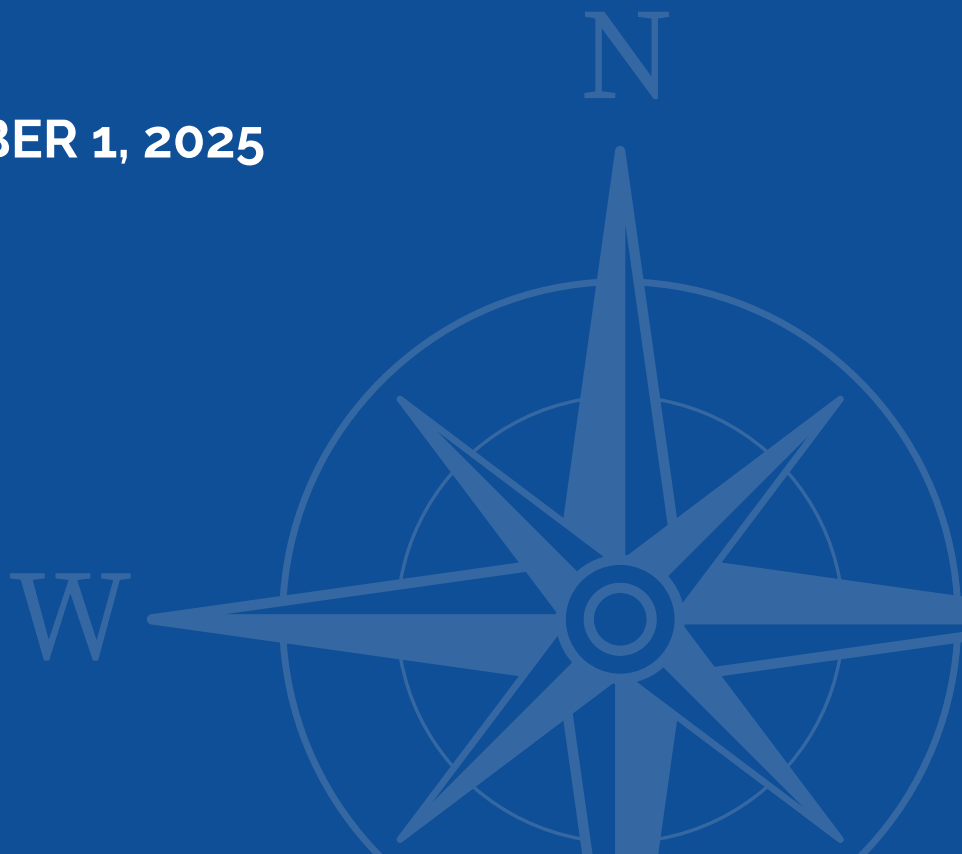




COURT COMPASS: NEW HIRE JOURNEY

**AN ONBOARDING TOOLKIT FOR ILLINOIS
JUDICIAL BRANCH LEADERS**

PUBLISHED OCTOBER 1, 2025





Forward

In 2023, the Illinois Judicial Conference identified Recruitment & Retention of employees as an area of opportunity. A Work Group convened in 2024 and quickly identified that onboarding programs – different than orientation sessions – can provide a plethora of benefits.

Onboarding programs can help new hires quickly understand their roles and responsibilities, the unique culture of the court system, and can align new hires with the Court's Mission, Vision and Values as listed in the [Judicial Branch's Strategic Plan](#). The Mission, Vision and Values are included here for your reference and please keep them front of mind as you engage with new hires.

The **mission** of the Judicial Branch is “to protect the rights and liberties of all by providing equal access to justice, resolving disputes, and upholding the rule of law pursuant to the powers and duties entrusted to us by the Illinois Constitution.”

The **vision** of the Judicial Branch is “to be trusted and open to all by being fair, innovative, diverse, and responsive to changing needs.”

The **core values** of the Judicial Branch are:

Fairness – impartial in our actions, decisions, and treatment of all.

Accountability – responsible and answerable for our conduct and performance, and transparent in the use of public resources.

Integrity – honest, trustworthy, and committed to the highest ethical and professional standards.

Respect – treat all with dignity, courtesy, and understanding.

A structured onboarding program enhances employee engagement and retention by easing the transition into the new role, thereby reducing turnover rates. Within this Toolkit, leaders will find introductory material for developing or strengthening an onboarding program within their jurisdiction or district.

The first section of this Toolkit will differentiate between orientation and onboarding, emphasizing the critical role of onboarding in maintaining the health of the judicial branch. The next section outlines the phases of an extended onboarding process, providing leaders with the essential foundation to develop this vital program for their new hires. Following that, we will delve into a highly effective strategy for fostering a sense of connection to the judicial branch's culture – a peer buddy program. Finally, the Toolkit will cover two additional key topics: preparing for the first assignment and actively seeking feedback, ensuring all parties are positioned for success.

In addition to offering a uniform understanding of the importance of onboarding, this Toolkit is meant to be functional. As such it also includes customizable templates as well as resources that leaders may share with their new hires. We all have a role in warmly welcoming new staff to the judicial branch. Thank you for considering this Toolkit, and we hope you find it useful.

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What is Onboarding and Why it is Important

Orientation and onboarding are two distinct, yet interrelated processes used to integrate new employees into an organization. Orientation is typically a short-term event lasting a few hours to a few days while onboarding is a longer-term process that can span weeks, months, or even up to a year.

Orientation focuses on providing new hires with basic information about the judicial branch and office, such as its history, mission, vision, policies, and procedures. It often includes administrative tasks like filling out paperwork, learning about benefits, and completing mandatory training sessions. The content is generally broad and applicable to all employees, covering topics like culture, safety protocols, and key policies, with the primary purpose of helping new employees get settled in their new environment and ensuring they have the necessary information to start their jobs.

