” (Wesson, 2005, p. 1019). These methods can include online resource materials, video, audio, video-conferencing and webinars (Gordon, 1996). Along with computer-based

training, blended learning can include face-to-face training, mentoring, hardcopy materials and informal approaches (Change, 2011; Berk, 2008).

Computer-based training has become prevalent for onboarding new employees and the capabilities of these training techniques have improved significantly, lowering the costs of orientation programs (Wesson, 2005). However, as Wesson (2005) explains, “some of the content dimensions are inherently more socially oriented than information oriented (p. 1019),” meaning that onboarding cannot be completed through computer-based learning alone due to the social elements of learning an organization’s informal rules and politics (Wesson, 2005).

Wesson’s (2005) research concluded that when new employees received computer-based training only, it negatively impacted their onboarding process as that process lacked aspects of socialization. For instance, new employees had less contact with colleagues and supervisors and they did not develop the ability to understand the complexities of politics and the importance of the goals and values of an organization (Chang, 2011; Wanous, 2000; Gordon, 1996).

To develop an onboarding program, Gustafson (2005) argues that it is necessary to blend “online instruction, classroom interaction and interpersonal dialogue to deliver a consistent, well-constructed and well thought-out program that immerses new employees in a company’s culture and clearly defines their role in an organization’s overall success” (p.2). With these various blended delivery methods available, trainee’s diverse learning styles can be recognized and the appropriate methods adopted to ensure the onboarding process is strategic.

Mentoring

Assigning mentors before the new employees begin their job is crucial to ensure they are able to allot the time needed to prepare for effective onboarding (Bradt, 2009; Derven, 2008). As Reece (2005) explains, “A mentor’s responsibilities include making the internal introductions required to help the new hire build a strong network to educate the new hire on the availability of resources and provide the new hire with an understanding of internal politics, communication issues, and how to tackle problems that might arise” (p. 28).

It is important to recognize that mentoring should not be solely relied upon to immerse new employees in their jobs and the work environment (Chandler, 2010). Mentors’ responsibilities should include helping new employees with developing their competencies and advancing their informal networks and relationships with colleagues (Anderson, 1988). As an extension of this, mentoring links new employees with go-to people to answer questions, access support and to assist them with making personal contacts with colleagues (Brown, 2012). Assigning the right people as mentors is imperative to ensure the experience is a positive one, which will aid in a positive onboarding experience (Brown, 2012; Bourdeau, 2011; Anderson, 1988).

Incorporating the best practices of onboarding, pre-socialization, socialization and orientation methods into one onboarding process combined with mentoring and a blended learning delivery method will help establish a thorough and consistent program. The structure of the program will efficiently support trainees to become productive employees; it will also improve retention, reduce onboarding expenses and increase employees’ loyalty and commitment to an organization (Gustafson, 2005; Reece, 2005; Coopey, 1995).

2. Needs Analysis

An organization's onboarding program needs to be a continuous process to help new employees learn the policies, procedures and other logistics, as well as aid newcomers in developing relationships and building social networks with colleagues (Bradt, 2009). With this in mind an important onboarding goal is to "diminish feelings of social and emotional vulnerability, decrease stress and allow new employees to learn the interpersonal and operational skills necessary for success in the new position" (Chapman, 2009, p. 127).

It is also significant to this process that new employees understand the mission statement, values and culture, as well as how they fit into an organization (Chang, 2011). Such understanding will help to increase their commitment and motivation so they can contribute to its long-term goals (Hicks, 2006; Lowe, 2006; Peterson, 2005).

While designing a strategic onboarding program, six domains of the onboarding process will be described: organizational goals and values, history, politics, language, people, and performance proficiency (Wanous, 2000). These domains need to be addressed by various means throughout the model. There is a cyclical format to these domains as their focus is in various areas of the onboarding process. The number of domains addressed during each of the phases will ensure the learning progression is not overwhelming during the early portions of the onboarding program.



Figure 1: Domains' cyclical process for the onboarding program (adapted from (Wanous, 2000))

It is necessary to describe and gain a clear understanding of the six domains before designing an onboarding program to ensure priorities and goals are met in a cohesive and continual process. The cyclical design indicates that this is a continual learning process that links the domains as each one will affect new employees' understanding of the other domains and an organization, allowing them to onboard in a time efficient and cost-effective manner.

Whether new employees are hourly paid front line employees or salaried managers, it is fundamental for the program to support new employees' successful integration into an organization's community (Hicks, 2006). This is carried out by assisting new employees to understand as much as possible about an organization. This will support them in working towards meeting job expectations and committing to the organization's goals and values (Peterson, 2005).

Organizational Goals & Values

Familiarizing potential applicants and new employees with the organization's goals, values, and mission statement should be a focal point of the onboarding process (Wanous, 2000). This domain will encourage new employees to become engaged and commit to an organization's values and goals. An organization's success relies upon this domain to ensure all potential, new and current employees understand and are dedicated to similar short and long term outcomes (Short, 2011).

