

Leverage Learning to  
Onboard Top Talent



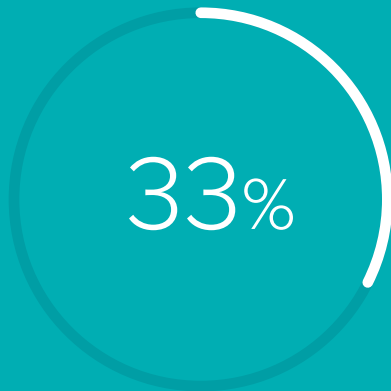
# What's in this guide?

Explore the top five ways that learning is used to enhance onboarding.

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Click to jump  
to a chapter.





of employees know whether they want to stay long-term at a company within one week on the job.<sup>1</sup>

By leveraging learning during onboarding, you can ensure employees are engaged and set up for success from day one. An effective onboarding experience can make or break employee engagement, productivity, and retention. It can play a critical role in how employees perceive an organization and its culture.

In this guide, explore the top five ways that learning is used to enhance onboarding as well as key strategies for increasing employee productivity, engagement, and retention.

Enjoy!

<sup>1</sup> The Center for Generational Kinetics

# What's your role in the onboarding process?

Onboarding a new employee is a cross-functional effort that impacts multiple teams at an organization.



## HR Business Partner

Typically, you are responsible for the first interaction in onboarding by welcoming new hires. And that means making introductions and explaining work environment information, benefits, policies, procedures and paperwork, along with other administrative matters.

You are also responsible for training others within your organization about the importance of onboarding. Consider putting together a toolkit for managers, to help guide them through the process. Check out LinkedIn's guide [Onboarding in a Box](#).



## Hiring Manager / Supervisor

You explain the team structure, goals, and performance objectives that make your department a success. You establish a one-on-one relationship with new hires. You give new hires the big picture covering where your team is, where it is headed, and how the new hire fits within it.



## IT Team Member

Your involvement is often overlooked, but it is essential. You ensure that new hire work areas are set up with the technology needed for success. You are responsible for assigning software to new hires, and providing login credentials for all line-of-business applications.

# 1 Reduce new hire time to productivity

From a manager's perspective, it's a challenge to find a balance between new hires learning the ropes and new hires quickly producing. When transitioning into a new role there is always a learning curve, and often times there are skills that need to be refreshed or developed. Employees want an onboarding process that helps them reduce the learning curve in becoming an effective, contributing team member. This is why 75 percent of companies include skills training in their onboarding programs.<sup>1</sup>

By providing on-demand learning with assignable content, employees are equipped with the skills needed to quickly become productive. Guided learning paths, or collections of curated learning, allow for personalized learning experiences customized for specific job functions.