Leaders in the judicial branch may be more familiar with the concept of orientation and less familiar with onboarding. However, research shows that while the first few days of employment are important (orientation), engaging the new hire in a meaningful way through the first several months of employment (onboarding) will result in greater retention and engagement.¹ Onboarding can lead to early productivity, excitement, and increased engagement of new hires.

The primary purpose of onboarding is to make sure new employees understand the organization's goals and culture and are engaged and productive from day one. To meet those goals, onboarding focuses on integrating new employees into their specific roles and the organization, including:

- Training
- Mentoring
- Performance feedback
- Peer support

As detailed in this Toolkit, onboarding must be tailored to the individual's role and department, encompassing job-specific training, goal setting, and relationship-building activities. As Dr. Brenda J. Wagenknecht-Ivey, an expert in the field of organizational psychology states, "[e]ffective onboarding also makes new employees comfortable in their work environment and cognizant of collegial relationships and assignments and how they matter to the organization's overall objectives."²

Increasing a sense of belonging for each employee through onboarding from their first day has led to a 56% increase in job performance and a 50% reduction in turnover risk.³

¹ Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. W., & Stilwell, D. (1993). A longitudinal study on the early development of leader-member exchanges. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78(4), 662-674. <http://psycnet.apa.org/journals/apl/78/4/662/>

² Wagenknecht-Ivey, B. J. (2018). *Onboarding white paper: Welcoming, connecting, and engaging new employees*. [Unpublished manuscript]. Praxis Consulting.

³ Deloitte. (2021). What is belonging in the workplace? *Deloitte Human Capital Blog*. Retrieved from <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/blog/human-capital-blog/2021/what-is-belonging-in-the-workplace.html>

In summary, orientation is a component of the broader onboarding process, providing essential initial information, while onboarding is a comprehensive effort to fully integrate new employees into their roles and the organization's culture over a longer period.

There are four Cs⁴ of onboarding that will help frame the process of integrating new employees.⁵ These Cs stand for:

1. **Compliance:** This is the basic level and involves teaching new employees the legal and policy-related rules and regulations of the organization. This includes things like filling out paperwork, understanding court policies, learning about safety protocols, and completing necessary training sessions.
2. **Clarification:** At this level, the goal is to ensure that new employees understand their new job and all related expectations. This involves clarifying job roles, responsibilities, performance expectations, and any key processes or procedures they need to follow.
3. **Culture:** This involves helping new employees understand and adapt to the organization's culture. This includes the court's values, norms, mission, and vision. It's about helping new hires feel a part of the team and understand how things work within the judicial branch.
4. **Connection:** This is about building interpersonal relationships and networks within the judicial branch. It involves introducing new employees to their colleagues, setting up meetings with key stakeholders, and encouraging social interactions to help them feel connected and supported in their new environment.

Together, these four Cs provide a comprehensive approach to onboarding that helps new employees acclimate more effectively and feel more engaged and productive in their roles.

This Toolkit contains customizable templates as appendices. Sample checklists, correspondence, onboarding plans with proposed onboarding resources, and a sample first-week schedule is provided for your convenience. It is encouraged that you customize and modify the templates to meet the needs of your court or division.

The Phases of Onboarding and Importance of Feedback on the Onboarding Process

The onboarding process typically involves several phases designed to integrate new employees effectively into an organization. Here are the common phases of onboarding:

1. Pre-boarding

When: Before the official start date

⁴ Bauer, T. (n.d.). What are the four C's of employee onboarding framework? *Preppio*. [Retrieved from here](#).

⁵ Society for Human Resource Management. (n.d.). Onboarding: Key to elevating company culture. *SHRM Executive Network*. [Retrieved from here](#).

Activities:

- Send welcome emails with arrival instructions or packets (See Appendix A)
- Provide access to introductory resources, such as an employee handbook
- Complete necessary paperwork, like tax forms and employment contracts
- Set up IT equipment and accounts
- Ensure workspace and equipment are ready prior to the start date, or if the employee is remote, equipment has arrived at their home prior to the start date
- Prepare to welcome new hire by preparing space, gathering supplies, and updating or preparing any other documents to be shared like handbooks, directories, Mentoring Plan and first week schedule (See Appendix E and F for sample Mentoring Plan and a sample first week schedule)

Purpose: To ensure new hires feel welcomed and prepared before their first day, reducing anxiety and ensuring a smooth start.

See Appendix B for a sample preboarding checklist.

2. Welcome, Orient, and Connect

When: The first few days

Activities:

- Warmly welcome new employees in person or via Zoom (See Appendix C for a sample welcome memo introducing new employee)
- Introduce new employees to the Court's mission, vision, values, and culture
- Conduct tours of the office or facility
- Introduce key personnel and team members
- Provide basic training on court policies, procedures, and systems

Purpose: To provide new employees with essential information about the court and their work environment, helping them feel comfortable and informed.

3. Role-Specific Training

When: The first few weeks to months

Activities:

- Train on specific job duties and responsibilities
- Set up meetings in person or on Zoom or shadow opportunities with colleagues and mentors
- Assign initial tasks and projects
- Provide access to necessary tools and resources

Purpose: To equip new employees with the knowledge and skills required for their specific roles, ensuring they understand their responsibilities and how to perform their tasks effectively.

