

THE ONBOARDING PROCESS



A Best Practice Series

An ADP VirtualEdge White Paper

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INTRODUCTION

Onboarding is the process for bringing a new employee “onboard” or starting their employment with your company. Although some argument could be made for exactly when the onboarding process begins, practically speaking this process begins as soon as an applicant accepts your offer of employment.

The onboarding process includes such activities as: providing introductory information to inform the new employee about the company, obtaining the new employee’s signature on necessary government, legal, and policy documents as well as business contracts, providing benefits information, arranging and coordinating relocation for the new employee and any dependents, and some process for orienting the new employee to their work location, work area, and teammates.

Research and experience has shown that new employees face significant transition and integration issues and challenges during the first weeks and months of employment. Improving the start-up experience through the onboarding process enables the new employee to overcome many of these initial personal challenges. The hiring organization benefits through faster time-to-contribution and ROI of new employees. This creates an opportunity for significant competitive advantage in talent acquisition. Effective onboarding processes are also recruiting opportunities for reviewing the employment brand with new employees and soliciting referrals to fill other hiring needs. In this white paper, we will:

- Review trends identified in recent research studies
- Review examples of poor onboarding processes and new hire experiences
- Outline specific opportunities and gains to be realized from improving the onboarding experience for new hires
- Offer examples of best practices used by insightful, agile, forward thinking companies
- Provide an overview of the onboarding module, VE Salute, and work flow
- Discuss benefits of using an onboarding process, and overall guidance in creating and deploying a program with ADP VirtualEdge (ADP VE)

An effective onboarding process is a critical tool in your overall talent acquisition strategy tool kit. VE Salute and your onboarding program, one more way we work in partnership to enable the Power Recruiter with the power to perform. Get it!

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND BENEFITS OF AN EFFECTIVE ONBOARDING PROCESS

Results of recent research studies offer additional insight for the need to have an effective onboarding process. Examples include:

- Reed Consulting –
As much as 4 percent of new employees leave their new jobs after a disastrous first day, according to industry statistics.
- Recruiting Roundtable –
Believes that investments in automation-based onboarding models will be one of the most important steps in driving quality of hire over the next decade, improving retention.
- Gartner –
Predicts that automated onboarding tools that bridge the recruitment and retention processes will soon become key. Self-service is taking off as HR organizations aggressively pursue coordinated techniques for delivering information, benefits, forms and through corporate intranets and other electronic channels

Many of us have heard horror stories of first days of employment gone wrong. A new employee arrives for work and finds nobody expected them much less prepared for their arrival. The hiring manager is on vacation and forgot to arrange for someone to take the lead in settling the new employee into the group. The new employee has no office space, no desk, no phone, no PC, and basically feels they may have made a bad decision to work for a company so ill prepared for the arrival of a new employee. The new employee is ready to begin work but nobody is available to provide a clear charter for the work to be accomplished or even assign beginning tasks and activities. All of this added to the normal stress of beginning a new job can be very overwhelming for new employees.

Imagine a best practice onboarding process in which the new employee is provided with information in advance of the starting date. By doing this you can be certain they understand the company, culture and purpose, their goals for the first year and exactly how all their relocation and employment benefits work. Imagine this new employee shows up for work, is greeted by a person waiting for their arrival, attends a well organized meeting with other new employees to gather paperwork and receive further information about the company. The new employee is greeted by their manager at the end of the orientation meeting and taken to the work area where their cubicle is labeled with their name plate and their space is fully functional with all the phone, PC, and network access and equipment they need. Finally, imagine the manager meeting with the new employee to outline specific tasks and activities to be undertaken over the first few weeks and months and reviews specific milestones and dates to be accomplished during the first year.

The onboarding process offers a significant opportunity to accomplish specific objectives toward a successful employment relationship including:

- Improve new employee productivity –
Gets new hires up to speed faster; reducing downtime resulting from poor performance of onboarding tasks.

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- Ensure legal and policy compliance –
Tracks process for providing information and obtaining necessary employee affirmation signatures with online compliance checklists.
- Improve the consistency of management practices –
Provides hiring managers with just-in-time prompts and reminders to deliver on best practices for managing new employees.
- Improve employee retention –
Provides a positive new employee experience that improves employee engagement, satisfaction and commitment to the organization.
- Automate existing processes –
Reduces manual administrative work associated with coordinating, tracking and following up on onboarding tasks.
- Enhance the employer brand –
Delivers a consistently excellent new employee experience that enhances a company's reputation as an employer, supporting recruiting efforts.
- Simplifies the workday –
Provides a 360° overview of your entire onboarding and employee integration practices and helps manage what was a complex process with easy-to-use tools.
- Offers a recruiting opportunity –
Informs the new employee about the company's employee referral program, instilling the perception of the value and commitment to this program. Also, offers the opportunity to solicit immediate referrals from the new hire.
- Another happy, productive employee –
Builds a foundation for the long-term success of the new employee.