People

An organization's culture can have a positive and lasting effect on employees throughout their employment. This domain is important as it gives new employees opportunities to develop connections with colleagues and others who can provide them with intellectual and social support that will increase their productivity and immersion within an organization (Chang, 2011; Reece, 2005).

Performance Proficiency

New employees must participate wholly in the onboarding process to ensure their knowledge, skills and abilities develop quickly or risk their careers falling short of their expectations or goals (Schmidt, 2007; Anderson, 1988). This makes performance proficiency one of the more targeted of the domains. The probability of new employees becoming proficient in their work will depend on an organization's ability to ensure the appropriate equipment, resources, training and supports are in place (Schmidt, 2007). Tasks

must be assigned in a methodical manner that builds on success and challenges, and feedback must be provided throughout the onboarding program (Bradt, 2009). The ability of new employees to access current information and resources is essential to assist them in developing the competencies required for strong performances in the workplace.

History

An organization's history will provide potential applicants and new employees with a sense of its customs, traditions and stories (Wanous, 2000). As an organization evolves over time, those considering applying for a position as well as new employees, could find themselves lost as they attempt to understand how and why it has come to be what it is today. This domain is necessary for successful onboarding as the history will inform newcomers of the reasons decisions were made in the past, which will support its present reality (Wesson, 2005).

Language

An organization has relationships with many external organizations and agencies, which can leave new employees in a quandary, struggling to understand the acronyms and language that are used in typical day-to-day workplace conversations (Bradt, 2009). Internal organization-specific terminology and acronyms can leave new employees lost during the onboarding process (Bradt, 2009). Supporting new employees to learn the terminology and acronyms is especially important when new employees are attending department meetings and learning department objectives as they can be left feeling isolated and frustrated from

day one (Bradt, 2009). The language domain gives new employees an organizational vocabulary to support their learning, adjust to the workplace, and provide them with the means to interpret their organizational experiences (Bradt, 2009; Berk, 2008).

Politics

Politics can muddy the waters for new employees as they try to navigate through the sensitive nature of this domain. Politics can affect the way new employees perceive colleagues and the way colleagues perceive them (Schmidt, 2007). Many organizations face the challenges of supporting new employees in finding their way through these sometimes difficult issues, but the understanding of the political issues is vital for retention and career planning purposes (Coopey, 1995). This domain must be factored in to the onboarding process because without a basic understanding of the politics, it will be a challenge for new employees to adapt to the workplace environment.

Blended Learning

As evident from the literature review findings, there are opportunities for blended learning methods to incorporate the six domains. For potential applicants, the ease of access and a user friendly website is vital to ensure they are able to research the RJP's to gain an in-depth perspective about a specific position and the organization itself. For new employees these methods can include web-based, webinar-based, mentoring, self-paced and group formats (Singh, 2001). Wesson (2005) does caution that a new employee's computer experience and age may affect his or her ability to successfully orientate through a computer-

based onboarding program. This factor must be considered in the development of an integrative program. The right combination of learning methods can address newcomers' diverse learning styles and provide them with the knowledge needed to perform their jobs.

Mentoring

Mentoring is pivotal to the onboarding process and provides a means for accomplishing objectives such as sharing knowledge and supporting new employees in acquiring the competencies necessary to become effective in the workplace (Short, 2011; Anderson, 1988). The decision to assign appropriate mentors must be a methodical one in order to ensure that the mentors understand their roles and responsibilities and are available to provide guidance and support to new employees where and when necessary (Anderson, 1988). Reece (2005) observes that "Core criteria sought for a strong mentor may include an established track record and reputation within the company, demonstrated interest, enthusiasm and commitment to mentoring, strong chemistry with the new hire, and availability" (p. 28). Mentors must have the soft skills to support newcomers when they are struggling with assignments and when they are attempting to network with co-workers (Anderson, 1988).

Addressing each of the six domains in a cyclical method will continually link these topics to ensure a cohesive process for the onboarding program. Through the connectivity of the domains, utilizing a number of blended learning methods along with mentors supporting this process, new employees will become more productive in a shorter time period by gaining a deeper understanding of the organization's short and long term goals. The onboarding

program will provide a solid foundation for new employees' integration into the work environment and the organization's culture through a consistent and thorough process.

3. Preliminary Plan

A five-phase implementation process (Derven, 2008; Ryan, 2000) will be utilized for the program developed in this project. A combination of domains strategically introduced and continuously utilized at specific points during each phase to ensure that a well-planned and thorough process is designed and implemented for an organization's onboarding program.

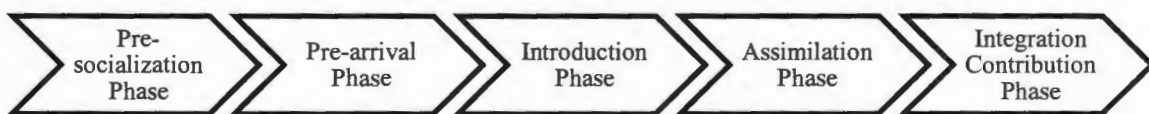


Figure 2: Onboarding Program Phased Implementation (adapted from (Derven, 2008; Ryan, 2000))

A number of blended learning options can be implemented during each of the phases to support diverse learning styles. Although all preliminary plan suggestions may not be used within the onboarding program, it is important to assess each idea to determine the ones that will be most efficient and effective (Berk, 2008). Consideration must be given to potential applicants' self-selection, managers and supervisors' time constraints, costs, and the overall progress of the trainee (Berk, 2008; Ryan, 2000).