4. Integration and Ongoing Development

When: The first few months up to the first year

Activities:

- Regular check-ins with supervisors and team members
- Provide ongoing training and development opportunities
- Encourage participation in team meetings and events
- Solicit feedback on the onboarding process and adjust as needed (See Appendix J for sample tools)
- Set performance goals and conduct evaluations
- Offer continuous learning opportunities, such as workshops and courses
- Provide mentorship and career development support
- Recognize and reward achievements

Purpose: To help new employees become fully integrated into their teams and the broader organization, fostering a sense of belonging and engagement. Also to support long-term growth and development, ensuring new employees remain engaged, motivated, and aligned with the Court's mission.

A big part of creating a positive employee experience comes from regularly taking the temperature of your employees. Effective onboarding is critical to employee retention making it a valuable tool for influencing employee engagement early on. Seeking feedback during the onboarding process is a great way to get an immediate read on how employees are feeling about joining the judicial branch. Onboarding surveys can also catch early warning signs of employees disengaging or detect changes in attitudes. This allows you to address these issues before they become larger organizational problems (See Appendices I and J for sample feedback questions and tools).

By following these phases, our courts and departments can ensure a comprehensive and effective onboarding process that helps new employees transition smoothly, feel welcomed, and become productive members of the team.

This Toolkit contains a sample Onboarding Plan (Appendix E). It can be used by court leaders as a tool to follow these phases and incorporate the 4Cs. It includes links to important resources that new employees may find to be beneficial, and key tasks that will help connect and align the new hire with the Court's mission. It is intended that court leaders will identify any other resources new employees should be connected to and include them in the Plan. It is also intended that the hiring manager or supervisor "assign" what would most benefit the new employee in their new role. The court's leader may wish to pre-assign and make mandatory certain tasks.

Onboarding Peer Program

Assigning a peer “buddy” as part of the onboarding program can advance all 4 Cs: compliance, clarification, culture and connection. Microsoft revamped its onboarding process in 2010 and adopted an onboarding peer buddy program. Microsoft reported that new hires who were assigned a peer buddy were 36% more satisfied at work, and 56% of new hires who met with their buddies at least once reported they reached full productivity more quickly.⁶ The Onboarding Peer Program is designed as part of onboarding to connect new employees with its leadership, culture and service opportunities, by creating mutually beneficial relationships to enhance employees’ professional and personal development. The Onboarding Peer Program is designed to facilitate communication of the values, vision and mission of the court through a one-on-one relationship while supporting professional development enhancing leadership competencies.

The Role of the Onboarding Peer

“A new employee’s introduction [to the office] is greatly enhanced by assigning an onboarding peer. A peer is not a substitute for a manager or supervisor, but a ‘go-to’ person who can provide guidance and answer the new employee’s questions about the work environment and the workplace culture in a positive and encouraging way. The onboarding peer can relate orientation information to actual situations while providing informal support on a peer-to-peer level.”⁷

There is benefit to the employee serving as the onboarding peer as well. It strengthens their knowledge base, develops leadership skills, practices managerial skills, brings a fresh perspective, and expands their network. The onboarding peer will have the opportunity to share their experiences and wisdom, broaden their view through the exchange of ideas, and encourage strategic thinking about the future of the organization and its employees.

How to Structure an Onboarding Peer Assignment

“The manager or supervisor should introduce the new employee to the onboarding peer, ideally on the first day at work.”⁸ At first, peers should strive to meet daily for the first week. It’s important to build a trusting and resourceful relationship, which can only occur through getting to know each other and being accessible in person or by Zoom. Thereafter, peers should meet with the new employee for a minimum of 15-30 minutes each week for the first month; however, support can go beyond the defined time period. “Onboarding peers should be available to answer questions by email, phone, or in person within a reasonable amount of time.”⁹

Managers should consider the following when assigning a peer to a new employee:

- Location

⁶ [Onboarding: The Key to Elevating Your Company Culture](#)

⁷ City of Portland. (2018). [Manager & Supervisor Onboarding Toolkit](#).

⁸ City of Portland. (2018). [Manager & Supervisor Onboarding Toolkit](#).

⁹ City of Portland. (2018). [Manager & Supervisor Onboarding Toolkit](#).

- Type of Assignment
- Compatibility
- Diversity

What Makes a Successful Onboarding Peer?

Below is a list of other qualities that supervisors should consider when matching a new hire with a peer:

- Willing and able to serve in this role
- Demonstrates a strong understanding of their own role
- Is highly regarded by peers and managers
- Has sufficient time
- Holds a job similar to that of the new employee (i.e. peer)
- Possesses a full understanding of the work environment (the organization's structure and functions)
- Has a good performance record
- Has good communication and interpersonal skills
- Has patience and is empathetic
- Has a positive attitude and enthusiasm
- Has schedule flexibility to be accessible to the new employee

The Responsibilities of an Onboarding Peer

"An onboarding peer should provide relevant information in a friendly and informal manner to help the new employee feel comfortable in their work environment. The onboarding peer should be a resource to the new employee on work rules, workplace culture and norms, and unwritten policies and procedures."¹⁰ Below is a list of suggested responsibilities of an onboarding peer:

- Help connect the new employee with peers, joining them for lunch, etc.
- Identify useful resources
- Make time available for the new employee
- Provide ethical guidance
- Provide a tour of the workplace as needed
- Check in often to see how the new employee is doing and answer any questions
- Schedule regular meetings. For the first week, try to meet daily then at least weekly. Be available to the employee by phone/email check-ins
- Instill a sense of belonging in the office by accepting, supporting and encouraging the employee

The Responsibilities of the New Employee

- Commit to fostering a positive and honest relationship with your onboarding peer
- Be open to learning
- Follow through with your onboarding peer
- Actively participate

¹⁰ City of Portland. (2018). [Manager & Supervisor Onboarding Toolkit](#).

