



Overview

In light of our new ways of working to best manage the risk of the coronavirus spread, we're focused on how to effectively execute our responsibilities as leaders in a virtual working environment. There are many areas of focus, but how do you onboard a new associate? This can be somewhat challenging to do remotely.

Coming to a new working environment, new culture, new ways of working, and establishing new relationships can present significant emotional challenges to new hires. How quickly will they learn those nuances and contribute effectively to their team?

But in these emotionally charged and uncertain times, these challenges are even greater since our new hires will be subjected to different onboarding processes. Therefore, it's critical for us as leaders to understand how we can properly address these challenges, connecting with new associates to create excited, engaged, and committed future leaders.

Tips

Here are some tips from **Aperian Global**, an expert in inclusion and virtual working, for how we can ensure new talent has a welcoming, informative, and engaging experience in a virtual working environment.

1. Overprepare for your new associate.

When working in a virtual environment, it's much easier for details to get missed. This problem gets quadrupled when an associate is new and is trying to absorb so much over a short period. Create detailed guidance (even if it feels overly detailed) and try leveraging tools to keep track of items, help with prioritization, and keep an eye on progress.

2. Fill downtime with self-study items.

Create a list of "self-study" items (documents, essential articles, websites, competitors' information, etc.) to fill those breaks in the schedule. This will also help to break up the monotony of constantly being on calls.

3. Schedule a face-to-face introduction with the team.

Let your new associate interact early on with the essential members of your team. It's a great way to get everyone familiar with each other.

4. Setup virtual meetings with key stakeholders and colleagues.

Give your associate a list of some of the critical people they'll be working with outside of your team and have them set up some virtual meetings. Craft a few starter questions for them to help break the ice and kick off conversations.

5. Connect them with other virtual colleagues.

Set up some time for your new associate to talk to other colleagues that typically work remotely. They can share tips, insights, and strategies, and will also be a valuable resource to each other in the future.

6. Check-in on them regularly.

Try to schedule one-on-one meetings with your new associate a bit more frequently than you would with a co-located one – at least for the first few weeks of their tenure. This type of communication will be valuable going forward.

7. Identify an "off-hour mentor."

This is especially important if you're managing an associate in a different time zone. Choose a mentor who is close to their specific time zone and who your remote associate can contact for any pressing questions, concerns, or worries in those hours when you may be offline.



8. Document and document!

It's essential to be transparent with your new hire. Provide them with written documentation of workflows, deliverables, job-specific processes, and procedures. Another option is to have your new associate create the documentation real-time as they onboard. Don't rely on "in-your-head" knowledge.

9. Use your internal experts.

Don't let your associate get fatigued by one voice throughout virtual meetings! Try to bring in a combination of different voices. If you need to teach them how to use an internal system, see if one of your team members can lead the training.

10. Rethink your budget.

Consider budgeting for virtual lunch with your new hire and your team. Allocate each team member a certain amount of money they can use to buy lunch, and then have everyone enjoy a meal together on a video conference.