

A photograph of three business professionals in a meeting. A man in a white shirt and tie is on the right, looking at a document. A woman in a grey blazer is in the center, looking towards the man. A man in a white shirt is on the left, seen from the back. They are sitting at a table with red chairs.

**U.S. ARMY
CIVILIAN
ONBOARDING
PROGRAM**

**Supervisor's Guide
to Onboarding**



INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your new employee! As a supervisor, it is your privilege and responsibility to welcome your new employees to the organization and to introduce them to the culture and values of the Army.

This guide has been developed for supervisors (Civilian and Military) of Army Civilians to support an effective and successful onboarding process for new employees.

The process begins when the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) notifies you of your new employee's Entrance on Duty (EOD) date, followed by an introductory phone call that leads to a meeting with your new team member on their first day.

An employee's initial impression of their job extends far beyond that first contact. What transpires from that first contact through the employee's first few months and up to a year is referred to as the *Onboarding Experience*. A well designed and carefully executed onboarding experience provides a roadmap for your new employee's success by giving them a better sense of the Army and its culture, helping them feel welcomed and connected to the organization, and allowing them to contribute to the mission straightaway.

This guide will focus specifically on the supervisor's role during the first 90 days of employment.

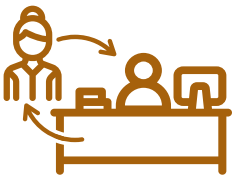
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Orientation is transactional in nature

- Typically a one-time event
- Focuses on organizational structure, mission, and policies
- Completion of payroll and benefits paperwork
- Other administrative tasks



Onboarding is strategic in nature:

- Lasts for months
- Promotes better understanding of Army culture, mission, and goals
- Fosters a feeling of belonging and affirmation of making a right choice
- Maximizes engagement and retention

Effective Onboarding helps:

- Attract/retain top talent
- Build trust
- Promote commitment to the organization
- Encourage manager/employee communication
- Foster an environment of employee engagement

ONBOARDING

What is Onboarding?

A successful onboarding program makes a positive impression on a new employee and creates a welcoming feeling that confirms their decision to work for the Army. An effective onboarding program starts when the job offer is extended and continues through the first year of employment. It consists of a series of activities, including new employee orientation. Orientation generally involves a first-day session at the local CPAC where new employees review and complete necessary payroll and benefits paperwork and familiarize themselves with the organization's structure, mission, and policies. If you have any questions regarding new employee orientation, please contact your organization's Civilian Human Resources Office, G-1 Office, or local CPAC.

Onboarding is the process of integrating and acculturating new employees to the Army and their unit, helping them to understand job expectations and how their position aligns with their organization's mission, and quickly equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and key relationships to become productive members of the Army Profession. We encourage you to view the Army Civilian Onboarding website, which provides information for the new employee:

<https://civilianonboarding.chra.army.mil/onboarding/>

Why is Onboarding Important?

Making a good impression is paramount! Employees arrive at their new jobs excited and engaged. Your role, as their supervisor, is to channel that energy toward success by helping them become fully integrated into the organization. A carefully planned and well-executed onboarding process will help you do that.

Effective employee onboarding serves three interrelated purposes:

1. Ensures that the employees feel welcome, comfortable, prepared, and supported;
2. Increases the new employees' ability to make an impact and be productive within their role, both immediately and over time; and
3. Fosters early engagement with new employees to strengthen their satisfaction and enhance the Army's ability to achieve its goals and continue to meet its mission.

While onboarding is a yearlong process, the first 30 days are critical.

So, let's get started!

One of the best ways to help new employees acclimate is to create a welcoming environment with their new team.



GETTING STARTED

During the first couple of weeks on the job, the goal is to ensure that the new employee understands the mission of the Army, the responsibilities of their job, and your expectations. In addition, this time is used to assist the employee with integration into the organization. During the next couple of weeks, it will be

Your role as Supervisor, especially during the first year, is critical to retaining and helping your new employee be successful and understand the specific organizational and office culture within the Department of Defense and Army.

important to formally set performance expectations in a performance plan and develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to address your new employee's training needs. Thereafter, coaching and guidance activities will be the primary focus of your onboarding

activities.

One of the best ways to help new employees acclimate is to create a welcoming environment with their new team. The supervisor's welcome letter and follow-up phone call from the supervisor and/or sponsor, discussed in the "Supervisor's Checklist for Onboarding New Employees" included later in this Guide, are intended to do that. Following are some additional ideas on how to create a welcoming environment. Not all of these ideas will be appropriate for every organization, however the staff introduction email is highly recommended. If you choose to employ any of these ideas, you can assign responsibility for planning and implementing each to the sponsor or other employees, or the idea can be

assigned as a team project facilitated by you, their sponsor, or a team member over several sessions.