- Discuss and explore opportunities within the organization; solicit input on how best to navigate challenges and opportunities

Benefits of the Onboarding Peer Program¹¹

The Onboarding Peer Program offers many benefits to the employee, onboarding peer and to the organization including, but not limited to:

For the Onboarding Peer:

- Shape the future of the organization's management and professionals
- Personal and professional satisfaction
- Review own strengths and weaknesses
- Learn from the new employee
- Individually assist the organization in implementing a viable and supportive employee engagement and retention strategy

For the Employee:

- Receive guidance and support from a seasoned court professional
- Learn more about the organization
- Increased career satisfaction
- Increased networking and relationship-building opportunities (e.g., meet team members, leadership, key stakeholders)
- Develop or improve on core competencies
- Gain an organizational perspective regarding court operations and tasks

For the organization:

- Assists employees in settling into the organization
- Communicates the values, vision and mission of the organization
- Supports involvement and progression within the organization
- Enhances employee satisfaction, engagement, and retention
- Implements a key element of succession planning and knowledge management
- Develops an organizational perspective regarding court operations and tasks

Onboarding Peer Program Evaluation

The program should be evaluated minimally annually to determine its effectiveness in providing the guidance and assistance intended by the program. It is important to disseminate surveys to the participants, both the new employee and onboarding peer as well as the employee's director supervisor, manager, and HR, to evaluate the benefits and consider areas for improvement (See Appendix H).

See Appendix G for a sample handout for the designated onboarding peer.

The First Assignment – New Employee

Supervisors must consider several factors when making the first assignment to new hires. First, supervisors should be mindful of the ease of the assignment. It will be important that it is an opportunity for an early "win" to boost morale. Equally

¹¹ [National Association of Court Management \(n.d.\). Mentor Program.](#) Nacmnet.org. Retrieved August 7, 2024.

important is how the supervisor communicates the details of the assignment. Clearly communicating expectations, how success is measured, helpful resources, and who else will be involved will establish a strong base for communication.

See Appendix K for a checklist that a supervisor should follow when making the first assignment.

Effective Feedback

Employees want clear, transparent, and consistent communication from supervisors. They value feedback that is constructive and specific, helping them understand expectations and areas for improvement. Open lines of communication where employees feel heard and valued are also crucial. Regular updates about organizational changes and recognition of their contributions enhance engagement and job satisfaction.

For tips regarding informal and formal feedback, see Appendix L.

Onboarding Remote Staff

Focusing on the key aspects of onboarding discussed above is just as important when onboarding someone who is working entirely remotely. However, remote onboarding presents unique challenges, particularly in encouraging informal communication and ensuring new hires feel connected to the team and court culture. Here are two key strategies to open lines of communication and foster a sense of belonging among remote employees.

1. Video Calls for Face-to-Face Interaction

One of the most effective ways to bridge the gap in remote onboarding is through video calls. These virtual face-to-face interactions are crucial for several reasons:

- **Setting Expectations:** Establish from the outset that all team meetings will be conducted with cameras on. This sets the tone for open and engaged communication.¹²
- **Observing Non-Verbal Cues:** Video calls allow participants to see each other's facial expressions and body language, which are essential for understanding context and fostering a more personal connection.
- **Building Relationships:** Regular video meetings help new hires feel more connected to their colleagues, making it easier to build relationships and integrate into the team.
- **Structured Check-Ins:** Schedule regular one-on-one video calls with the new hire to discuss their progress, address any concerns, and provide feedback. These check-ins can help identify any issues early and ensure the new employee feels supported.

By prioritizing video calls, leaders can create a more interactive and engaging onboarding experience that mimics the in-person environment as closely as possible.

¹² Hemmat, D. (2022, October 24). [Why Zoom meetings do matter](#). *LinkedIn*.

2. Utilizing Chat Features for Informal Communication

In addition to formal video meetings, it's important to facilitate informal communication through chat features. Tools like Slack, Microsoft Teams, and others offer robust platforms for this purpose:

- **Instant Messaging:** Encourage the use of chat platforms for quick questions, casual check-ins, and informal conversations. This can help replicate the spontaneous interactions that occur in a physical office.
- **Channels and Groups:** Create dedicated channels or groups for different teams, projects, or interests. This can help new hires find information, participate in discussions, and feel more involved.
- **Availability and Boundaries:** While encouraging chat use, also communicate the importance of boundaries. All chat services offer the option to mute notifications, allowing employees to focus on tasks without constant interruptions. Make it clear that it's acceptable to use these features to manage their time effectively.
- **Engagement Activities:** Use chat platforms for fun and engaging activities, such as virtual coffee breaks, trivia games, or sharing personal interests. These activities can help break the ice and foster a sense of community.

By leveraging chat features, leaders can maintain open lines of communication, support informal interactions, and help new remote employees feel more connected to their colleagues and the organization.

Effective communication is the backbone of successful remote onboarding. By emphasizing the use of video calls for face-to-face interactions and chat features for informal communication, leaders can overcome the challenges of remote onboarding. These strategies not only facilitate the smooth integration of new hires but also foster a collaborative and inclusive remote work environment. Prioritizing these communication methods ensures that remote employees feel supported, engaged, and connected from day one.¹³

¹³ GitLab. (n.d.). [The complete guide to remote onboarding for new hires](#). In *GitLab Handbook*.

Appendices

Appendix A: Sample Welcome Emails to New Employee

[Different than a letter conveying an offer of a position]

Welcome to []! We are excited to welcome you to the [Circuit/District Court]. Our work is meaningful; every day we each have the opportunity to make a positive impact on our community.

