

5 WAYS TO INTEGRATE TECHNOLOGY INTO YOUR ONBOARDING PROGRAM



Onboarding is critical to the long-term success of your new hires. Effective onboarding leads to successful, productive long-standing employees and organization advocates.

Remember, you only get one chance at a first impression - it's crucial that you make a good one.

Now, it's time to ask yourself: "Is my onboarding effective?" One way to ensure your onboarding is effective and engaging is to **incorporate technology**.

In this eBook, we'll define what onboarding is and how you can use technology to enhance your employee onboarding program.

What is Onboarding?

Onboarding is made up of a series of training events with the aim of integrating a new hire into a role and organization. Essentially, the goal of onboarding is to set the individual up for long-term success.

Employee onboarding programs typically have these common objectives:

- Integrate employees into their new role in order to be productive as soon as possible
- Prepare new employees for their position's tasks and duties
- Immerse new employees with the team and organization culture
- Help new employees understand their roles and the tools and processes needed to do them
- Show new employees how their work will achieve department and organizational goals

The best onboarding programs review performance goals and expectations, demonstrate a healthy and inclusive culture, display operational efficiency, and reduce first-day anxiety.

Through integrating technology into your employee onboarding program, you can not only impress a new hire, but also set your organization apart from others.

Without further delay, here are five ways you can integrate technology into your onboarding program.



Invest in HR Software to Support Day 0 Onboarding

Of all the things onboarding should be, there's one thing it ideally shouldn't be: **boring**.

One way to successfully streamline tedious onboarding paperwork is to use an HR software. Such software allows you to optimize Day 0, which is the time between a new hire accepting a job offer and their first day.

That time is perfect for completing all new hire paperwork, such as:

- Payroll setup
- Tax forms
- NDAs
- Employee contracts
- Policy manuals

If your organization uses software that digitizes and streamlines any of the above processes, your new employees will have more time on their first day for more engaging and meaningful onboarding activities.

The best HR Management System can automatically guide employees through new hire paperwork, direct them to documents they need to complete, and update you once they've done so. It makes the onboarding process more convenient for everyone.

Other Ways to Make Use of Day 0

- Send new hires first-day information like a company history video, directions to the workplace, and organizational charts
- Send a company-wide email announcement with the new hire's approval
- Prepare their workspace with a personalized note and welcome gift
- Assign an employee mentor to show the new hire the ropes



Implement Videos into Your Onboarding

Video has become increasingly popular in workplace learning. Video offers a consistent, and dynamic way to exhibit company culture, send messages from leadership, tell the company story, and more.

Quality, professional videos help to immediately engage and impress your new employees. Another plus to using videos is that you can use them for a broad audience; you don't have to recreate a company culture or history video for each new hire. It's content that you can reuse reliably.

If your organization doesn't have access to a film crew, you can still leverage the power of videos without an established multimedia team.

For example, senior leadership can take a minute or two to record a personalized greeting to send to new employees. Even without professional film work, audio, or motion graphics, these videos can go a long way in making new hires feel welcomed.



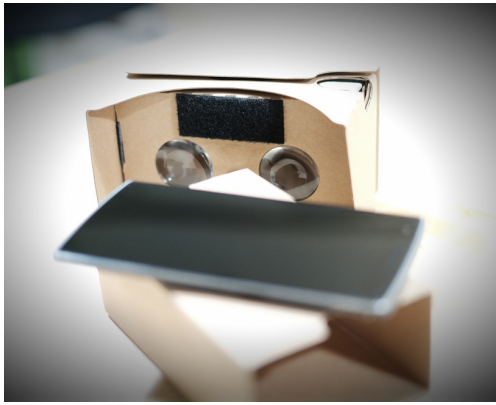
Use Video Conferencing to Connect New Hires with Teams

Another way to elevate your onboarding program is to include video conferencing. In contrast to regular videos, video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, Webex, and Slack allow for real-time, face-to-face interaction among geographically dispersed participants.

While you can use video conferencing tools to conduct formal virtual instructor-led training (VILT), you can also use them informally.

As part of your onboarding process, video conferencing is often circumstantial. If you have team members across the country and around the globe, you can set up first-week video conferences for new hires to acquaint them with their team. If you find yourselves amid a global pandemic that created remote workers in droves, you'll find that video conferencing is essential.