Ideas for Creating a Welcoming Environment for Your New Employee



- 1. Send an email.** Prior to your new employee's arrival, it is best to send an email to your team introducing the new employee. A suggested format is provided in the Supervisor's Toolkit which provides information for the new employee at the Army Civilian Onboarding website: <https://civilianonboarding.chra.army.mil/onboarding/>
- 2. Plan a "Welcome Event."** Put together a welcoming breakfast or lunch. Consider doing something at a staff meeting when employees regularly gather. Make it fun.
- 3. Create a "New Employee Get-to-Know-You Questionnaire."** Use some unthreatening questions such as:
 - What is your hidden talent?
 - Who is your most admired person and why?
 - What do you like to do in your spare time?
 - What is one thing you would really like other people to know about you?
- 4. Create a "Welcoming Book."** Ask current employees to write about themselves in the book, include pictures, and share it with new employees. For instance, create a "favorites list" and have all employees complete it (you might ask about their favorite snack, restaurant, hobby, actor, sport, store, music, color, dream job, dream vacation, etc.).
- 5. Create a "New Employee Discussion Group."** Schedule all new employees to get together with a facilitator to discuss their experiences, identify successes, describe moments of pride, ask questions, etc.
- 6. Think of your own idea.** Poll your team and invite ideas about what would have made them feel more welcome when they started. Then involve them in creating that experience for the new employees.



Onboarding Checklist

A checklist has been created to help you with all of the steps involved and the timelines associated with each. You can access this checklist at the end of this guide or from <https://civilianonboarding.chra.army.mil/onboarding/>. The checklist provides an overview of the activities that need to be planned and accomplished prior to the first day of employment, as well as during the first 7, 30, 90, and 180 days. It also covers activities that need to be accomplished during the balance of the first year. It is your responsibility to work with your new employee and ensure that all of these items are covered.

Onboarding Overview



Prior To New Employee's Arrival

- Send a welcome letter to your new employee
- Call your new employee a couple of days later



Before the End of the First 30 Days on the Job

- Meet to review expectations
- Solicit feedback



Before the End of the First 90 Days on the Job

- Continue meeting to review expectations and progress
- Make plans for their future with the Army

Prior to Employee's Arrival



Send a welcome letter to your new employee. Ensure you have included the name and contact information for the sponsor.

Either the sponsor or you (or both), should call your new employee a couple of days later and introduce yourselves, welcome them to your organization, and arrange a time to meet.

During the call:

- Confirm start date, time, parking, facility access, dress code, orientation details, etc.
- Confirm contact information for the sponsor/supervisor (provided in the welcome letter).
- Identify computer needs and access requirements.

- Remind employee to complete any new hire tasks.
- Ask if your new employee has any questions and provide answers, following up as needed in a subsequent call, email, or letter.

Before the End of the First 30 Days on the Job

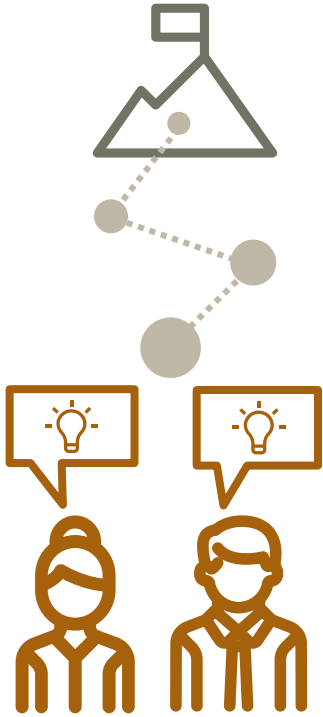
On the first day and continuing during the first 30 days, you want to meet with your new employee several times to review the expectations of the organization and their expectations, discuss progress, and continue efforts toward integration into the organization and the Army.

During this time, supervisors should:

1. Discuss the employee's initial experience and how it is matching their expectations. Ask:
 - How is your job going?
 - Is it what you expected when you were hired?
 - Do you have all the work tools and resources you need?
2. Discuss any concerns or issues the employee has. Ask:
 - Is there anything you need that you don't have access to?
 - What obstacles, if any, are keeping you from being productive and successful?
3. Establish performance objectives and standards in a performance plan, and review progress toward initial goals.
4. Create an IDP in ACT (<https://actnow.army.mil>) to identify and plan for all required and any additional training your new employee will need during the first year; this is an Army requirement.
5. Identify and facilitate opportunities for the new employee to meet with key individuals, such as the Functional Community Representative.
6. Answer any questions.