Your first day is []. Please arrive at [time] to [room] of [building]. I will meet with you at that time to provide a short orientation to working with the courts, and you will meet your supervisor after.

The address of the [building is...] [Include anything they need to be mindful of regarding entering.] You will need to pass through Security upon entry. Do not bring weapons or anything that could be perceived as a weapon. The security entrance does not open until 8:00 a.m.

[insert parking instructions]

[Include information about what to bring the first day. Enclose any forms that need to be completed in advance]

[Include information about any other orientation sessions required; date/time. Any documents that need to be brought at that time? Include when ID badge photo will be taken.]

In advance of your start date, please forward a headshot of yourself, as well as a sentence about what you are excited for? I would like to share this with our team.

Should you have any questions in the interim, please contact [information here].

We are enthusiastic about the contributions you will make to the [Circuit Court].

Regards,

cc: New staff person's supervisor

Encls. [Be sure to include any forms that need to be completed, and anything else you think would be helpful. Brochures about your court?]

Sample Welcome Email for a Remote or Hybrid Employee

Welcome to []! We are excited to welcome you to the [Circuit/District Court]. Our work is meaningful; every day we each have the opportunity to make a positive impact on our community.

In advance of your start date, can you please forward a headshot of yourself that you

like, as well as a sentence about what you are excited for? I would like to be able to share this with our team.

Your first day is []. Please join via Zoom at [time]. The Zoom link is:

[Include information about what to prepare for the first day. Enclose any forms that need to be completed in advance]

[Include information about any other orientation sessions required; date/time. Any documents that need to be brought at that time? Include when ID badge photo will be taken.]

Should you have any questions in the interim, please contact [information here].

We are enthusiastic about the contributions you will make to the [Circuit Court].

Regards,

cc: New staff person's supervisor

Encls. [Be sure to include any forms that need to be completed, and anything else you think would be helpful. Brochures about your court?]

Appendix B: Sample Welcome Emails to New Employee

New Employee Checklist for Hiring Manager/Supervisor Pre-Arrival Tasks for Hiring Managers

- Prepare Welcome Package [After the Offer Letter has been sent and accepted]:
 - Draft and send a welcome letter or email from the head of the department or HR to the new employee. Include information relevant to the first day including parking, dress, lunch options, and details for arrival. Include information regarding when ID photo will be taken. Include a point of contact in the event a question arises, [See Appendix A]
 - Include any necessary forms (tax forms, direct deposit forms, parking pass forms etc.).
 - Provide an overview of the Court's mission, vision, and values.
- Introductory Announcement
 - Draft an email or memo to the organization introducing the new employee. Consider including a photo and a “blurb” from the new employee about what they are excited for or why they were interested in this position/department. [See Appendix C]
- Coordinate IT and Technology Setup:
 - Request IT department to set up necessary accounts (email, network access, phone programming, etc.).
 - Ensure all required software and systems are accessible.
- Schedule Orientation Sessions:
 - Coordinate with relevant departments to schedule orientation sessions which may include: HR, Technology Orientation, Emergency/Evacuation Protocols, court policy review.
 - Arrange introductions with key team members and stakeholders.
- Assign and coordinate an onboarding peer for the length of your onboarding program.
- Prepare workspace
 - Ensure that a clean workspace with the appropriate technology and supplies are available, or that technology and supplies are delivered to the new employee
- Request any business cards, name badges, name plates as applicable
- Create Onboarding Plan [See Appendix E]
- Create First Week Schedule and confirm any appointments or meetings to be held the first week; add virtual meeting links as needed [See Appendix F]

- Review and update all Directories
- Review and update any Department or Team handbooks
- Prepare copies or otherwise make accessible:
 - Policies handbook
 - Manual or Handbook specific to team or department
 - Directory or other key contacts
 - Required forms
 - Nearby lunch options or walking paths
 - Organization chart
 - Other:

Appendix C: Sample Memo Introducing New Employee

To: [new employee's work department]

I am pleased to announce that [name] is joining [team] as [title] on [date]. [Provide relevant information regarding the position and role.]

[Provide information about relevant employment background or experience].

[Include a statement from the new employee about what they are excited for, or why they were interested in this position/department].

[Include a headshot or cropped photo of new employee; provided by new employee.]

Please join us at [location of employee's work space / virtual meeting information] to meet [name] and welcome [name] to our team!

You can reach [name] at:

- Office location
- phone number
- email address
- any other relevant contact information

[Signature]

Appendix D: Sample Letter from Chief Judge/Justice

Dear [New Court Staff],

As [title], I congratulate you on your recent acceptance/selection to serve within [organization]. The Chief Judge/Justice is charged with [what is your role].

As public servants working in the judicial branch, [be clear about expectations]. There is a tremendous responsibility that is entrusted to each of us. May you, as a [court employee], be forever proud to discharge your duties and continue to serve as a [something something].

It is an honor and privilege to serve as [title], and on behalf of the judges and staff of the [organization], I welcome you to the judicial branch.



COURT COMPASS: NEW HIRE JOURNEY

AN ONBOARDING PROGRAM FOR
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New Hire Compass for Journey of:

(Add date once completed, ask supervisor or co-worker to initial if s/he assists)

1st Day	Assigned	Date Completed
Review Welcome video from Chief Justice at [insert link]	X	
Technology and Essential Systems Set-Up with help of [team or department]	X	
Meet Onboarding Peer: [name]	X	
Receive and Review Policy Handbook, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illinois Supreme Court Confidentiality Policy • Anti-Harassment & Discrimination Collect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency contact information • Parking pass information Receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access or security pass 	X	
Meet with [name] to review Evacuation Procedures and security protocol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [include any information you would want staff to be able to answer regarding evacuation procedures and security protocol] 	X	
Receive Directory of relevant team members and Departments	X	
Receive and Review Organization Chart	X	
Office tour [Virtual, if appropriate]	X	
[insert tasks in tables as the role presents. Supervisors should mark "assigned" if it is assigned to this specific person. Some may be pre-checked if the organization deems it necessary for all staff.]		