In order to provide a consistent and strategic onboarding program I consider which domains will be utilized during each phase of the program. As the domains are introduced in a cyclical format, it becomes apparent that in some cases the domains are introduced more than once so new employees can increase the depth of their understanding of an organization and various topic areas.

Pre-socialization Phase

During the pre-socialization phase, addressing an organization's values and goals provides an opportunity for potential applicants to determine if their competencies, interests and adaptive skills are a good fit for an organization (Cronshaw, 2013; Ryan, 2000). During this phase an organization can provide cohesive position-related information. This information would be available on the website for individuals to preview the RJP in the hopes that potential applicants will self-select for specific positions, be a good match for those positions, and complement an organization's efforts to reach their goals (Ryan, 2000).

The RJP will reduce the number of applicants who are unqualified or unsuited for the organization. An organization's objective by providing RJP is to "attract, hire, train, develop and manage an organization's people for the purposes of maximizing organizational performance" (Mehta, 2011, p. 45).

Pre-arrival Phase

There is a clear need for preparation before new employees arrive on their first day to make sure they feel welcome and less anxious (Bourdeau, 2011). During the pre-arrival phase, domains to be addressed include organizational value and goals, people, and performance proficiency.

Preparing workspaces with typical office supplies, setting up computers, emails and telephones and arranging access to needed secure online resources are some of the basic necessary preparations that will support a friendly atmosphere for new employees (Chang, 2011; Berk, 2008). Other pre-arrival preparations might include face-to-face introductions,

personalized letters or welcoming videos from the executives introducing and explaining their roles and how new employees can work to fit with the overall organization's mission statement (Patton, 2011; Thomas, 2010). As executives typically understand and exemplify the philosophy of an organization sharing their knowledge could be a valuable way of introducing an organization's culture to its new employees (Reece, 2005). These greetings could be sent to new employees ahead of time to ensure they have a supportive introduction to the workplace environment.

Department meetings could be scheduled as an introduction for newcomers, so they will feel comfortable entering the organization during their first few days (Berk, 2008). Work-related documents could be mailed to new employees' home; alternatively, online access to these documents could be permitted in advance through an organization's website's HR department link or portal (Caruth, 2010). Whether mailing documents to their home or accessing them online would cause new employees confusion and anxiety needs to be considered, as this should be a smooth easy process.

Arranging for mentors, HR staff, or managers to contact new employees by telephone or email one or two days in advance of their start date may help them prepare for their first day (Caruth, 2010; Lowe, 2006). Other options include mailing an information sheet with similar materials or allowing access to an organization's website. Experienced staff or managers can provide new employees with basic information about what to expect, what to wear, where to go and when to arrive (Snell, 2006). The distribution of this information will reduce anxiety, prepare new employees for their first day, and allow the onsite onboarding to begin on a positive note (Snell, 2006; Duguay, 2002). Current employees must be aware of

new employees' positions and start dates in advance to help to create a welcoming environment.

Introduction Phase: Week One

On the first day and during the first week, a slow integration into the work environment is important to ensure retention of information. The people, organizational goals and values, performance proficiency and language domains could be addressed during this phase, although this may provide an overwhelming amount of information in too fast of a timeframe.

Making available key onboarding staff when new employees arrive on the first day promotes a welcoming atmosphere and reduces anxiety (Bourdeau, 2011). Having managers, supervisors and new employees review onboarding checklists will help to ensure everyone is clear about their expectations and responsibilities throughout the process (Caruth, 2010; Thomas, 2010). Throughout the first week, mentors, supervisors or co-workers could provide tours and allow new employees time to familiarize themselves in their workspaces.

Another responsibility includes assisting them in accessing resources and reference materials through an organization's website, HR department link or a new employees' portal (Moscato, 2005). As an organization's portal can be quite a complex system it would be important to provide a mini-session for training before expecting them to access this information independently. However, successful onboarding must allow for the introduction of new employees to co-workers in the department. With the scheduling of coffee breaks with colleagues in various departments, this process will benefit employees by increasing

their ability to develop relationships with others, accessing needed information and understanding how their roles fit within an organization's goals. (Caruth, 2010).

Completion of any outstanding work-related documents and first assignments can also take place during the first week. Assignment of first tasks may ease new employees into their department, providing small challenges (Berk, 2008). A variety of activities could be planned so new employees are not inundated with paperwork or overwhelmed the moment they enter the workspace (Bourdeau, 2011; Caruth, 2010). When new employees understand that they will have access to "the necessary resources and support to carry out the responsibilities of the positions ... they will have confidence in the company and their ability to achieve an organization's goals" (Reece, 2005, p. 29).