During these meetings, you should solicit feedback from the employee. Once you have determined the training needed, schedule it or help the employee learn how to do so. Be sure to provide tools and resources needed as well. You may want to enlist the assistance of the new employee's sponsor to help with these things. Look for opportunities to integrate new hires into their work groups and into the organization as a whole.





Before the End of the First 90 Days on the Job

The goal is to provide guidance and feedback to the new employee to ensure continued success and to make plans for their future with the Army. During the first 90 days, you will want to meet with the employee several times to:

1. Discuss experiences and how they match the employee's expectations.
2. Review progress toward initial goals, and adjust if necessary.
3. Discuss any concerns or issues the employee may have.
4. Provide feedback on the employee's performance to date and solicit feedback from the employee.
5. Discuss the career planning philosophy at the Army and how it applies to the employee.
6. Update or refine the IDP.
7. Solicit feedback from the employee about the onboarding process and their suggested changes.
8. Answer any questions.



ANNEX A: SUPERVISOR'S CHECKLIST FOR ONBOARDING FOR NEW EMPLOYEES

New Employee Information

Employee Name: _____ Start Date: _____

Position Title: _____ Assigned Sponsor: _____

Contact Telephone Number: _____ Supervisor/Rater: _____

Contact Email: _____ Higher Level Reviewer/Senior Rater: _____

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS:

Within Three (3) Days of Formal Job Offer and Acceptance (As Confirmed by CPAC)

- 1. Obtain firm entrance on duty (EOD) date from Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC).

- 2. Contact new employee (preferably by phone) to welcome him/her to the Army team and your organization.
 - Confirm start date.
 - NOTE: Notify CPAC if employee believes the start date is different from what the CPAC stated.
 - Request new employee's pre-employment (personal) telephone and email contact information.
 - Record contact information in new employee information section of this checklist, above, and provide to sponsor.

- 3. Send the new employee a welcome letter or email with a copy of the "New Employee Onboarding Handbook" and "New Employee Onboarding Checklist."
 - Access and customize "Supervisor Letter to New Employee Template" from the Army Career Tracker (ACT) Army Civilian Onboarding Community.

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- ❑ 4. Select and assign a sponsor for new employee and meet with the sponsor to explain their role and responsibilities, and review the sponsor checklist.
 - NOTE: In the event you are unable to assign a sponsor, incorporate key provisions of “Sponsor Letter to New Employee Template” into your (supervisor) welcome letter (discussed in action #3 above).
 - Also, be sure to review and take important actions listed on Sponsor Checklist which is accessible from the Army Civilian Onboarding website: <https://civilianonboarding.chra.army.mil/onboarding/>.

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS:

At Least One (1) Week Before Start Date

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- ❑ 5. Announce pending arrival of new employee to the new employee’s higher level reviewer and other appropriate senior leaders within the Command, and draft Command senior leader welcome letter for review/release by the appropriate senior leader.
 - Access and customize “Command Senior Leader Letter to New Employee Template” from the Army Civilian Onboarding website: <https://civilianonboarding.chra.army.mil/onboarding/>, and route for signature.
-
- ❑ 6. Announce pending arrival of new employee to members of the staff in the new employee’s organization.
 - Access and customize “Staff Introduction Email Template” from from the Army Civilian Onboarding website: <https://civilianonboarding.chra.army.mil/onboarding/>.and send it as an announcement email to the staff.
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- ❑ 7. Review work area and confirm an assigned workstation, desk, work bench, chair, computer, network, telephone, office supplies, or other required tools and equipment are in place prior to the new employee’s first day.
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- ❑ 8. Gather all historical information from the predecessor (if possible), such as best practices, files, records, and metrics to pass along to the new employee.
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- ❑ 9. Determine what system access will be required by the new employee and initiate a System Authorization Access Request (SAAR), DD FORM 2875, if required, to be signed by new employee on first work day (or during first week).
-
- ❑ 10. Arrange your schedule to be available to meet with the new employee on his/her first day and inform the assigned sponsor of the desired meeting time and place.
 - Record date, time, and location of meeting: _____
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- ❑ 11. Schedule your new employee to attend/receive your Command Welcome Briefing.
 - Record date, time, and location of Command Briefing/Orientation: _____
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- ❑ 12. Determine what the new employee needs to know to become productive as soon as possible, and identify training, important introductions, and administrative activities to be accomplished by the employee in the first week or two. Use this information to plan the employee's first assignment or activities for that period.

