What is onboarding? It is the process in the first few weeks of a job that focuses on helping new employees become acclimated to their workplace, understanding of job function and overall comfort level. It is an ongoing process that starts with the hiring decision and continues until the new hire is a productive member of the team. Research shows that successful onboarding contributes to employee success and reduced turnover for the company.

Why is it important to the hiring process? It helps achieve understanding the ways in which things are done, the values and characteristics that are relevant to the company, and allows new employees to better assimilate with their colleagues in a welcoming manner. It gives the new employee a feeling of purpose and belonging.

How do I create a better onboarding experience? First, understand the difference between orientation and onboarding. Orientation is the one-time event that focuses on the big picture of the company and is for the larger population. Onboarding focuses on the individual and their role in the department and on the job. Both are necessary for a successful onboarding experience.

How can I help with a better onboarding experience? Friendships and relationships are vital to retention, so help new hires make connections right away. Introduce them to those who would be good mentors to help them get acclimated. Initiate a “buddy program” in your area. Just being friendly, providing support, and answering questions will help new employees get more comfortable in their new role.

**KEEP ON LEARNING**

- Read more about the importance of good onboarding in this New Employee Onboarding Guide from the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).
- Watch this entertaining and informative video short: “Good vs. Bad Onboarding.”
- Set aside time to watch this one-hour LinkedIn Learning video on developing a great onboarding experience.

**THIS WEEK’S CHALLENGE:**

If you have new team members that have been on board for less than a year, check in with them this week and offer your support in helping to learn processes and systems used in your department. Ask them what you can do to help them feel more welcome and comfortable. Remember, the full onboarding experience often takes up to a year.