Video conferencing can help new employees feel a distinct sense of belonging when they start their new jobs, whether through strategic meetings or casual virtual lunches.



Surprise New Hires with Cardboard Virtual Reality (VR) Headsets

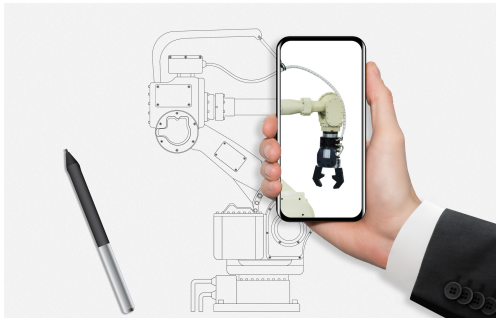
Think back to your first day on a job. Someone likely showed you to your workspace where you joyfully discovered a welcome package. Perhaps the assortment included a notebook and pens, safety gear, and a company-branded coffee mug. Now imagine if a cardboard VR headset was added into the blend!

Cardboard VR headsets double as swag and success-builders. They cost \$7-\$12 a set and can be customized with your company's brand. Your employees can experience 360° VR with these cardboard headsets by launching the content on their smartphone.

With this technology, you can immerse your new hire in virtual environments made with footage of real-world spaces. Users cannot physically move throughout the virtual environment, but they can look left and right, look up and down, and pivot left and right. Cardboard VR headsets and the content they deliver can be unique additions to your onboarding program that convey your company's modern sensibilities.

You can use cardboard VR headsets to:

- Showcase specific workspaces, like a sales or warehouse floor
- Have employees uncover the company's story through VR scenarios
- Immerse new employees in company processes and show them behind-the-scenes
- Show your new hires different locations without having to travel



Add Some Flair with Augmented Reality (AR)

In addition to VR, another extended reality technology you can use is augmented reality (AR).

With AR, employees can use their smartphones and tablets to overlay reality with a host of digital assets, including 2D images, videos, text, and 3D digital models. While there are pros and cons, AR can be beneficial for role-specific training, as well as on a general level.

Imagine sending new hires on a scavenger hunt throughout the workplace. They could scan real-world 2D images to generate custom-built content that tells a story about the company's history or culture. If your employees work with equipment that they have to troubleshoot or repair, you can use AR as an introduction to that process.

That logic also applies to sales associates who you want to equip with product knowledge. AR can explain a new hire's role and walk them through step-by-step instructions for whatever real-world tasks their position requires, including work on an assembly line with equipment parts or at a cash register with money.

While you should be mindful of high initial costs for AR, you can mitigate expenses and boost long-term ROI if you:

- **Reuse AR onboarding content repeatedly** - That means making the content as evergreen as possible so it won't need updated. If you can't avoid updates, use a tool that makes updating AR content easy.
- **Create 3D models only if it's necessary** - 3D designers cost between \$100-\$200 an hour, so it's a good idea to limit 3D models for employees who will truly benefit from them, like those who work hands-on with real-world equipment.
- **Encourage employees to use their smartphones** - Most smartphones are AR-capable out of the box. The fewer tablets you have to purchase to facilitate AR onboarding, the less costly it will be.
- **Use an Extended Reality System (XRS)** - An XRS, such as Mercury, can help to manage your training program, deliver consistent and repeatable training activities, and offer flexibility with offline access.



Recap

- ✓ **Invest in HR Software to Support Day 0 Onboarding**
- ✓ **Implement Videos into Your Onboarding**
- ✓ **Use Video Conferencing to Connect New Hires with Teams**
- ✓ **Surprise New Hires with Cardboard Virtual Reality (VR) Headsets**
- ✓ **Add Some Flair with Augmented Reality (AR)**

When attempting to improve your onboarding program with technology, the world is your oyster. There are many technologies you can utilize in a variety of ways, just remember to stick to your onboarding goals throughout the process.

Ultimately, you want to make new hires feel comfortable, confident, and excited about their new job. If you do that, you'll leave a great first impression that makes both you and your new employee proud to be a part of your organization.

So now it's time to ask yourself, "Is it time to integrate technology into our organization's onboarding program?"