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CURRENT

EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS OF ONBOARDING A NEW COMPANY

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https://doi.org/10.70300/XMCK1612

Abstract: *This scientific publication is titled: "Employee expectations of onboarding a new company".*
The purpose of the study is to investigate the expectations of an induction period for new employees in a company. At the same time, previous positive and negative experiences with onboarding phases and their respective consequences have to be illuminated. In addition, the focuswas primarily on obtaining data concerning the expected components of an induction phase as a new employee in a new company. As part of the study to explore the aforementioned aspects, a quantitative research method was chosen. A digital questionnaire was used to survey 304 people online, who answered a maximum of 14 questions in total. Among other things, the evaluation of the research made it possible to identify the exact and expected components of an onboarding process for employees in new companies. These are primarily of a functional and social nature. According to this, new employees expect, for example, a functional familiarization with the work processes and activities of the position and familiarization with the necessary IT programs duringtheir onboarding in a company. With regard to social integration, for example, an introductory meeting with the supervisor and team-building measures with work colleagues are expected. Accordingly, companies should use the identified measures to develop a holistic onboarding concept in order to meet the expectations of new employees on the one hand. On the other hand, this will provide the best possible support for the company's goals, because the new employee willbe trained as quickly as possible in a high quality and effective manner.
Keywords: *Onboarding, Employees, Expectations, Company*

INTRODUCTION

According to Brenner, as soon as an employee joins a new company, onboarding and integration take place on three levels. These are the professional, social and value-oriented levels. The functional onboarding thus has a task-related focus. According to Brenner, this means that the new

employee is trained in terms of his or her tasks, knowledge and skills and how to use them effectively to perform his or her position. The functional induction of the employee also includes the transfer of knowledge regarding the corporate structure, the organizational processes and internal as well as external contacts (cf. Brenner, 2020, 12).

Social integration covers the initiation into the work environment. According to Brenner, this includes relationships with the manager, work colleagues, teammates and customers. These are formed through social interactions with the aforementioned partners. These interactions arise as soon as the new employee becomes active in the context of group work, project work, in coordination or in the context of his or her job. Social integration can be judged successful when the new employee experiences feelings of belonging and acceptance (cf. Brenner, 2020, 12).

According to Brenner, the introduction of the employee to the corporate goals, corporate values and corporate management guidelines is part of the value-oriented induction. Value-oriented onboarding is the third pillar of onboarding, but it takes place over a medium – to long-term period. This is due to the fact that the new employee receives the value-oriented induction primarily through the values experienced in the company. The job-related, i.e. the functional onboarding, is relatively the least challenging when compared with the degree of difficulty of the social and value-oriented onboarding. Accordingly, the most frequent reasons for termination during the probationary period are due to a lack of individual compatibility in the team or differing values (cf. Brenner, 2020, 12).

The new employee's onboarding plan should include the three components described, but according to Brenner, it should be individually adapted to the prerequisites of the new employee. This depends in particular on the maturity level of the new employee and on what previous knowledge is already available. For example, these are most likely to be different for someone just starting out in their career than for an executive with many years of experience. This must be taken into account, particularly during the functional induction, so that neither excessive demands nor insufficient demands arise (cf. Brenner, 2020, 13).

Because of this, according to Au, there is a separate onboarding concept for executives and senior managers who are recruited from external sources. The expectations placed on these management levels are more demanding, as relatively rapid job-related and company-related onboarding is assumed. This increased expectation means that the onboarding concept must be adapted to be as efficient and targeted as possible (cf. Au, 2017, 159).

According to Lorenz and Rohrschneider, this shows that an individual and customized onboarding of the employee represents a high added value for the company, because it ensures that the new employee can start work effectively as quickly as possible. The structured onboarding process accelerates the learning effects and independent working methods (cf. Lorenz und Rohrschneider, 2022, S. 191).

According to Kaudela-Baum, Meldau and Brasser, the candidate experience is not limited to the time until the contract is signed, but also includes employee onboarding. A structured onboarding process not only leads to the fastest possible and most effective start of work, but also to an increase in team effectiveness. Structured onboarding at the beginning of the employment relationship also counteracts premature fluctuation (cf. Kaudela-Baum et al., 2022, 167).