Ongoing check-ins and feedback during this phase may help to ensure that newcomers are receiving proper guidance to become effective in their jobs and in their ability to adjust to their new work environment (Reece, 2005). Feedback may support new employees' performance and "should be done in the spirit of empowering the new hire to take responsibility for his or her own onboarding experience" (Reece, 2005, p. 28).

Assimilation Phase: Weeks Two – Four

Providing new employees with information about an organization's history, ongoing messages about the mission statement and values, and how their positions and departments contribute to its strategic plan (short- and long-term goals) could aid them to understand their job descriptions and employment expectations (Snell, 2006; Gustafson, 2005). Domains during the assimilation phase could include organizational goals and values, history, people,

performance proficiency and language. This information could be communicated through a number of blended learning methods such as online and hardcopy resources, informal conversations with co-workers, mentors, supervisors and managers, videos and webinars (Singh, 2001; Gordon, 1996).

The development of new employees' competencies could be strategized at this point by the assigning of more in-depth assignments and the provision of access to training designed to engage them in their work and an organization's community as a whole (Gustafson, 2005). To advance these competencies new employees need to learn and understand the unique organization's language. This can be accomplished through online resources, support of their mentors and supervisors, hard-copy reference tools, new employees' handbooks and the development of working relationships with colleagues in various departments and on various committees (Brown, 2012).

To ensure new employees have the opportunity to access the resources and information needed, time should be set aside for online and other learning formats that ought to be incorporated into their regular work schedules (Gustafson, 2005). Time should also be allotted for check-ins and feedback on a regular basis (Berk, 2008). Essential during this phase is an ongoing constructive assessment of new employees' abilities and accomplishment of their basic tasks. As Vernon (2012) observed, "since onboarding is about establishing behaviours that will create the foundation for long-term workplace success, it is important the new hires receive feedback as they are developing their habits to ensure that they are forming the right ones" (p. 33).

Integration and Contribution Phase: Weeks Five to Twelve

The onboarding process needs to become more comprehensive during this phase to enhance new employees' competencies and immerse them deeper in an organization's culture (Derven, 2008). Domains that could be addressed are organizational values and goals, people, politics, history, performance proficiency and language. This could be accomplished by defining long-term goals and encouraging new comers' continual review of an organization's mission statement, goals and values (Derven, 2008). Such definition and review will support new employees in envisioning future career paths, which will in turn help engage them in their work and increase their emotional investment, motivation and commitment to an organization (Short, 2011; Ferri-Reed, 2010). Depending on the position, the onboarding program may need to be extended for a longer period of time, especially for those with management appointments.

During this phase new employees may be offered longer and more challenging assignments and the opportunity to become more involved in projects or committees; they will thereby further develop competencies and become more immersed in an organization's community (Hicks, 2006). In line with this, managers could "provide specific projects in which the employee can apply the training within a reasonable time frame" (Berk 2008, 47). As assignments become more complex, newcomers will have opportunities to apply an organization's specific language within their duties to gain a better understanding of its operations (Bradt, 2009).

Access to appropriate resources and guidance from mentors and co-workers are fundamental in supporting further development of new employees' ability to be successful

and confident in their ability to perform their duties (Vernon, 2012; Wanous, 2000). Throughout this phase of onboarding, newcomers may continue to develop their understanding of the political atmosphere due to the need to work with colleagues from other departments with varying job priorities and social realities (Reece, 2005).

On a different topic, an organization must recognize new employees' needs for a work/life balance (Bradt, 2009). Workshops could assist them in coping with their job responsibilities and personal lives through relevant topics such as stress management, conflict resolution and time management offered when and where applicable (Derven, 2008). Permitting current employees to attend these workshops could provide new employees with further opportunities for networking and developing personal relationships, as well as assisting them in gaining a better understanding of their workplace environment on a different level. These types of opportunities will help to advance new employees' competencies, increase their confidence and willingness to take on new challenges and support their career development (Chandler, 2010).

Using a phased implementation and introducing the six domains in a cyclical process will provide a slow integration into the organization without overwhelming new employees during their first few weeks of work. Choosing a variety of learning methods and mentors during each phase will support new employees to become more engaged in the onboarding program as they will feel valued due to an organization's efforts to ensure their training and integration into community is a consistent and ongoing process.

4. Delivery Methods

An organization's onboarding program is compiled using a combination of blended learning methods (Patton, 2011; Singh, 2001; Derven, 2008). It is crucial that HR staff, managers, supervisors and current employees are involved in the final design of an onboarding program as far as content and delivery methods are concerned (Berk, 2008).

Wanous (2000) discovered that the use of videos had a more positive effective on new employees than exclusively hard copy reference materials. Short (2011) and Wanous (2000) have similar recommendations to blend computer-based and online material, videos, video-conferencing, webinar, and handbooks to offer a more diverse learning environment.

Webinar & Video-conferencing

Webinar and video-conferencing are useful communication tools for new employees' onboarding (Short, 2011). Organizations can provide access to online training and discussions in formats that reach new employees at a number of regions or departments at the same time. These methods allow for workshop options and give management an opportunity to stress an organization's values and goals in a consistent way (Patton, 2011; Short, 2011; Singh, 2001). As many organizations have offices located across many regions, online options provide a flexible tool that will decrease time, travel, and accommodation expenses needed for onboarding new employees.