MAKING A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION:

First Day

- ❑ 13. Ensure sponsor meets and escorts new employee upon completion of CPAC orientation or designated Human Resource/HR orientation at an arranged location, and escorts to his/her workstation. Pre-arrange alternate in case of sponsor's absence.
-
- ❑ 14. Ensure technical assistance is available to help new employee set up computer and access network resources.
 - May need to defer until after new Common Access Card (CAC) has been issued and system access has been granted.
 - If CAC and/or system access is delayed, arrange for the employee to use a computer kiosk to access publicly available sites (e.g., Center for the Army Profession and Leadership (CAPL) Army Values: <https://www.army.mil/values/>).
 - Record name of technical point of contact (POC) and time he/she will be available:

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- ❑ 15. Meet with new employee to discuss first day activities and plan for the balance of the first week.
 - Try to personalize experience with something unique for the new employee, such as a welcome note from the staff, name plate, etc.
 - Give introductions to department staff and key personnel.
 - Provide a copy of the new employee's position description and describe the importance of the employee's responsibilities.
 - Provide and review the contents of the welcome pack (if one was assembled).
 - Ensure new employee receives the New Employee Onboarding Handbook.
 - Obtain new employee's signature on the SAAR (if required) and submit it for processing to ensure employee gains needed system access as quickly as is feasible.
 - Explain that, during the first 30 days, you will have discussions about performance expectations and training requirements, and that these discussions will result in completion of a performance plan and IDP, by the 30th day.
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- 16. Conduct, or arrange for the sponsor to conduct, a tour of the facility, including:
 - Office/Desk/Workstation
 - Restrooms
 - Tools/Equipment
 - Copy Centers
 - Mail Rooms
 - Coffee/Water/Vending Machines.
 - Printers
 - Bulletin Boards
 - Kitchen/Cafeteria/Break Areas
 - Authorized Work Areas
 - Security Office
 - Emergency Exits and Procedures
 - Conference Rooms
 - Fax Machines
 - Parking
 - Office Supplies

-
- 17. Review general administrative procedures, or arrange for sponsor to review:
 - Keys/Access Cards (Building and Computer)
 - Telephone Access Policy and Procedures.
 - Telephone Alert Roster

MAKING A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION:

Within First Week

- 18. Ensure employee is issued DoD CAC.
 - Employee may have scheduled an appointment: <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/>
 - Troubleshoot as needed to ensure CAC issuance is not delayed.

 - 19. Ensure employee completes DoD Information Assurance (IA) Awareness Training (<https://cs.signal.army.mil/login.asp>).

 - 20. Provide new employee with overview of your organization and its mission, including an explanation of how your division's mission supports the overall mission of the Command and the Army. Ensure new employee understands how his/her role supports your organization, Command, and the Army missions.

 - 21. Ensure that one or more senior leaders (including the higher level reviewer) welcomes new employee as soon as possible.
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- 22. Send email to new employee's Functional Chief (FC)/Career Field Director (CFD) (with copy to Functional Community Representative (FCR)), notifying of new employee's EOD into the functional community, and asking FC and CFD to send welcome letter.
 - Access and customize "Supervisor Email to FC Template to trigger FC Welcome Letter" from the ACT Army Civilian Onboarding Community and send it as a trigger for the CFD to send CFD Welcome Letter.
-
- 23. Inform the new employee of regularly scheduled meetings and send invitations to any regularly scheduled meetings (e.g., staff and department) to employee's inbox and calendar.
-
- 24. Give employee his/her initial assignment. (Make it something small and doable.) Ensure that the assignment constitutes meaningful work—either training or substantive task assignment related to the new job and CP.
 - If computer access is not immediately available, work or training assignments might include reading and/or shadowing others who have a similar job.
-
- 25. Debrief with employee after he/she attends initial meetings, attends training, and begins work on initial assignment.
 - Also touch base quickly each day.
-
- 26. Conduct an initial performance counseling session:
 - Review position description, typical and anticipated work assignments, and performance expectations;
 - Describe how employee's job fits in the organization, and how the job and organization contribute to accomplishing the Command and Army mission;
 - Explain which organizations and entities are customers of the work and which support the organization in completing its mission; and
 - Explain the annual performance review and goal-setting process. Explain that you will work together to establish a performance plan within the first 30 days.
-
- 27. Conduct an initial training and development counseling session:
 - Review training and education requirements (e.g., Civilian Education System (CES) grade-level requirements/ Supervisor Development Course (SDC) if applicable).
 - Explain that you will work together to establish an IDP within the first 30 days.
-
- 28. Introduce new employee to the Army Values—Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, Personal Courage.
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- 29. Assist new employee with learning about Military rank and insignia and titles of address for senior civilians.
-

30. If the employee is in a bargaining unit position, inform the employee who their union representative is and how to reach him/her.

31. Ensure new employee's name is added to local directories, relevant email distribution lists, and SharePoint site permissions.