Within 1st Week	Assigned	Completed
Attend New Employee Orientation with HR		
Meet with Onboarding Peer		
Review any team specific manual or handbook		
Review videos associated with introduction to State Courts and Legal Terminology (see first week schedule for links)	X	
IT Orientation/Training on management systems or specialized tools		
Review specific expectations with Supervisor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time away from office, planned or unplanned; time sheet processes • other 		

<p>Overview of State Courts and Legal Terminology</p> <p>Video (3 minutes): “The who, what, when, where and how of State Courts” - NCSC</p> <p>Reading (1 minute): “How Cases Proceed Through the Court System” - Illinois Supreme Court</p> <p>Review videos from National Center for State Courts for basics on terminology and court process, as needed</p>		
Review difference Legal Information v. Legal Advice, and review Safe Harbor Policy (see first week schedule for links)	X	
<p>Review customer service expectations with supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your new knowledge of Legal Information v. Legal Advice support this? • What resource referrals would you like to keep on hand? • How can you respond if someone asks you for a referral for an attorney? • What is ex parte communication, and what responsibilities do you have regarding it? 		
Facility Tour [Virtual, as appropriate]		
Complete first assignment		

Within 2 Weeks	Assigned	Completed
<p>Observe and shadow opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [add options here] 		
<p>Opportunities to meet other key staff in departments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [add key staff here] 		
Overview of judicial system : 51 minute video	X	
Meet with Onboarding Peer		
Meet Key Team Member(s):		

End of 3 Months: Probation/Welcoming Period End	Assigned	Completed
Conduct formal review: Feedback on performance objectives and check in on professional development plan		
Refine objectives for the coming year		

Within 3-6 Months	Assigned	Completed
(any resources on Domestic Violence 101 and Power & Control wheel?)		
Shadow or Observation Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add here 		
Additional Training Opportunities		
Review [any other resource for this role]		
Tour National Center for State Court's (NCSC) website, specifically (any section that makes sense for this role)		
Continue to meet with Onboarding Peer		

At 12 months	Assigned	Completed
Formal Evaluation		
Provide feedback and suggestions for improving the onboarding process		

Once complete, this checklist should be signed by both the staff member and the supervisor/Department Head. The original documents should be kept in the Department's file.

Employee's Name (Please Print):

Job Title:

Hire Date:

Employee' Signature:

Date:

Supervisor/Department Head Signature:

Appendix F: Sample First Week Schedule

This is a sample template for a first week schedule. Supervising managers will find it helpful to adapt it to their department and position. Consider including any components that have been pre-arranged by the supervisor.

Week 1 Onboarding Schedule

Day 1: Welcome and Orientation

- **8:00 AM - 9:00 AM:** Arrival and Review of Policies and Procedures
 - Meet with representative for initial paperwork and introduction to the workplace.
 - Receive Policy Handbook
 - Review important policies related to working with the court to include overview of: Code of Professional Conduct, Confidentiality, Political Activities Policy, and Non-Discrimination & Anti- Harassment.
- **9:00 AM - 9:30 AM:** Welcome - meet with Supervisor
 - Overview of the judicial branch's mission, vision, and values.
 - Receive Onboarding Plan and First Week Schedule; review.
 - Receive Manual or Handbook specific to your department or team.
 - General expectations for your role.
- **9:30 AM – 10:30 AM:** Technology Orientation & IT Setup
 - Set up computer, email, phone, printers, and access to necessary systems.
 - Briefing on cybersecurity best practices and security protocols.
- **10:30 AM – 12:00 PM:** Office Tour and Introductions
 - Review Organization Chart and Directory.
 - Tour of key areas including courtrooms, offices, and break rooms.
 - Meet team members; brief overview of roles and responsibilities.
 - Meet Onboarding Peer for ongoing support and guidance.
- **12:00 PM - 1:00 PM:** Lunch Break with the Team [See map of nearby options]
- **1:00 PM – 4:00 PM:** Office Set-up & Handbook Review
 - Orient self with workspace.
 - Review Manual or Handbook specific to your department or team.
- **4:00 PM – 5:00 PM:** Security Briefing
 - Review policies and procedures regarding emergency evacuation and closure.
 - Discuss responsibilities for reporting unsafe conditions.

Day 2 and/or 3: Your Role in the Big Picture

- **8:00 AM - 10:30 AM:** Role Specific Training
 - Training on specific duties, responsibilities, and expectations for the employee's role with _____.
- **10:30 AM - 12:00 PM:** Orientation Session with Human Resources Department
 - If not already completed, review initial paperwork, including I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification, Direct Deposit form, receive information regarding benefit enrollment, and take security badge photo.
 - Bring with:
 - Documents that establish identity and employment authorization for I-9 form: State ID Card and Social Security card ([See complete list here](#)).
 - Cancelled check for enrollment into automatic payroll deposits
- **12:00 PM - 1:00 PM:** Lunch Break
- **1:00 PM - 3:00 PM:** Role-Specific Training
 - Training on specific duties, responsibilities, and expectations for the employee's role with _____.
- **3:00 PM-4:00 PM:** State Courts and Legal Terminology
 - Overview of court procedures, legal terminology, and case management processes.
 - Video (TBD): TO BE RELEASED- Welcome from the Chief Justice
 - Video (3 minutes): "[The who, what, when, where and how of State Courts](#)"- NCSC.
 - Reading (1 minute): "[How Cases Proceed Through the Court System](#)"- Illinois Supreme Court
 - Review videos from National Center for State Courts for basics on terminology and court process, as needed
 - Review [court's website] at: [include link]
 - Review [Illinois Supreme Court website](#)
 - Review [Illinois Legal Aid Online](#) at your leisure
- **4:00 PM- 5:00 PM:** Meet with Onboarding Peer to decompress from first days