Website and Intranet

To attract well-informed applicants who have realistic job expectations, organizations need to have an up-to-date and user-friendly website (Rynes, 1991). RJs that are current and clearly define the position, duties, potential for career development, and an organization's mission will encourage the potential applicant to apply for the position or inform them that the position is not relevant to their needs or interests (Cronshaw, 2013).

Much of the standard information can be relayed to employees through an organization's intranet and HR link with the development of a new employees' section, but information must be current. Generic welcome videos from the senior management in which they share their insights about an organization can add personal touches to help new employees to understand management's perspective on how work gets done (Bradt, 2009). This area of the intranet will provide other tools to assist new employees in finding solutions for many of their own questions through a frequently asked questions section or locating the department and the people who can help them (Short 2011).

After ongoing review of these materials, it is imperative that new employees follow-up with mentors who will address any confusion or refer them to supervisors or HR staff to ensure new employees have the opportunity to speak to any outstanding issues related to onboarding the resources and reference materials (Brown, 2012). This process will increase newcomers' understanding of an organization's operations, and they will become more confident and independent in their work.

The intranet should also offer in-depth information about an organization's policies and procedures, governance, organizational chart, history, upcoming events and other

valuable information to support new employees in learning more about an organization and their particular department (Peterson, 2005). This will aid in newcomers' immersion into the culture and community, supporting their ability to understand an organization's operations and future direction as well as its values and goals (Bradt, 2009).

New Employee Handbook

An organization's new employee handbook is an excellent reference tool (Brown, 2012). It should provide information including an organizational chart, various committees' goals and responsibilities, policies and procedures, values and ethics, legislation and policies affecting employment, formal rules, and training and development opportunities (Brown, 2012). The handbook should have point form information, charts, and tabulated sections that allow quick access to reference information. To enable easy updating or addition of supplementary materials, the handbook can be compiled in a binder (Chang, 2011). Although reading materials should provide the basic background and understanding of an organization itself, they will not help new employees develop personal connections, gaining insight into informal rules or thoroughly appreciate the organization's values and goals (Brown, 2012). With this in mind the handbook should not be relied on to replace other blended learning methods of the onboarding program.

Depending on the number of new employees beginning work within the same time period, face-to-face introductions will assist in making connections with other employees and management. This method can become quite costly if travel is necessary. Other blended

delivery methods such as video-conferencing and webinars are suitable alternatives to this format (Chang, 2011; Thomas, 2010).

In addition to these methods the supervisors and new employees' checklists system will be established to support the onboarding program (Derven, 2008). An organization must ensure that new employees' checklists encompass safety issues to make certain they are aware of the policies and procedures for emergency, security and injury situations (Thomas, 2010). With the inclusion of other organization specific information, supervisor, HR and payroll information will be able to support new employees' ability to take an active role in their onboarding experience (Thomas, 2010).

New employees tend to be overwhelmed during their first few weeks and they might miss important information, leading them to unnecessarily contact HR staff or supervisors (Berk, 2008). New employees' checklists will allow them to take more responsibility and become more engaged in the onboarding program as well as have a better understanding of the process and expectations (Derven, 2008). An additional advantage that checklists offer is the easy identification of issues that new employees may be struggling with during the onboarding process. This allows management to be more proactive in assisting the new employee.

These blended learning methods offer new employees options to support a number of diverse learning styles. These will enhance new employees' onboarding experiences to support their integration into an organization's community (Berk, 2008). These methods will help in the development of new employees' competencies and provide them with the

resources and reference material needed to relate their work to an organization's mission statement and goals (Berk, 2008).

The delivery methods for the onboarding program are keys to addressing new employees' diverse learning styles. Through a variety of options, such as webinars, new employee handbooks, and an organization's website and intranet, new employees will have access to valuable information and resources through a number of avenues. With their access to tools, such as the new employee handbook, their ability to engage in their work environment and develop social networks to aid in their performance proficiency and form personal relationships with co-workers which can result in productivity and retention. These methods support the onboarding process as new employees' ability to use these resources will help them connect their work with the organization's goals and values.

5. Onboarding Program Design

The onboarding program is designed to enhance one organization's orientation program and to support its further development. The implementation of the five-phase (Derven, 2008) and six-domain concepts (Wanous, 2000) are applied in a number of capacities to support this organization's potential applicants and new employees' onboarding.

This process enables potential applicants to assess if a position is a good match, support new employees to prepare for their first day of work, immerse them in the organization's community, and continually aids them in developing their competencies (Derven, 2008; Saks, 1994).

Researchers will be interested in the testing the efficacy of the proposed onboarding model, to this end, one or more propositions is given at the end of each phase of the onboarding process described below. These propositions can be rewritten as testable hypothesis which if supported, validate this onboarding model.

