

Integrating and Engaging New Recruits is a Key Element of Employee Retention

A new Canadian study published in the *Journal of Managerial Psychology* shows the value of structured approaches to orientation (induction) training and mentoring.

Jamie Gruman, author and Organizational Behaviour professor at the University of Guelph said: "Simply throwing newcomers into a job and letting them fend for themselves results in their being socialized by default rather than design."

The study, conducted with Alan Saks of the University of Toronto, examined links between 'on-boarding' tactics and newcomer engagement. Jamie Gruman said that "Personal engagement at work, described as bringing one's full self to the job (spending time thinking about the job, becoming engrossed in one's work), is considered key to a new employee's commitment and performance. That in turn affects a company's productivity and competitiveness."

140 co-op university students on a work term were involved in Gruman and Saks' study. Co-op students are defined as combining formal education with work experience. The researchers found that more structured on-boarding tactics led to:

- employees being happier and more confident
- strengthened their belief that they fit both the job and organization
- in turn, those highly desirable outcomes made employees feel engaged

Jamie Gruman commented that organizations should use structured on-boarding to help build relationships. But, he added, formal processes should be only a starting point, as they lead only indirectly to employee engagement. To be fully engaged, people must feel 'safe' - supported by their superiors and colleagues = and feel that their work is meaningful.

Gruman also suggested that organizations should give their employees opportunities to develop their personal strengths such as self-confidence as well as the material resources they need to do their job well.

Jamie Gruman concluded: "Companies benefit from boosting their employees' well-being. Helping new hires adjust at the start empowers them to achieve their potential later on."

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