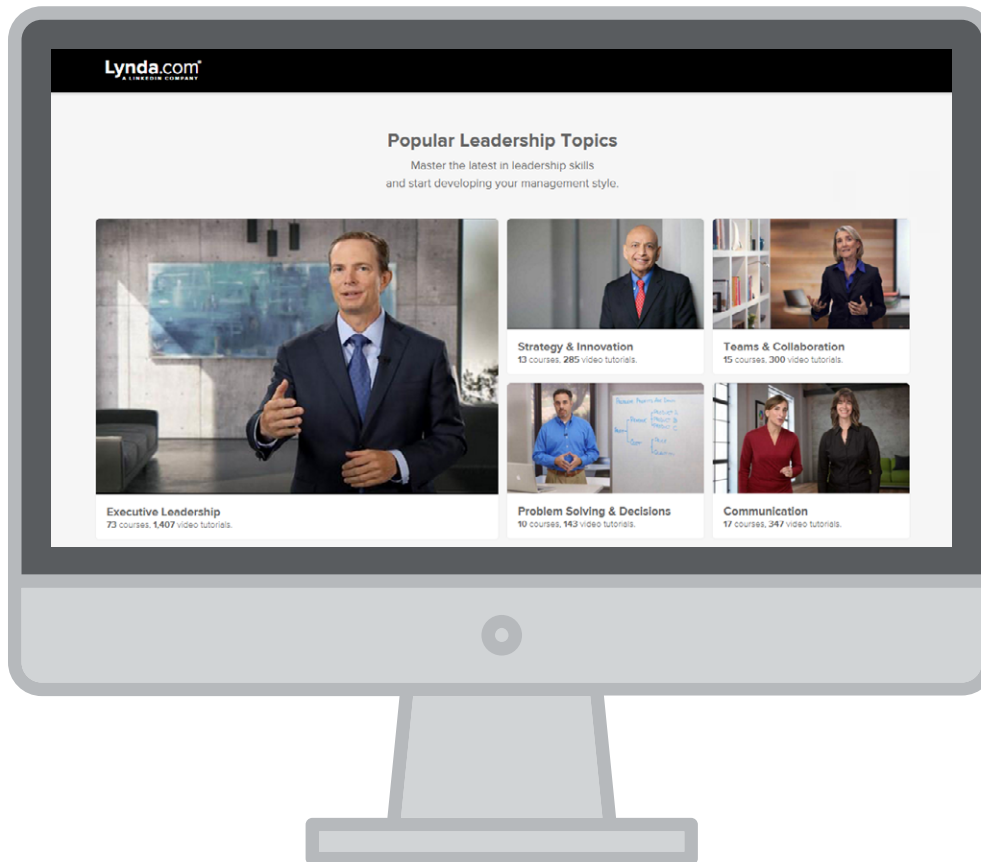
For example, a guided learning path focused on getting new managers up to speed includes training on communication fundamentals, leadership, managing conflict, global strategy, and motivating and engaging employees.



<sup>1</sup> 2012 Allied Workforce Mobility Survey: [Recruiting and Relocation](#)

<sup>2</sup> SHRM, [Onboarding New Employees: Maximizing Success](#)

Example: LinkedIn Learning uses a [guided learning path](#) to help first time managers build fundamental leadership and managements skills.



### TIP

Create a handful of guided learning paths that are short, interactive, and fun. Each should focus on tools and skills for a specific role. In no time, you'll have a library of paths you can easily deploy for the next round of new hires.

# Are your employees unproductive?

Signs of unengaged employees.



Lack enthusiasm



Act passive



Complain



Make excuses



Don't help others



Appear distracted



Resist growth

The cost of poor onboarding:

In the US and UK alone, an estimated

**\$3.7B**

is spent annually on unproductive employees.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UrbanBound, [The Onboarding Statistics You Need to Know](#)

## 2 Provide tools for career transformation

Employees who don't feel they can achieve their career goals with their current employer are **12 times more likely to consider leaving**. With new employees, this number skyrockets to about **30 times more likely**.<sup>1</sup>

The key to retaining amazing talent long-term is investing in employee professional development opportunities from day one.

At LinkedIn Learning, we do this through Transformation Plans. During onboarding, each new hire works with their direct manager to compile a plan for next steps in their career. A variety of learning tools and methods are provided during the onboarding process and beyond. The goal is to empower employees to develop skills needed to move into the next stage of their careers.

Planning for the next career step, when only weeks into a current role, may sound conflicting. But with **52 percent of millennials** saying opportunity for career progression is the most desirable quality in a workplace, companies need to invest in providing learning opportunities to up-skill their current workforce.<sup>2</sup>

By investing in professional development, leaders are built from within. And having a large talent pool of leaders, ensures the leadership pipeline stays full.

It's a win-win.

<sup>1</sup> IBM, [The Value of Training](#), 2014

<sup>2</sup> PWC, [Millennials Survey, Millennials at Work: Reshaping the Workplace](#)



# Career opportunity promotes happiness



78%

of employees say a clear career path would compel them to stay with an organization longer.<sup>1</sup>



62%

of employees say that professional development contributes to their job satisfaction.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Mercer, *One in Three Employees Claim to Have a Job Rather Than a Career*

<sup>2</sup> CompTIA, *Managing The Multigenerational Workforce*

# 3 Promote learning as an ongoing daily habit

A few orientation days isn't sufficient for adequately engaging new hires and getting them off to a productive start. Even in effective and strategic onboarding programs, over 80 percent of what is learned during training is forgotten.<sup>1</sup> With competition for attracting and retaining top talent in full swing, companies need to focus on creating a culture that encourages employees to make learning a daily habit.