VE SALUTE PRODUCT OVERVIEW

VE Salute is a comprehensive, configurable onboarding application that streamlines and accelerates the process of integrating new hires into an organization.

From managing security access to collecting new hire data to distributing company documents, VE Salute manages the assignment, visibility and completion of all onboarding activities.

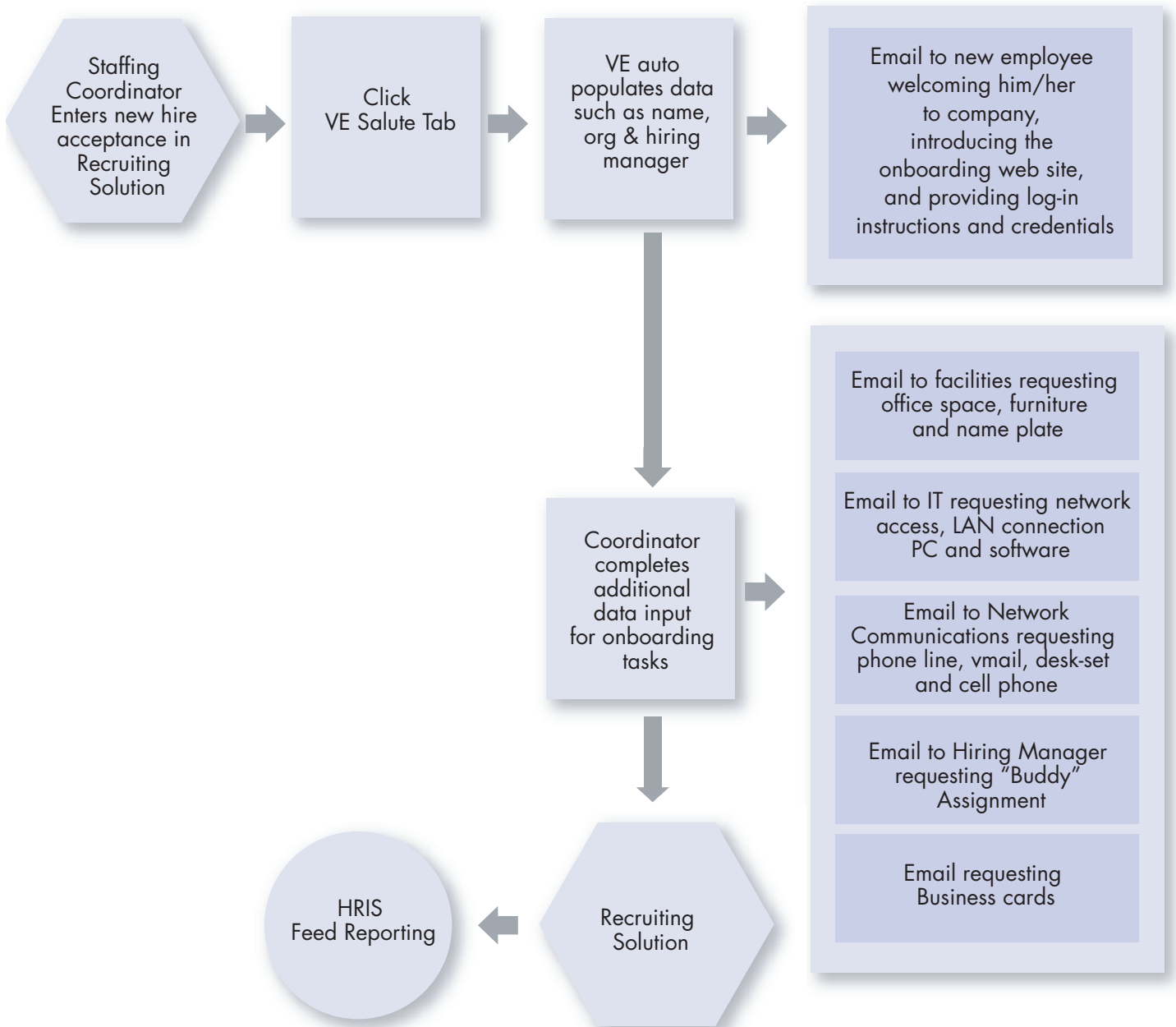
VE Salute was designed with two integral pieces:

- The front end web-based interface is the “face” to the customer. This is the tool used for welcoming the new employee, pushing information to them, and beginning the process of gathering the information and ordering the infrastructure items needed to create an effective onboard and start-up process.
- The back end web-based interface is the tool used by the Recruiting team to drive the onboarding process, track progress of the tasks involved, and manage the new employee onboarding in a mini-project management type of environment.

VE Salute also provides a methodology for evaluating customer satisfaction through surveys to request feedback from the new employee with respect to the process they just completed to interview, accept employment, and start working with the new employer. Additional survey capability is available for soliciting feedback from the hiring manager and others involved in the process.