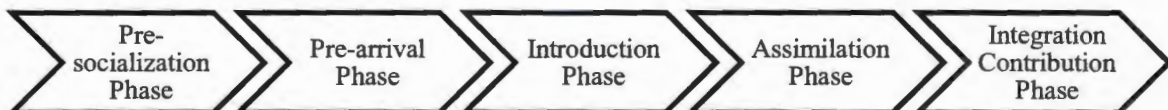


Figure 3: Onboarding Program Phased Implementation (adapted from (Derven, 2008; Ryan, 2000))

Pre-socialization Phase

The pre-socialization phase provides potential applicants with a realistic job preview (RJP) available on the organization's website. This offers applicants a chance to identify the

organization's values, goals, and mission, and determine whether or not they are a good fit for the organization (Ryan, 2000).

In some cases, RJPs are introduced during the interview to develop open discussions about the position and organization itself. For the premise of this project, RJPs will be available on the organization's website to enable potential applicants to determine in advance if they are suited for the position and the organization. This will decrease the number of applicants without the required attributes and skill levels for the position, before the interview process begins.



Figure 4: Onboarding Domains: Pre-socialization Phase (adapted from (Wanous, 2000))

By providing potential applicants with RJPs, information relating to an available position within the organization will increase the self-selection process. In many cases individuals will determine job fit themselves before choosing to apply, which in turn can increase job performance and reduce job turnover in the long run (Cronshaw, 2013; Premack, 1985).

In addition to describing the job duties, the RJP will identify training needs and career opportunities. This helps the applicant to understand the commitment needed to fill the position's role as well as the commitment the organization is making in hiring the applicant (Cronshaw, 2013). With individuals possessing a greater understanding of the position, along with its challenging and difficult aspects, potential applicants may perceive these as positive or negative attributes. With this in mind, they will be able to make a more informed decision about whether to apply for a position or not (Cronshaw, 2013; Wanous, 1992).

During the pre-socialization phase, potential applicants will gain an understanding of the organization and position available. This will aid in their ability to determine whether their values, goals and self-interest are a good match for the position and the organization as a whole (Cronshaw, 2013; Ryan, 2000). With the availability of RJP on the organization's website, potential applicants will have the ability to gain an in-depth perspective of the positions and organization by thoroughly researching roles and choosing to self-select (Ryan, 2000). This phase can help to ensure other phases progress smoothly due to the potential applicants' understanding of the organization and determining that they are a good match for the position.

Proposition One: Potential applicants receiving Realistic Job Previews (RJP) will select-out more often than applicants not receiving an RJP.

Pre-arrival Phase

The main priority for the organization prior to the new employee's first day of work is to prepare a welcoming atmosphere to reduce the new employee's anxiety. As such, the domain to focus on during this phase is people (Snell, 2006).



Figure 5: Onboarding Domains: Pre-arrival Phase (adapted from (Wanous, 2000))

Research recommends that supervisors contact new employees by telephone two days before they begin their jobs, as it will help prepare them for their first few days and provide an opportunity for them to ask questions before they arrive on the job (Snell, 2006; Duguay, 2002). Supervisors should be the primary contact as their involvement in the onboarding process demonstrates clear reporting and administrative guidelines. This method will ensure a welcoming environment for new employees, lower their anxiety, and increase their confidence. They will become engaged in their onboarding immediately because they will be prepared for work in advance (Caruth, 2010; Duguay, 2002).

It is important for organizations to inform their internal communities by e-mail that new employees have been hired. Included in the emails should be information about new

employees' backgrounds, their start dates, their new positions and in which department they will be working (Korte, 2010). This information will prepare current employees to support the onboarding process.

Ensuring new employees receive online personalized welcoming videos from senior management is not time or cost-effective. A mail-out of personalized letters that include the executive's signatures along with other key documents such as new employees' employment contracts is a more efficient method to address this portion of the onboarding process.

Other work-related documents such as Canada Revenue Agency documents, benefit packages and examples of time-sheets, vacation request and professional development requests should not be mailed out in advance. Sending these forms prior to their start date may cause confusion for new employees and create more work for HR staff and supervisors who may be inundated with phone calls and emails when in actuality these queries could be addressed during new employees' first few days of work.

Other department managers will record generic welcome videos available on the organization's intranet HR link with a specially designed new employees' section (Moscato, 2005). These videos will provide information about their roles and how their departments work with other departments in order to move towards reaching the organization's mission statement, values and goals (Moscato, 2005). If the new employees have not reviewed these videos in advance of beginning their employment, time will be scheduled into their regular work day to allow them to gain a better understanding of how and why the organization operates the way it does.

Proposition Two: *New applicants having access to welcoming videos from management will reduce their anxiety and feel welcome to the organization.*

Introduction Phase: Week One

It is imperative that new employees' supervisors or managers are available for at least one hour when they first arrive at the organization to ensure a welcoming atmosphere (Berk, 2008). The domains of people, performance proficiency, and organizational goals and values will be important during this phase.



Figure 6: Onboarding Domains: Introduction Phase (adapted from (Wanous, 2000))

Introduction of the onboarding program, completion of outstanding work-related documents, a review of new employees and supervisors' onboarding checklists, and clarification of expectations and responsibilities is necessary before newcomers begin work (Caruth, 2010; Snell, 2006; Wanous, 2000). Assigning first tasks, confirming the reporting guidelines and developing a schedule for feedback and evaluations will outline additional roles and responsibilities in the workplace (Caruth, 2010). The next step should be to

connect new employees with their mentors to provide tours and introduce co-workers in their immediate departments.