32. Ensure the new employee logs into ACT (<https://actnow.army.mil>) and identifies and selects his/her 1st and 2nd Line Supervisors in ACT.

- The 1st line supervisor is the employee's "rater" and the 2nd line supervisor is the employee's higher level reviewer.
 - Ensure the new employee is informed of the correct supervisors to select; these should be identified in the "New Employee Information" above.
 - ACT will send reminders or system prompts until this step is completed. Employee will be unable to navigate in ACT unless supervisors are identified in a timely manner.
-

33. Accept request in ACT as supervisor for new employee.

- ACT will send reminders or system prompts until this step is completed.
-

34. Review key administrative policies:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| ■ Time and Attendance Labor Accounting | ■ Sexual Harassment/Assault | ■ Standards of Conduct |
| ■ Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)/Leaves of Absence | ■ Holidays | ■ Progressive Disciplinary Actions |
| ■ Vacation/Annual Leave and Sick Leave Reporting | ■ Performance Reviews | ■ Visitors/Security |
| ■ Overtime | ■ Appropriate Attire | ■ Emergency Procedures |
| ■ Severe Weather Procedures | ■ Safety | ■ Confidentiality (specific procedures to safeguard confidential/sensitive material). |
| ■ Diversity Awareness | ■ Official Use of Govt. Property | |
| | ■ Ethics/Joint Ethics Regulation | |
-

35. Review computer use policies:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| ■ Establish Email | ■ VPN/Mobile Phone |
| ■ Intranet/SharePoint | ■ Outlook Address List Profile |
| ■ Shared Drives | ■ Microsoft Office |
| ■ Databases | ■ Other Software/Applications. |
| ■ Internet Use | |
-

- 36. Review general administrative procedures:
 - Business Cards
 - Purchase Requests
 - Vehicle Registration
 - Govt. Travel Card
 - Conference Rooms
 - Organizational Policies
 - Official Travel
 - Mail (incoming and outgoing)
 - Shipping (FedEx, DHL, and UPS)
 - Military Driver Requirement
 - Defense Travel System

Within First 30 Days

- 37. Explain use of and ensure the new employee creates an account in and updates MyBiz.
- 38. Explain the use of and ensure the new employee creates a student account in ArmyIgnitEd.
- 39. Arrange for employee to meet the functional community representative (FCR), or appropriate representative to discuss the purpose and value of Talent Management, review Army Civilian Talent Development Program (ACTDP) plan, and to learn about career development support available from the CP.
 - Record date, time, location for meeting with FCR: _____
- 40. Meet with the employee to identify and discuss short/long term training requirements (CES, SDC, Career Field, Army Regulation (AR) 350-1 required training as well as organizational training, etc.).
- 41. Ensure the employee uses information discussed above to create an IDP, including development goals, in ACT.
- 42. View, review, and approve the employee's IDP in ACT.
 - Record date IDP approved in ACT: _____
- 43. Meet with new employee to develop and review performance plan, including elements and standards.
- 44. Arrange for higher level reviewer to meet with and counsel new employee, and approve the performance plan.
 - Record date, time, and place for higher level reviewer meeting:

-
- 45. Enter date performance plan approved and signed into ACT.
 - Record date performance plan completion date entered into ACT: _____
 - 46. Arrange for new employee to meet key partners from other departments.
 - 47. Provide feedback to new employee about work assignments, training, and seek feedback about job satisfaction to date.
 - Conduct regularly occurring one-on-one meetings;
 - Provide timely, ongoing, meaningful “everyday feedback;” and
 - Elicit feedback from the employee and be available to answer questions.
-

Within First 90 Days

- 48. Discuss what it means to be part of the Army Profession according to Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-22 *Army Leadership and the Profession*.
 - 49. Provide training, as needed, to help new employee understand internal systems, general operating practices, and obtain other information or skills required in the performance of his/her job.
 - 50. Coach, counsel, and give performance feedback early and often to new employee.
 - Recommend at least once a month;
 - At a minimum, meet for informal 3-month performance check-in.
 - 51. Have employee “shadow” you at meetings to get exposure to others and learn more about the department and organization.
 - 52. Meet with employee to discuss whether required training has been completed or scheduled and to determine whether any assistance is required to complete training or whether any adjustments are needed to the IDP.
-

Within First 180 Days

- 53. Continue to talk with new employee about expectations, culture, and the Army Profession.
 - 54. Ensure new employee is on track to complete grade-level CES requirements and SDC if applicable.
-

-
- 55. Conduct mid-point performance counseling. Meet with new employee for formal performance feedback, review of IDP, and career goals. Arrange for higher level reviewer to meet with and counsel new employee.

