

STRATEGIC EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING - A ROADMAP TO SUCCESS

PHASE FOUR - CONNECTION & INTEGRATION

The Connection & Integration phase, spanning months two through four, moves new employees from being introduced to being involved. Through collaboration, knowledge exchange, and purposeful conversations, employees build connections, contribute their perspective, and gain a deeper understanding of how their role connects to the team and unit.

CONNECTION & INTEGRATION



YOU
ARE
HERE

↑ INCREASED ENGAGEMENT

†Strong workplace connections are associated with greater employee engagement and stronger organizational commitment.

↑ GREATER FOCUS AND ATTENTION

†Employees who feel connected to their colleagues show greater attention and mental engagement in their work.



Why does Connection & Integration matter?

CONNECTING PEOPLE, ROLES, AND PURPOSE

Connection & Integration provides the opportunity for employees to draw on the knowledge and experience of colleagues, bring their own perspectives to shared efforts, and navigate work that extends beyond their immediate responsibilities. These experiences strengthen employees' ability to contribute across teams and help build a more connected, coordinated organization.

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CONNECTION & INTEGRATION IN ACTION

Connection & Integration develops through the combined efforts of new employees, team members, and the broader unit. Together, their actions and interactions help build a stronger, more connected unit.

EXCHANGING KNOWLEDGE

Sharing lessons from past projects, including lessons learned and historical insights not captured in formal resources

EXPANDING THE NETWORK

Getting to know colleagues from other teams and units whose roles relate to a shared project or different areas of expertise

LEARNING THROUGH COLLABORATION

Working closely with a related team or unit on a project, or joining them to learn more about their approach to the work

CONTRIBUTING PERSPECTIVE

Applying knowledge from previous experience, offering a different perspective, or suggesting an approach during a team discussion

CONNECTING WORK TO OUTCOMES

Explaining how projects or work assignments impact partner teams, inform decisions, or contribute to broader unit goals



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HOW CONNECTION & INTEGRATION TAKES SHAPE



Connection & Integration is different from simply knowing the organization or understanding a role. It moves employees from learning about their role to becoming active participants in the unit. Managers and supervisors help make that shift possible through intentional efforts to bring new employees into the unit's culture.

When Connection & Integration is prioritized...



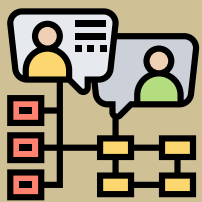
CONNECTIONS GROW THROUGH COLLABORATION

Create opportunities for new employees to build working relationships beyond their immediate team or unit. Ask them to join a cross-team project, introduce them to colleagues in related roles, or involve them in meetings where they can learn from others' perspectives and expertise.



KNOWLEDGE MOVES MORE FREELY

Make space for employees to share their expertise and perspectives while learning from colleagues' lessons, past decisions, and practical experience. For example, invite a colleague to share lessons learned from a similar project, then give the new employee space to offer their own perspective.



WORKFLOWS AND IMPACTS BECOME CLEARER

Involve employees in work that helps them understand how related roles and responsibilities connect, including what comes before and after their own, and how different contributions fit together to advance shared efforts. Try walking through a recent project to show how responsibilities passed between people or teams and how each contribution shaped the next step.



ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT INCREASES

Invite employees to take an active role in discussions and decisions that affect their work, making space for them to ask questions, offer recommendations, and help shape next steps. For instance, ask an employee to propose an approach to an upcoming task or identify a way to improve an existing process, then discuss their ideas together.

†Sources: Ellis, A. M., T. N. Bauer, L. R. Mansfield, B. Erdogan, D. M. Truxillo, and L. S. Simon. 2015. "Navigating Uncharted Waters: Newcomer Socialization Through the Lens of Stress Theory." *Journal of Management* 41: 203–235; Bauer, T. N., Erdogan, B., Ellis, A. M., Truxillo, D. M., Brady, G. M., & McCarthy, J. M. (2025). The Evolving Future of Work: Implications for Newcomer Adaptability and Connectivity During Organizational Socialization. *Human Resource Management*, 64(6), 1651-1668. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.70008>; Allen, D. G. 2006. "Do Organizational Socialization Tactics Influence Newcomer Embeddedness and Turnover?" *Journal of Management* 32: 237–256.