Day 3 and/or 4: Hands On Training/ Technology and Tools

- **8:00 AM - 9:30 AM:** Technology Training
 - Hands-on training on case management systems, legal research tools, and other software.
 - Ensure access to necessary databases, documents, and online resources.
- **9:30 AM - 12:00 PM:** Observation Opportunity
 - Shadowing opportunity/ observe court proceedings.
- **12:00 PM - 1:00 PM:** Lunch Break

- **1:00 PM - 4:00 PM:** Role Specific Training
 - Training on specific duties, responsibilities, and expectations for the employee's role with _____.
 - Requesting supplies, facilities requests, IT requests, review customer service expectations
- **4:00 PM – 5:00 PM:** Q&A Session with Supervisor
 - Open forum for questions, clarification, and discussion on topics covered.

Day 4 and/or 5: Technology and Tools

- **9:30 AM - 12:00 PM:** Observation Opportunity
 - Shadowing opportunity/ observe court proceedings.
- **12:00 PM - 1:00 PM:** Lunch Break
- **1:00 PM - 4:00 PM:** Role Specific Training
 - Training on specific duties, responsibilities, and expectations for the employee's role with _____.
- **4:00 PM – 5:00 PM:** Q&A Session with Supervisor or Opportunity to meet Key Leaders
 - Open forum for questions, clarification, and discussion on topics covered.

Day 5 or beginning of Week 2: Wrap-Up and Feedback

- **8:00 AM – 9:30 AM:** Legal Information v. Legal Advice
 - Receive overview or sheet of resources available in the community
 - Review difference between Legal Information and Legal Advice
 - Copy of Safe Harbor Policy
 - [Legal Information vs Legal Advice Video](#) (47 minutes)
 - Complete Quiz [Appendix __]
- **9:30 AM - 12:00 PM:** Role Specific Training
 - Training on specific duties, responsibilities, and expectations for the employee's role with _____.
- **12:00 PM - 1:00 PM:** Lunch Break
- **1:00 PM – 4:30 PM:** Role Specific Training
 - Training on specific duties, responsibilities, and expectations for the employee's role with _____.
- **4:30-5:00 PM:** Q&A Session with Supervisor
 - Open forum for questions, clarification, and discussion on topics covered.

Appendix G: Sample Handout for Designated Onboarding Peer

ONBOARDING PEER REFERENCE GUIDE

Program Overview

The Onboarding Peer Program is designed as part of onboarding to connect new employees with its leadership, culture and service opportunities, by creating mutually beneficial relationships to enhance the employees' professional and personal development. The Onboarding Peer Program is designed to facilitate communication of the values, vision and mission of the court through a one-on-one relationship while supporting professional development enhancing leadership competencies.

The Program offers many benefits to the Employee, Onboarding Peer, and organization including:

For the new Employee:

- Receive guidance and support from a seasoned court professional
- Learn more about the organization
- Increased career satisfaction
- Increased networking and relationship-building opportunities (e.g., meet team members, leadership, key stakeholders)
- Develop or improve on core competencies
- Gain an organizational perspective regarding court operations and tasks

For the Onboarding Peer:

- Shape the future of the organization's management and professionals
- Personal and professional satisfaction
- Review own strengths and weaknesses
- Learn from the new Employee
- Individually assist the organization in implementing a viable and supportive employee engagement and retention strategy

For the Organization:

- Assists employees in settling in to the organization
- Communicates the values, vision and mission of the organization
- Supports involvement and progression within the organization
- Enhances employee satisfaction, engagement, and retention
- Implements a key element of succession planning and knowledge management
- Develops an organizational perspective regarding court operations and tasks

The goals of the Onboarding Peer Program:

- Create opportunity for professional and personal development
- Connect employees to the organization, its leadership, benefits, and service opportunities

- Enhance recruitment
- Facilitate employee retention

About the Onboarding Peer Program

The Onboarding Peer Program is designed to connect individuals who have a lot of knowledge and experiences with new employees. The relationship between the onboarding peer and the new employee is mutually beneficial. The Onboarding Peer Program is intended to last as long as the onboarding process, but it is hoped that the informal relationship will last a lifetime.

The success of the program depends in part upon the leadership and dedication of ethical and professional peers who provide guidance, listen to concerns, and set an example of how to serve. Before agreeing to serve as a peer, one should honestly evaluate whether he or she has the inclination and skills necessary to serve in this capacity.

Minimum qualifications for a peer:

- At least two years of service to the court;
- A reputation for competence and ethical and professional conduct;

Other desirable qualities include:

- Integrity
- Reliability
- Quickness to listen
- Even temperament
- Respectfulness
- Patience
- Coaching/teaching skills

What Will the Relationship Look Like?

The onboarding peer relationship may look different for each pairing. The onboarding peer and new employee will discuss what the new employee hopes to gain from the one-year mentorship. Below are suggestions about what this may look like throughout the year. Please adjust as you see fit.