- Record date mid-year performance review conducted: _____

- 56. Continue to provide and/or arrange coaching, counseling, and mentoring.

- Explore ACT for mentoring opportunities.

Within First Year

- 57. Encourage participation in training, webinar sessions, learning activities, and other outreach/development activities.
-

- 58. Ensure employee completes onboarding requirements, including CES training requirements and SDC (if required).
-

- 59. Continue to look for opportunities to integrate your new employee with the work groups/teams, and into the organization as a whole.
-

- 60. Celebrate successes and recognition of employee's contributions.
 - Take prompt action (well before the end of the probationary period) to correct poor performance and/or conduct issues.
-

- 61. Continue to meet regularly with new employee to review and revalidate performance and training plans and developmental goals. Discuss performance as an Army Professional and monitor progress in competence (knowledge, skills, and abilities), character (ethical conduct and behavior), and commitment (to duty, mission accomplishment, and Army values).
-

- 62. Encourage your new employee to share ideas for improving the operations, strategies, work, and/or culture of the organization.
-

- 63. Complete annual performance appraisal.
 - Meet with employee to review appraisal and counsel employee.
 - Arrange for higher level reviewer to meet with and counsel employee.
 - Record date final annual appraisal completed: _____
-

- 64. Arrange recognition of onboarding completion and award certificate as an Army.
-

- 65. Solicit employee's feedback and suggestions on ways to improve the onboarding experience.
-

Helpful Links and Information

Forms and Resources:

- ❑ ACT: <https://actnow.army.mil/>
 - ❑ ArmyIgnitED: <https://www.armyignited.com/app/>
 - ❑ Center for the Army Profession and Leadership (CAPL) at: <https://capl.army.mil/civilians.php>
 - ❑ Sponsor Checklist at Army Career Tracker: **Army Civilian Onboarding website:** <https://civilianonboarding.chra.army.mil/onboarding/>
 - ❑ New Employee Onboarding Handbook at **Army Civilian Onboarding website:** <https://civilianonboarding.chra.army.mil/onboarding/>
 - ❑ MyBiz: <https://compo.dcpds.cpms.osd.mil/>
 - ❑ MyPay: <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>
-

Required Training:

- ❑ Cyber Security User Portal/IA Training: <https://cs.signal.army.mil/login.asp>
- ❑ CES and SDC enrollment: <https://armyuniversity.edu/amsc/EducationalPrograms>

Any additional organizational requirements.

ANNEX B: ONBOARDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Human Resources plays a vital role in building a strong foundation for new employees.

Role of Human Resources

Formal employee orientation and onboarding consists of a carefully planned welcome that is often coordinated between the CPAC, the supervisor, and your organization’s onboarding point of contact(s) (POC(s)). Human Resources (HR) plays a vital role in building a strong foundation for new employees that can have a positive effect on their productivity, longevity, and morale. This includes ensuring a successful first day of employment and follow-through on important benefits elections, and may include a first week of activities that familiarize the employee with the organization’s structure, mission, and policies. HR services include:

- Contacting the organization on the employee’s first day.
- Communicating the importance of the Oath of Office, official and required documents—such as pay and benefits, wellness, rules, and policies—and completing paperwork.
- Partnering with the hiring manager to follow up and coordinate new employee activities.



The most important relationship within any organization is the one between the employee and their immediate supervisor.

Role of the Supervisor

The supervisor’s role in getting the new employee off to a good start cannot be overemphasized; the most important relationship within any organization is the one between the employee and their immediate supervisor. You may have heard the saying, “People don’t leave organizations; they leave leaders.” This guide has been created to help you successfully perform in the role of effective leader. The relationship generally begins before the new employee’s first day and is most important during the first few weeks and months of employment.



Some things to remember during the onboarding:

- Work closely with Human Resources to ensure the new employee has a smooth transition.
- Be enthusiastic and engage the new employee.
- Align the new employee’s work with mission, vision, goals, and plans.
- Help the new employee assimilate as quickly as possible.
- Provide guidance to ensure proper training and development.

As supervisor, during these first days and weeks you should establish regular communication and work with your new employee to develop a comprehensive training plan Individual Training Plan (IDP) to ensure proficiency in job tasks and organizational norms. You will also assign work tasks and set clear performance expectations for your new employee, give needed direction, and provide coaching and timely performance feedback. You should work to connect your new employee with key information, resources, and people within the organization to help support their performance success.

Supporting new employees is not about adding more responsibilities to your role. We know that, as Army supervisors, you are already stretched thin and juggle many projects, responsibilities, and priorities. Rather, the purpose of this guide (and the other onboarding materials) is to provide you with a structured process to create a more engaging and effective experience for you and your new employee. This guide provides the tools and suggestions you need to successfully onboard and integrate your new employee into your team. By attending to the items in this guide and the Supervisor's Checklist, you will create a stronger bond with your employee and ensure a shorter path to productivity for both of you.