While they are getting comfortable in their workspace, mentors can schedule coffee breaks with colleagues in their immediate and other departments (Caruth, 2010). This will encourage new employees to meet with others so they can start to establish working relationships and social networks (Reece, 2005). New employees will thus develop an increased understanding of how departments interlink to support the overall goals of the organization (Macy, 2008; Bauer, 2007).

Proposition Three: *New employees who have received information about performance proficiency are more productive on the job.*

Proposition Four: *New employees will be able to become more performance proficient in a shorter period of time.*

Assimilation Phase: Weeks Two to Four

Supporting new employees in understanding how their jobs and departments fit into and contribute to the organization's mission statement, values, goals and history will allow them to perform their duties (Schmidt, 2007). Other domains to be addressed during this phase are people, language, performance proficiency and politics.



Figure 7: Onboarding Domains: Assimilation Phase (adapted from (Wanous, 2000))

There are a number of different methods that can be used to share the organization's mission statement, history, values, and goals: intranet documents, hard copy reference materials, informal conversations with mentors and colleagues, and welcoming videos from executives (Snell, 2006; Gustafson, 2005). Time to review these resources should be set aside during their regular work schedule.

Supervisors should assign increasingly challenging assignments to new employees throughout this phase (Gustafson, 2005). This will ensure a cohesive strategy is in place for new employees' competencies development. The options of how assignments will be completed will be determined by the positions new employees hold. Blended learning methods will include the organization's website and email, hardcopy materials and interpersonal communication (Bradt, 2009).

Through mentors' support, informal conversations with colleagues and participation in internal committee meetings, newcomers will begin to understand the organization and external organizations' languages, terminology and acronyms (Bradt, 2009; Bauer, 2007).

During these gatherings new employees will start to adjust to the workplace environment, its decision making processes and the political influences that occur during these meetings and conversations (Macey, 2008). To aid in this process, new employees and mentors will review a type of “cheat sheet” from the new employees’ handbook. This will become an immediate hardcopy reference tool to use during workshops, meetings and interactions with others.

The political aspects of the organization’s culture and work environment should be introduced at this phase (Chang, 2011). If this domain is introduced later new employees would have already experienced some of the challenges of trying to cope with the underlying relationships without having an understanding of how things are done at the personal and departmental level. Without having this working knowledge early there is a retention risk for new employees as they may experience higher levels of frustration and lose interest in potential long-term career opportunities within the organization (Reece, 2005).

Proposition Five: *Blended learning methods provide a higher level of production and new employees’ satisfaction than do presentation of written onboarding materials.*

Integration and Contribution Phase: Weeks Five to Twelve

During this phase the continuance of the six domains cycle will allow new employees to become more involved in the organization’s community, building their competencies and relationships with co-workers (Wanous, 2000).



Figure 8: Onboarding Domains: Integration and Contribution Phase (adapted from (Wanous, 2000))

Longer and more challenging assignments will be introduced throughout this phase, with guidance being provided when necessary (Wanous, 2000). As these assignments become more complicated, new employees' competencies will increase and allow them to appreciate how their duties correspond with the organization's goals (Reece, 2005). This will encourage them to complete their work in consideration of the organization's mission statement and guiding values (Reece, 2005; Wanous, 2000). Blended learning methods will be determined by the assignments and the positions held by new employees. For management appointments and other excluded positions, there may be a longer period of time for the onboarding process.

An important component to this phase is supporting new employees in learning to balance their work loads and personal lives (Short, 2011). This area can be supported through the HR new employees' section, which would have reference and resource materials available during the regular work day.

Face-to-face workshops, webinar and video-conferences integrated with current employees will provide more of a discussion model that will help new employees with the enhancement of their work and life skills (Short, 2011; Snell, 2006). The added value these tools provide is the opportunity to connect with colleagues on a more personal level, which will allow them to understand and adjust to the political environment through open discussions (Brown, 2012; Macey, 2008). Furthermore, these activities facilitate learning the organization's terminology, enhance social networking, and immerse new employees in the workplace culture (Brown, 2012; Macey, 2008; Snell, 2006).

Throughout the five phases of the onboarding program blended learning methods are used to support new employees' development. With the goals of potential applicants self-selecting for positions and new employees having the ability to continually immerse themselves in the organization, its culture and work environment (Wanous, 2000). The onboarding program ensures a consistent and thorough process to aid in new employees' productivity and welcoming them into the community to support retention and career development.