According to Nerdinger, Blickle and Schaper, an employee's entry into a new company is initially characterized by uncertainty, as many unknown factors affect the employee at the same time. This, coupled with the demand to meet one's own expectations and those of the company, leads to additional psychological pressure. Here, the expectations on the employer's side relate not only to performance, but also to behavior. A structured on-boarding process can provide a high degree of stability during these initial periods of uncertainty. However, it is also the responsibility of the respective manager to stand by the new employee, especially during the onboarding period. But the reality regularly shows that new employees feel left to their own resources or not understood, especially during the onboarding period, because managers lack empathy during this time. This can be seen in managers over- or under-challenging new employees during their orientation period. In addition, existing teams may make it difficult to integrate the new employee. Depending on whether the existing cohesion within the organization is close or conflictual, this can make it more difficult for the new employee to join the team (cf. Nerdinger et al., 2019, S. 88).

According to Nerdinger, Blickle and Schaper, the following measures can be part of the onboarding concept:

- "Introductory events at which information about the company, its structure, products, etc. is provided,
- Training courses, which often take place outside the company,
- Greetings and induction by the supervisor,
- Social and sports activities with colleagues,
- Trainee programs,
- Assignment of mentors" (Nerdinger et al., 2019, 88).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part of the paper presents the methodology used to conduct the research. The purpose of this scientific publication is to investigate the expectations regarding the onboarding of new employees in companies. In addition, on the basis of a sample, the quality of the onboarding received so far due to a change in companies is researched and what effects this has had. At the same time, it was also asked why an onboarding did not take place. Finally, within the framework of this scientific study, research was conducted to determine which components are expected of new employees during the onboarding phase.

In this study, quantitative research was conducted using a 14-question questionnaire with 304 respondents. The questionnaire was developed via an online tool and also sent to the defined target group via this tool. It was specified that there must be at least 200 complete surveys in total. There was no prior contact with survey participants. The first question was used to inquire about gender, with the response options being male, female, and diverse. Female and male persons were interviewed in equal parts with 50% each, since both gender groups were to be researched representatively in the context of this study topic.

Another demographic parameter was queried in the second question, as age had to be specified

here. Here, the age of the respondents was set between 18 and 67 years, as this is the average inimum age when entering professional life, e.g. in the form of an apprenticeship or while working as a student. The maximum age was set at 67, as this is the current retirement age.

The third question referred to the respondent's qualification level and the answer options were based on the German qualification framework in order to create comparability. If it is not possible for the respondent to be classified in the German qualification framework, he/she must classify him/herself as “unlearned”.

The occupational situation, which was queried by the fourth question, was used to identify the relevant target groups for this study and to exclude the irrelevant target groups for this study. Only groups of people who are either currently employed in some form of employment or are looking for such employment are relevant for this study. The relevant target groups for this investigation are trainees, students, working students, interns, salaried employees, employees on parental leave, the unemployed and job seekers.

Self-employed, freelancers, and retirees were also offered as choices, with these choices resulting in disqualification from the study. This was determined because they generally have little or no connection to the topic being studied. Self-employed and freelancers are generally unable to make any statements about experiences and expectations regarding onboarding phases in companies, as they either do not have these and or do not have any well-founded opinions on this topic. The same applies to retirees, since the study primarily examines people who have a relatively current connection to the topic under investigation.

The fifth question identifies the number of years of work experience, as this can be analyzed inrelation to the number of training periods and their quality.

Previous participation in onboarding phases is checked in the sixth question. The possible answers are “Yes”, “No”, and “I have never participated in an onboarding period as a new employee in a company and/or I have never needed an onboarding period”. Should the answer option “Yes” be selected, a stored skip logic is activated. This leads to the respondent answering how many onboarding phases he or she has already gone through and what the average quality of these onboarding phases was. Due to the branching logic, the respondent must also answer whetherthere has already been a qualitative and an incomplete onboarding. At the same time, these questions ask what effects both qualitative and incomplete onboarding had on the new employee in the company. Finally, the components expected of new employees during onboarding in the company are examined.

However, if the original question as to whether the respondent has already taken part in an onboarding process due to a move to a new company is answered with “No”, irrelevant questions are skipped due to the logic of branching and the respondent was forwarded directly to the question where he or she must answer why no onboarding process has taken place to date. However, this question is also followed by a question about what components are expected during an onboarding phase as a new employee in a company.

Should the respondent answer the original question of whether one has already participated in an onboarding process due to a transfer to a new company with “I have never participated in an onboarding process as a new employee in a company and/or I have never needed an onboarding process”, this automatically leads to the disqualification of the respondent, as he or she cannot provide relevant statements and data on the topic under investigation.