The sponsor should help establish a sense of belonging for the new employee.

Role of the Sponsor

Transitioning into a new job can be stressful. Another way to smooth this transition is to assign a sponsor. A sponsor's job is to facilitate the new employee's integration into the organization, offering advice and guidance. A sponsor should create a comfortable, more informal environment in which the employee can ask and receive information about the culture and norms, including those everyday (mostly unwritten) procedures and policies that help to explain how things really work.

Sponsors should be in the grade equal to or higher than the incoming employee when practical. A sponsor should be a superior performer with strong people skills. The sponsor knows the ropes and, more importantly, knows what actions to take to be successful in achieving the Army's mission. The sponsor is a source of advice and encouragement who can succeed in steering new employees in the right direction and help create and maintain a positive and productive culture of excellence.

With an effective sponsor, each new employee will quickly become a contributing member of their new organization.

Please access the "Sponsor's Guide to Onboarding" on the Army Civilian Onboarding website: <https://civilianonboarding.chra.army.mil/onboarding/>

Selecting a Sponsor

There are a number of ways to select a sponsor: you can nominate someone, you can request nominations, or you can request volunteers. Some things to keep in mind as you select a sponsor for the new employee:

- Select a **positive role model**.
- Ensure **the individual has time** to be accessible to the new employee, and **has interest** in taking on the responsibilities of the sponsor role.
- Select someone who has **strong interpersonal and communication skills**.
- Ensure the individual understands the **organization’s mission and culture**, and the new employee’s job.
- Provide the person with the tools and resources needed to be effective in their role.
 - Review the “Sponsor’s Guide to Onboarding” so that you are familiar with the sponsor’s role and responsibilities.
 - Respect the confidentiality agreement between the sponsor and the new employee.
- **Check in** with the sponsor regularly to ensure he or she has what they need to be successful.
 - At the 30-day mark, again at the 180-day mark, and at the end of the new employee’s first year, ask the sponsor for feedback on what went well and what might be needed to improve the onboarding process.

Remember, the sponsor will be part of the new employee’s integration into the organization, so it is important to choose this person with care. We strongly recommend that any sponsors you select take the sponsor duties seriously.



It is your role to work side-by-side with your new employees until they learn the ropes and establish credibility within the organization.



ANNEX C: USEFUL TIPS

Explaining the Army Culture

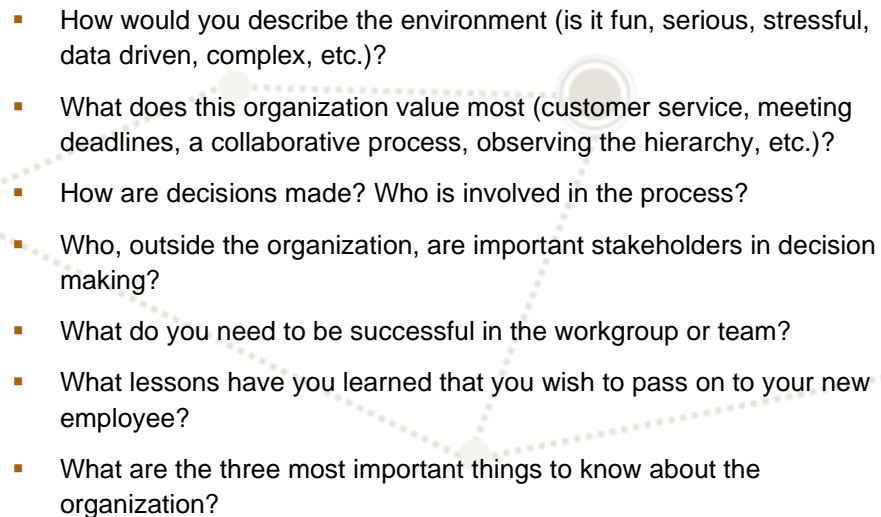


In addition to feeling welcome and learning about the unit's vision, mission, and goals, the new employee needs to have some introduction to the culture of the organization and the Army.

Culture can be defined as the combined beliefs, values, ethics, procedures, and atmosphere of an organization. The culture of an organization is often expressed as "the way we do things around here" and consists of largely unspoken values, norms, and behaviors that become the natural way of doing things. An organization's culture may be more apparent to an external observer than to an internal practitioner.