Proposition Six: *New employees who received the onboarding program will become more attached to their unit than those not receiving the onboarding program.*

6. Project Limitations

1. A comprehensive onboarding program design should include input from HR staff, department managers, supervisors and employees (Chang, 2011; Berk, 2008). This avenue was unfortunately not available for the development of this project (Chang, 2011; Berk, 2008). Instead, resource information was accessed through the review of secondary data only, including data from trade books, journals, articles and the organizations' website. Face-to-face interviews with HR staff, management and current employees would have provided insight, which would have further developed this project.
2. New employees are responsible for position-specific areas and duties, but this was not addressed as it is beyond the scope of this project. The model is designed as a general onboarding program with its recommendations for a wide range of positions, not individual jobs or positions. The model and program can be applied to enhance onboarding practices throughout the organization.

7. Recommendations

The recommendations for the onboarding program focus on consistency, a continual evaluation of the program and its processes and the commitment from management for support to ensure it continues to evolve as the organization changes over time.

1. The first recommendation put forth for the organization to commit to providing new and current employees with ongoing opportunities for open discussion of the organization's mission statement, values and goals. It is evident that the domain of organizational values and goals will be continually strengthened throughout the phases of the onboarding program. Schmidt (2007) determines that "new employees decreased their perceived learning about organizational vision and leadership in the month that immediately followed orientation" (p. 327). These findings reveal the need for management to provide these opportunities throughout the entire onboarding program and in future training and professional development opportunities (Schmidt, 2007). Other employees could also be included in these events in order to enhance the learning environment and build a social network within the workplace that will support loyalty to the organization and its goals (Coopey, 1995).
2. The second recommendation is that the core documents of the onboarding program be controlled at the HR level to ensure accuracy and consistency. The rationale for the model being a controlled document is to eliminate the possibility of ad hoc changes being made by employees and/or management in different departments (Duguay, 2002). Having a secured version ensures that the document is consistent and up-to-

date, which allows the HR department to efficiently assess performance proficiency. Additionally, by ensuring a controlled document, the language domain will remain consistent and include specialized terms and acronyms which link to employees' performance proficiency.

3. The third recommendation is that for the organization to implement two evaluation methods, formative and summative, of which formative will be addressed first.

- 3.1 Managers, supervisors and HR staff must appreciate the importance of and commit to the continual analysis, adaptation and advancement of the onboarding program (Berk, 2008; Worthen, 1997). A "formative evaluation is conducted to provide the program staff evaluative information useful in improving the program" (Worthen, 1997, p. 14). It is vital that the ongoing examination of the program occurs to ensure that it is meeting the ever changing needs of new employees, dependent on a workplace environment and the organization's short and long term goals. This evaluation process will support the performance proficiency and organizational goals and values domains "with the assessment of the organizational climate and culture to determine which aspects of the climate would facilitate implementation... and which might present barriers to its successful implementation" (Worthen, 1997, p. 14). The results of the formative evaluation will be beneficial due to an increase in retention and integration and by reducing expenses and inconsistencies within the onboarding program (Cronshaw, 2013).

3.2 “Summative evaluation is completed by providing “program decision makers and [new employees and other stakeholders] with judgements about that program’s worth or merit” (Worthen, 1997, p. 14). This process can be completed through a new employees’ survey type evaluation, providing insight into the effectiveness and/or inefficiencies of the program. Senior executives and department managers, armed with this valuable information, will be able to determine if the onboarding program is valuable and should continue it needs more funds to further develop additional supports (Cronshaw, 2013). The evaluation results could effect “decisions concerning program continuation, termination, expansion, adoption and so on” (Worthen, 1997, p. 15). This evaluation would enhance the program, increase retention, performance, new employees’ commitment to the organization as well as program improvement or redesign.

The recommendations aid in further developing and enhancing the onboarding program to promote potential applicants self-selection for positions and new employees’ commitment to the organization. With the cost of turnover and retraining, the ability for the organization to retain valuable employees by supporting them through this comprehensive onboarding, the benefits outweigh the expense of implementing such a program.

8. Conclusion

This onboarding program was designed to be a strategic learning process that will support new employees and give them the tools to succeed within a particular organization. The program supports the self-selection and assessment of adaptive skills through the use of RJP's. With this onboarding process new employees can be involved in their learning throughout the process rather than remain as passive observers. The goal of this process is to instill the importance of the organization's history, people, language, performance proficiency, politics, goals and values in new employees to engage them in their work and in the organization as a whole.

The program offers a combination of blended learning methods to incorporate diverse learning styles that will reduce the time and expense of onboarding and facilitate integration into the organization's community. It provides strategic access and training opportunities to new employees in a number of regions in a consistent, efficient and cost effective manner.

A formative evaluation process supports HR, managers and supervisors to alter and enhance the onboarding program methodically, ensuring it is current, with changes being made as necessary as the organization has an ever evolving workplace environment. The summative evaluation process supports senior executives' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the program in order to support, cancel, or make recommendations for modifications based on the ongoing evaluation feedback.

Increasingly, the development of new employees' knowledge, skills and abilities allows them to become productive and valued employees through a cost-efficient and effective process. Ultimately, this onboarding program uses the five phase

implementation of the six domains to ensure a strategic approach to facilitate the efficient transition of new employees into their jobs and the organization as a whole. Their immersion into culture and their understanding of potential future career paths enhances motivation and retention capacities, which will help new employees and the organization, realize the benefits of long-term employment commitments.

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