The exact questions and answer choices were as follows:

1. Gender
   a. Female
   b. Male
   c. Diverse
   d. None of the above options.
2. Age
3. What is your highest degree?
   a. Unskilled
   b. Education
   c. Bachelor's degree/master's degree/technician/qualified specialist/commercial specialist
   d. Master/ Business economist/ Diploma
   e. Doctorate
   f. None of the above options.
4. What is your current professional situation?
   a. Trainee/ Student/ Working student/ Intern
   b. Employed
   c. Self-employed
   d. Freelance
   e. Retired
   f. Parental leave
   g. Unemployed/job seeker
   h. None of the above options.
5. How many years of work experience do you have?
   a. Up to 2 years
   b. 2 to under 3 years
   c. 3 to under 5 years
   d. 5 to under 7 years
   e. 7 years to under 10 years
   f. 10 years and more
6. How many onboarding phases have you gone through in your career so far? Please state the number.
7. How would you rate the average quality of your previous onboarding phases as a new employee in a company?
   a. Rating between 0 and 100 points

8. Have you already participated in an onboarding phase due to a transfer to a new company? (Please select at least one answer).
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I have never participated in an orientation as a new employee at a company and/or I have never needed an orientation.
   d. Other (please specify).
9. Have you already had a faulty/unstructured/gap in the onboarding phase as a new employee in a company?
   a. Yes
   b. No
10. What were the consequences of a faulty/unstructured/incomplete onboarding phase as a new employee in a company for you? (Please select at least one answer).
   a. None of the above options.
   b. Loss of motivation
   c. Dissatisfaction
   d. Loss of quality in the activities to be performed
   e. Frustration
   f. Estrangement from the new company
   g. Thoughts about submitting a resignation during the probationary period
   h. Disappointment over failure to honor agreements made/promises made, e.g., from the job interview
   i. Regret over decision to take the position with the company
   j. Bad evaluation of the employer upon separation e.g. in social networks
   k. Bad evaluation of the employer in private environment e.g. with family, friends, acquaintances, etc.
   l. Other (please specify)
11. Have you already had a high-quality/structured/complete onboarding phase as a new employee in a company?
   a. Yes
   b. No
12. What impact did a high-quality/structured/complete onboarding phase have on you as a new employee in a company? (Please select at least one answer.)
   a. None of the above options.
   b. Increase in motivation
   c. Satisfaction
   d. Quality improvement in the activities to be performed
   e. Increase in loyalty to the new company
   f. Increasing the number of thoughts about staying with the company in the medium to long term

g. Pleasure in keeping agreements made/promises made, e.g., from the job interview
h. Self-confirmation about the decision to take up the position in the company
i. Positive evaluation of the employer in case of separation e.g. in social networks
j. Positive evaluation of the employer in private environment e.g. with family, friends, acquaintances, etc.
k. Other (please specify)

13. For what reason have you not participated in any onboarding phase so far? (Please select at least one answer).
    a. None of the above options.
    b. Onboarding has not been offered.
    c. Onboarding was offered, but I did not take it.
    d. Time resources for onboarding have been lacking.
    e. Personnel resources for onboarding have been lacking.
    f. Other (please specify)
14. What components do you expect as a new employee during the onboarding phase in a company? (Please select at least one answer.)
    a. None of the above options.
    b. Company tour
    c. Submission of an onboarding plan
    d. Introductory meeting with the supervisor
    e. Team-building activities with work colleagues
    f. Functional onboarding in the work processes & activities of the position.
    g. Instruction in the necessary IT programs
    h. Regular meetings with supervisor
    i. Familiarization with the corporate culture
    j. Familiarization with the organizational chart and company structures
    k. Explanation of benefits/benefits to employees
    l. Preparation of required work materials & workspace
    m. Setting up all access & access rights for required programs.
    n. Internal communication to introduce oneself
    o. Meeting with supervisor to discuss tasks to be performed
    p. Briefing on the rules of conduct
    q. Familiarization with company objectives
    r. Instruction on supervisor's expectations
    s. Personal introductions to all departments
    t. Briefing on the responsibilities of the various departments
    u. Other (please specify)

RESULTS

A total of 304 people participated in the survey. The gender distribution among respondents wasnot as anticipated at 50% each for male and female. The percentage of female respondents was 53% and the percentage for male respondents was 45%. The number of respondents identifying as diverse was 0.33%. This means that a total of 164 female respondents, 139 male respondents, and one diverse respondent participated in the survey. 46% of the respondents were between 18 and 29 years old, 25% were between 30 and 44 years old, 22% were between 45 and 60 years old, and over 60 years old were 6%.