VE Salute is designed to assist you in developing the most effective and positive onboarding process possible for each new employee.

VE SALUTE WORKFLOW :: ONBOARDING PROCESS



DESIGNING AN ONBOARDING PROCESS THAT MEETS YOUR NEEDS

The goal is to create the best possible start-up experience for new employees by pushing information to them as soon as they accept the job offer. New employees should be guided along a path to the new job by staying in touch and keeping them informed throughout the process and never leaving them to guess about the next step. Instead, they should understand before each step in the process details such as what will happen next, when it will happen, and where it will happen. Employees should not be left in the dark to wonder about the process of starting the new job. They should be fully informed from the time they accept the new role and know what to expect and what their responsibilities are at each step in the process. New hire documents can be delivered via the web in advance; with supplemental instructions explaining not only what the new employee is expected to do with each document, but the purpose or requirement for each. Welcome letters and information can be delivered electronically to the employee to help them begin to feel part of their new company and learn more about the organization they are joining.

Best Practice leaders in this area are assigning a mentor or “buddy” to help the new employee transition to the new company culture. They introduce the “buddy system”, roles and responsibilities, and describe some of the ways this system will be helpful to the new employee as they join the company. Meetings are scheduled to introduce the new employee and their new buddy to help facilitate the relationship.

Finally, new employees arrive at these best-in-class companies to find a person waiting to greet them upon arrival; they attend a new employee orientation meeting in which they are provided additional information about their new company and introduced to a few key executives and managers; they are taken to their new office or cubicle which already bears a name plate with their name; they are seated at a desk which has been pre-filled with necessary office supplies; a box of business cards with their name and title has been placed on the desk; a PC has been pre-loaded with the software they will need and a technician from the IT department has recommended an appointment time to meet with the new employee to review their PC functionality, network and email access as well as other critical information systems issues.

The new employee’s Manager reviews a planned agenda of start-up items including “check-in” meetings between the two of them to monitor progress and identify needs during the first few months.

Let’s review specific examples of tasks which could be included in an effective best-in-class onboarding process.

- Upon acceptance of a job offer a new employee promptly received an email with a link to the “Welcome Aboard” (onboarding) web site.
- Upon clicking the email link, the new employee was greeted with a picture of the CEO and a signed letter addressed to the new employee welcoming them to the company and their new role within the hiring department.
- Additional links on the welcome page provided the following:
 - An overview description of the orientation process for new employees and how this web site is an integral part of the process.
 - A list of printable policies and forms which need to be reviewed before beginning work. All of these would be signed in the presence of a company employee during the orientation meeting on the first day.

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- An existing employee is selected to be the new employee's "buddy." An introduction, bio and contact information is provided to the new employee prior to his/her start date opening two-way communication immediately. A reception to be held during the new employee orientation meeting will include an introduction to the buddy in person.
- Links are provided to maps and directions for the new employee orientation meeting location as well as the location where they will work.
- Additional links provide information about traffic patterns around the facility, commuting times, local restaurants, and local area maps.
- A link is provided which will become functional by the time the new employee begins work and provides information about the building they will work in, floor plans showing common areas and toilet facilities, parking areas, emergency exits, etc.
- Among the new hire documents described in the prior answer, the new employee is introduced to their employee ID No., Company, Group, Division, and/or Cost Center data and the importance and use of each is described.
- Links are provided to background information regarding the history, markets, products, and executive leadership team and will be discussed during the orientation meeting offering an opportunity for further questions and discussion.
- In addition to the actions previously described with respect to greeting the new employee and setting up their office and IT needs in advance, on the first day of employment a link to the interview process survey questionnaire arrives via email requesting feedback from the new employee about their experiences and any suggestions they might have for process improvement.
- At the end of the employee's first day, provide a link to the interview process survey questionnaire. The survey will request feedback from the new employee about their experiences and any suggestions they might have for process improvement.

Beginning with the "Welcome Aboard" website and throughout all of the "touch points" described above, the new employee is informed and reminded about the company's Employee Referral Program and solicited to refer people they feel would be good employees.

As described above, the new employee's manager reviews a planned agenda of start up items including "check-in" meetings between the two of them to monitor progress and identify needs during the first few months.

The end result is that the new employee feels welcomed and equipped to succeed in the new role.

IN CONCLUSION

Improvements in your onboarding process for new employees can pay huge dividends in employee satisfaction, commitment, performance, and retention. An effective process improves legal and policy compliance capability through equal treatment of employees while obtaining necessary information and agreements. New employees experience a smooth transition to the new role and their managers receive better informed employees with fewer distractions remaining due to the transition to the new company and role.

VE Salute enables an effective onboarding process for new hires, drives hiring success, assists you in achieving positive ROI, and enables Power Recruiters to outperform. Get it!



5 Caufield Place :: Newtown, PA 18940
V :: 215.504.5400 F :: (215)504-8735 W :: virtualedge.adp.com