“ *The single biggest driver of business impact is the strength of an organization's learning culture.* ”

— **Josh Bersin**, Principal and Founder, Bersin by Deloitte

Traditional onboarding is transactional in nature. Its focus is on getting employees set up with technology, training them on basic policies and procedures, and providing functional job overview training. New hires join their teams, and learning becomes an afterthought.

But learning isn't a one-time event. It happens in chunks over time. When learning happens over the long term, it becomes transformative. And organizations with transformative learning cultures thrive.

## TIP

Boost employee retention by

**25%**

by extending onboarding to a year or more.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Training Station, 2014

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Treasury, Partnership for Public Service



# What does it mean to be transformative?

A company understands that learning is a natural process, that people yearn to grow. They cultivate potential through learning opportunities and experiences. And it's through these experiences that onboarding becomes strategic and sustainable for the organization.

## Transactional Onboarding

- Lasts only two to three days
- Emphasizes short term learning
- Presents skills in piecemeal
- Covers corporate policies
- Explains benefits
- Introduces technologies
- Highlights company vision and resources

vs.

## Transformational Onboarding

- ✓ Lasts a year or more
- ✓ Happens daily
- ✓ Covers skills in depth
- ✓ Explains role impacts
- ✓ Aligns with department goals
- ✓ Sets performance expectations
- ✓ Promotes personal goal setting
- ✓ Encourages continuous learning
- ✓ Offers coaching and support

# 4

## Create a consistent, scalable experience

Incorporating learning and development opportunities into onboarding creates a balanced learning experience that is scalable for growth.

By standardizing learning, staff of all departments and levels receive a consistent experience. This makes learning easier to measure and improve. Also, an

on-demand training tool frees up time for the onboarding staff. It gets everyone moving in the same direction — improving adoption of the company culture and promoting a clear understanding of departmental and organizational goals. A standard onboarding process is key for growing organizations.

Organizations with a standardized onboarding process see:



greater new hire productivity

+



better new hire retention

Aberdeen Group, 2011

# 5 Communicate culture and values

When new employees understand their company's culture and values from the start, they're more likely to feel valued, stay engaged, and remain invested in their employer. Use learning to help employees understand a mission, or sense of purpose.

Culture is the personality of your company — defining **what it is** and **what it aspires to be**. And values are the principles upon which you make day-to-day decisions. Values are a subset of culture, so they're inextricably linked. Getting this right helps with motivating. It helps with inspiring. It helps with productivity.

How can learning be leveraged to communicate culture and values?

Learning can:

- Engage, motivate, and excite. It gets people's attention and holds it.
- Highlight key values and inspire new employees to put them into action.
- Present realistic, engaging scenarios and provide opportunities to practice a wide range of skills — from holding productive one-on-ones to building essential leadership skills.

Check out our guide [Create a Culture of Learning in 6 Steps](#) to start building a transformative learning culture.



Employees who say their organizational values are “known and understood” are

**51x**

more likely to be fully engaged.

<sup>1</sup> Modern Survey, [The State of Engagement – Fall 2014](#)

# Parting thoughts

Now you're ready to leverage learning in your onboarding program for an interactive, scalable, and transformative experience. By using the tips from this guide, your onboarding will produce more engaged and productive employees that have made learning a daily habit. Investing in your employees allows you to build leaders from within. The most successful companies don't recruit leaders. They grow their own.

Remember that **one in three employees** know whether they want to stay long-term at your company after one week or less. It all begins with the onboarding experience.



## About LinkedIn Learning

LinkedIn Learning is a transformative learning solution that enables individuals and companies to achieve more. Our goal is twofold: to identify the precise skills you and your organization need to excel in their career, and to efficiently deliver relevant, expert-led courses. The combination of our digital content library of 8,000+ courses and data-driven personalization delivers a powerful learning experience that transforms how learners acquire and hone in-demand skills.

Learn more about how LinkedIn Learning can support your onboarding initiatives.

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