The majority of respondents, with a share of 54%, had indicated a completed apprenticeship astheir highest degree. In second place, with a share of 18%, was indicated a bachelor's degree, master's degree, technician's degree, business administrator's degree or business administrator's degree. There is a relatively even distribution among the unskilled (7%), none of the options mentioned (7%) and respondents with a master's degree, business administration degree or diploma (10%). Only 3% of respondents (3 respondents) indicated that a doctorate is available.

The largest proportion of respondents, 39%, stated that they had 10 years or more of professional experience. There is a relatively equal distribution of respondents with up to 2 years, 2 to less than 3 years, 3 to less than 5 years and 5 to less than 7 years of professional experience, as the proportions range between 12% and 15% in each case. The lowest proportion, 6%, is accounted for by respondents with between 7 and 10 years of professional experience.

The previous queries served on the one hand to form groups of people on the basis of demographic data and on the other hand to be able to draw more conclusions about the answers submitted through professional characteristics such as the number of years in the profession and the highest degree. The main focus here is on correlations between the number of years in theprofession and the existing degree and how these characteristics affect the expectations of an onboarding.

In total, out of 304 respondents, only 243 answered the following question: “Have you already participated in an onboarding process due to a move to a new company?”. Overall, 71% of the respondents had indicated that they had already participated in an onboarding, which is the absolute majority. Only 22% of respondents had indicated that they had not participated in any onboarding to date due to a move to a new company. The remaining 7% had chosen that they had never participated in an onboarding process as a new employee in a company and/or had never participated in an onboarding process.

The average rating of respondents who indicated that they had already taken part in on-boardingwas 66 out of 100 points. This means that the average rating was slightly better than average. Of 169 respondents, 105 (62%) indicated that they had already experienced a flawed, unstructured, or incomplete orientation period as a new employee at a company. 37% of respondents, representing64 respondents out of 169, indicated that they had no experience in this regard.

The consequences of an incorrect, unstructured or incomplete onboarding phase should also benamed by the respondents. Accordingly, dissatisfaction is the most frequent consequence of an unstructured, incorrect or incomplete induction phase, at 35%. This was followed by loss of motivation with 32% as the second most frequent consequence of a poor onboarding phase.

Frustration and loss of quality in the activities to be performed follow as the third and fourth most frequent responses with 23% and 22% respectively. The fifth most frequent consequence, at 20%,was disappointment at the failure to comply with agreements made/promises made, e.g. in the jobinterview, and thoughts about handing in one's notice during the probationary period were cited asthe sixth most frequent consequence of a faulty, unstructured or incomplete onboarding phase as anew employee in a company.

Out of 169 respondents, 140 people answered yes to the question “Have you already had a high-quality/structured/complete onboarding phase as a new employee in a company?” and thus the percentage was 82%. This led most often to satisfaction, as this answer option was chosen with a share of 64%. In second place comes the increase in motivation with 52% as a result of a high-quality, structured or complete onboarding phase as a new employee in a company. The increase in the quality of the work to be performed with 37%, satisfaction with the fulfillment of agreements or promises, e.g. from the job interview, with 33% and an increase in the bond with the new company with 37% follow in third to fifth place.

193 respondents answered the question as to why they had not yet taken part in an onboarding phase. Twenty-one percent of respondents stated that they had not taken part in any onboarding so far because it had not been offered. The second most frequently cited reason was a lack of time resources for onboarding.

The question “What components do you expect as a new employee during the onboarding phasein a company?” was answered by a total of 221 respondents. The most frequent response, at 48%,was that a functional onboarding is expected. In second place was an introductory meeting with the supervisor as part of an onboarding phase as a new employee in a company, as the percentage of this chosen answer was 46%. The company tour follows in third place, as this answer was selected with a share of 45%. Instruction in the necessary IT programs was expected to be the fourth most common component as part of an onboarding phase as a new employee in a company, with 34%. The presentation of an onboarding plan with 34% and the preparation of the required work materials and the workplace with 32% follow in fifth and sixth place of the expected components.

CONCLUSIONS/DISCUSSION

In the following, the conclusions are explained, which were made based on the conducted research. All corporate goals are derived from the main objective of profit optimization or profit maximization. Accordingly, the employees of a company are one of the important pillars to achieve this main goal. Due to this, it should be an important concern for companies to ensure that new employees experience a high-quality, structured, and complete on-boarding phase to effectively start their job as soon as possible. This means that companies should not only design the onboarding process according to the individual prerequisites of the employee but should also consider the different expectations of employees for a successful and qualitative onboarding. The survey conducted enables an analysis of both negative and positive experiences with onboarding phases to date and their respective consequences. In addition, by providing information on the expected components of a qualitative onboarding process, conclusions can be drawn as to how an onboarding

phase should be designed in a targeted, successful, and employee-oriented manner. This enables companies to counter potential risks such as dissatisfaction, demotivation, and unproductivity, which could arise from an unstructured, incomplete, and incomplete onboarding process.