Keep in mind that there are many aspects of Military culture that are not common and may not be well-received in a Civilian setting. For example, in the Military, it is not uncommon to identify someone as sir or ma'am, Mr. or Mrs., or by their rank; however, in the Civilian sector, using formal titles like these can make co-workers uncomfortable. Email etiquette is also different in the Military and Civilian sectors. The Military writes in active voice, where email copy is very direct and to the point. While this is appreciated in business, it can also come off as being demanding, rude, or bossy. Helping your new employee understand and not be offended by these differences is an important aspect of helping to define or clarify the culture.

To prepare for a conversation about office culture, it might be helpful to ask yourself these questions:

- 
- How would you describe the environment (is it fun, serious, stressful, data driven, complex, etc.)?
 - What does this organization value most (customer service, meeting deadlines, a collaborative process, observing the hierarchy, etc.)?
 - How are decisions made? Who is involved in the process?
 - Who, outside the organization, are important stakeholders in decision making?
 - What do you need to be successful in the workgroup or team?
 - What lessons have you learned that you wish to pass on to your new employee?
 - What are the three most important things to know about the organization?

The sponsor will also be an important contributor to helping the new employee understand and thrive in the culture.

Be sure to cover “priority” topics for Army and your organization’s mission—overall strategy, strategic plans, and especially how your team supports the organization’s mission. Also, talk about the Army and organizational culture. Be realistic when sharing this information, and make sure you are positive and supportive of the larger organization, your internal and external customers, and the Army.

Never assume a new employee knows the basics even if they are coming from another organization within the department. Remember that knowledge and culture differ from Agency to Agency, as well as from organization to organization.

Making Onboarding a Valuable Experience

Without a doubt, you, as the direct supervisor, are the most influential person in the onboarding process. You are key to the successful integration of your new employees into the organization.

It is your role to work side-by-side with your new employees until they learn the ropes and establish credibility within the organization. Help them thrive during the critical transition period and your employees will be better prepared for long-term success.

Following are six ways you can help your new employee make a successful transition:

1. Clarify your expectations up front.

Even the most detailed job descriptions don't fully represent what the position entails, so be sure to share with new employees exactly what you expect of them.

- Review expectations point-by-point to ensure that each new employee understands them and is comfortable with them.
- Don't assume that new employees will know exactly what they have been hired to do. If they don't, they aren't likely to be comfortable asking.

2. Don't assume that qualifications equal immediate success.

Just because new employees are well qualified (even Military retirees) doesn't mean they will easily and quickly take to their new roles with the Army. Every new employee will have strengths as well as opportunities for improvement.

- Give positive feedback on strengths and pay attention to opportunities to coach through weaknesses. Remember that some responsibilities may be new to the employee. Be sure to show compassion when discussing these areas. It helps to recall what it was like when you were learning a new skill or behavior.
- Address a performance or conduct concern the *first time it shows up* as a learning opportunity. Again, do so as someone who is trying to help the employee be successful—not someone who is looking for mistakes.

3. Help new employees nurture their network.

Introduce new employees to their internal strategic partners. As part of the introduction, talk about client expectations. Success on the job hinges on the ability to form a strong network with coworkers and customers alike.

- Have a frank discussion about the individuals who will affect the new employee getting their job done. Emphasize relationships: direct reports, subordinates, major internal customers and partners, organizational leadership, and others.
- Make key introductions.
- Invite the new employee to meetings and encourage participation.

4. Be honest about potential pitfalls and past mistakes.

We all need to learn from past mistakes. Inform new employees of these and make sure they don't make the same common past mistakes in your Directorate. Help them know what influences employee success and talk with your new employee about possible obstacles to success (such as not meeting client needs) and the strategies to overcome them.

5. Hold regular discussions.

The "honeymoon period" can last anywhere from 3 months to a year, depending on the person. Hold regular meetings with each new employee in their first year. (See suggestions under "Before the End of the First 30 and 90 Days" sections.)

- Find out what is going well and what is not.
- Ask what you can do to help them.
- Provide feedback on how you think they are doing.

6. Make coaching and mentoring resources available *before* there is a crisis.

Don't wait until a new employee is in serious trouble before taking action. Address issues as they arise. Know the coaching, mentoring, and other resources available to you. What makes a good coach, sponsor, preceptor, or mentor? Someone who:

- Listens to what is being said.
- Helps the person understand why something didn't work as expected.
- Offers suggestions for improvement.

Answering these questions for yourself may help you to provide a snapshot of the organizational culture for new employees. Assigned sponsors can also help the new employee understand and work in the new environment.

Army Civilian Onboarding Website

As you will see, the portal contains a wealth of information, including guides, checklists, and other helpful materials. This portal will serve as a great resource for you, the new employee, and their sponsor during the first few months of employment. <https://civilianonboarding.chra.army.mil/onboarding/>.