71% of respondents have stated that they have already participated in an onboarding process due to a move to a new company. At the same time, 62% of respondents answered that they had already experienced a faulty, unstructured, and incomplete onboarding phase as a new employee in a company. This explains why respondents rated the average quality of their previous onboarding phases as mediocre. As the consequences of a faulty, unstructured, or incomplete onboarding phase have far-reaching negative consequences for the company, which in the first place can range from dissatisfaction on the part of the new employee to a loss of quality in the activities to be performed. This can result in high costs for the company, such as loss of productivity or a high frequency of errors when processing orders or advising customers. In addition, dissatisfaction and demotivation triggered by the inadequate onboarding phase can lead to employee fluctuation, which in turn is also associated with costs for the company, e.g., loss of revenue due to a lack of resources.

On the other hand, a high-quality, structured, and complete onboarding phase as a new employee in a company has far-reaching positive effects on the company. These are an increase in motivation, an increase in the quality of the work to be performed and an increase in loyalty to the new company. The last point helps the company to counteract premature or early employee turnover. Furthermore, the increase in the quality of the work to be performed enables the company to benefit early on from the efficiency and productivity of the employee, as this enables the employee to support the company's goals in the best possible way. For companies to benefit from these positive effects, they must ensure that the necessary human and time resources are made available for the onboarding of the new employee, as according to the respondents, these were reasons for not participating in onboarding phases.

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the components of an onboarding process for a new employee must be multifaceted and holistically designed to meet the expectations of the new employee in the company. However, the focus is on the functional onboarding, the social integration itself and measures that help with social integration. According to the survey, the functional training in the work processes and activities of the position is in first place in terms of expectations. The introductory meeting with the supervisor follows directly in second place, which reflects the social level. The company tour, introduction to the necessary IT programs, presentation of an onboarding plan, preparation of the necessary work materials and the workplace, and the setting up of all accesses and access rights for required programs again express the expectations for the functional onboarding. Team-building measures with work colleagues, familiarization with the corporate culture, regular meetings with the supervisor and personal introductions in all departments again express the needs for social integration during onboarding as a new employee in the company.

If a company mainly includes these components for the onboarding concepts of their new employees and, if possible, considers the other components according to the survey, a structured, complete and high-quality onboarding phase is ensured that both meets the expectations of new employees and supports the company's goals in the best possible way.

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ОЧАКВАНИЯ НА СЛУЖИТЕЛИТЕ ОТ ПРОЦЕСА НА ВЪВЕЖДАНЕ В НОВА КОМПАНИЯ

Резюме: *Тази научна публикация е озаглавена: „Очаквания на служителите от процеса на въвеждане в нова компания“. Целта на изследването е да се проучат очакванията от въвеждащия период за новите служители в една компания. Същевременно трябваше да се очертае предишният положителен и отрицателен опит във фазите на въвеждане в работата и съответните последици от тях. Освен това фокусът беше насочен преди всичко към получаване на данни относно очакваните компоненти на въвеждащата фаза като нов служител в нова компания. Като част от проучването за изследване на гореспоменатите аспекти беше избран количествен метод на изследване. С помощта на електронен въпросник бяха анкетирани онлайн 304 души, които отговориха общо на максимум 14 въпроса. Наред с други неща, оценката на изследването позволи да се определят точните и очаквани компоненти на процеса на въвеждане в работата на служителите в нови компании. Те са предимно от функционално и социално естество. В съответствие с това новите служители очакват например функционално запознаване с работните процеси и дейности на длъжността и запознаване с необходимите ИТ програми по време на тяхното включване в компанията. По отношение на социалната интеграция се очаква например встъпителна среща с ръководителя и мерки за изграждане на екип с колегите от работата. Съответно дружествата следва да използват идентифицираните мерки за разработване на цялостна концепция за онбординг, за да отговорят на очакванията на новите служители, от една страна. От друга страна, по този начин ще се осигури възможно най-добрата подкрепа за целите на компанията, тъй*

като новият служител ще бъде обучен възможно най-бързо по висококачествен и ефективен начин.

Ключови думи: *въвеждане в работата, служители, очаквания, компания*

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