- The initial contact with the onboarding peer and new employee will be through their supervisor.
- After the initial introduction, onboarding peer should initiate contact with the new employee to arrange their first meeting. Schedule regular meetings. For the first week, try to meet on a daily basis then at least weekly. Be available to employee by phone/email check-ins
- Each pairing should determine a mutually agreed, recurring meeting time. At minimum, we recommend connection on a weekly basis, at least at the beginning.
- The onboarding peer should work with the new employee to review progress, and to also discuss goals the new employee may have.
- Both the onboarding peer and the new employee should come to the meetings prepared.
- Each party will receive a final survey describing their satisfaction with the program. The feedback will be used to further enhance our program.

The Onboarding Peer's role includes:

- Sharing information about their organization
- Facilitating the new employee's growth by sharing resources and networks
- Challenging the new employee to move beyond his or her comfort zone
- Coaching the new employee on a practical skill
- Focusing on the new employee's professional development

You may find the below questions, from Zavvy,¹ useful as you begin working with the new employee:

Day 1: "👋 Welcome the New Hire!"

Hi!

Thanks again for **volunteering as a buddy** for our new hire. We highly appreciate your time & efforts to make their first days a great experience 🥰

Your new hire has now arrived and it's time to schedule a first 1:1 with them, so please 📅 **find a slot that works for you both.**

To help you make the best out of the experience, we prepared some **questions and topics to discuss** with your new buddy:


1. *What are you looking forward to doing at work?*
2. *Do you have any mentors in your professional life?*
3. *What was your first paying job?*
4. *Who inspires you?*
5. *What kind of music do you like?*
6. *What's the best concert you've been to?*
7. *Do you like traveling?*
8. *What's the best place you've traveled to?*
9. *Do you like reading? If so, what genre of books do you like?*
10. *What's the best book you've read recently?*
11. *What's the most exciting part of your job?*
12. *Where did you work before this position?*
13. *What's your most-used productivity hack?*

Thank you for being a part of this welcoming period. Please reach out to your supervisor should you have any questions, concerns, or require any additional resources.

¹ Deel (2024, January 9). [How and Why to Create an Onboarding Buddy Program](#). Zavvy.com. Retrieved August 7, 2024

Appendix H: Sample Feedback Tools for Onboarding Peer Program

Sample buddy program: Survey for new hires



Regular check-ins:

- ☐ How would you rate your satisfaction at work?
- ☐ Have you met your buddy regularly?
- ☐ My buddy is helping me understand my role better:
Yes/No
- ☐ My meetings are relevant and helpful: Yes/No
- ☐ My buddy is helping me experience psychological
safety: Yes/No

- ☐ The buddy program has a positive impact on me:
Yes/No
- ☐ Do you have any feedback for the buddy program?
Which aspect do you like the best?
- ☐ Is there anything you don't like?

Source: Deel (2024, January 9). [How and Why to Create an Onboarding Buddy Program](#). Zavvy.com. Retrieved August 7, 2024.

Appendix I: Sample Check-in Questions for Supervisors

New Employee Check-in Meeting Questions for Managers From Tennessee State University]

Name _____ Today's date _____
Position _____ Start date _____

How is your job going?

Is it what you expected when you were hired?

Any surprises? If yes, what were they?

Has training been helpful?

What training would you add?

Has your Onboarding Peer been helpful?

Can you suggest any changes for the Onboarding Peer program?

Do you have all the equipment and/or work tools you need?

Do you know where you stand in terms of your progress since you started working?

How are your relationships with your co-workers?

Was the New Employee Onboarding helpful?

Do you have suggestions on how to improve the New Employee Onboarding?

Do you have suggestions on how we could improve our work across the department?

Are there any questions you still have/ is anything still unclear?

Is there something we should be providing to new employees that we have missed?

Do you feel out of the loop about anything?

Is there anything that you need and to which you don't have access?

Do you have any general suggestions?

Do you have any general work needs that haven't been met?

Is there anything you would like to tell me that I have not asked you?

Appendix J: Sample Feedback Tool for Onboarding Process

Feedback on the onboarding process

You may also want to ask employees to evaluate the onboarding process and the company culture on a scale of 1 to 5. Sample onboarding survey questions might ask employees to provide a rating for these questions:

1. This job meets the expectations set during recruiting. (1–5)
2. Prior to starting my new job, I felt welcomed by my new team or manager. (1–5)
3. I have access to the technology I need for my job. (1–5)
4. My manager has been supporting my transition into the organization. (1–5)
5. I feel like I belong here at [company]. (1–5)
6. The training provided by the company has effectively prepared me for my role.
(1–5)
7. I have a clear understanding of the company's mission and values. (1–5)
8. My colleagues are approachable and willing to help me when I have questions or
need assistance. (1–5)
9. The company's communication about its expectations and goals is clear and
consistent. (1–5)
10. I have had the opportunity to engage in meaningful work and contribute to the
company's success since starting my job. (1–5)

Appendix K: A Successful First Assignment

The first assignment is important for several reasons. It can give the employee a successful start in their new position. Securing an early win can boost morale and improve productivity. It can also help establish communication between an employee and supervisor.

Explain the expected outcome of the assignment.

- What will be the result of the assignment? Will it be newly created or updated/changed?
- What will the outcome look like? (Provide examples, if possible.)
- How will success be measured?

Clarify the importance of the outcome to help the employee connect the assignment to the overall organization.

- Where do the results fit in the larger organizational picture? (Consider missions, goals and priorities.) This will help the employee understand the impact the job has on the organization.
- Who will benefit from the results?

Describe the key features of the assignment.

- What actions or steps are required?
- What resources or resource limitations may apply?
- What are the deadlines? Will there be milestones to meet prior to the final deadline?
- What is the priority of the assignment for the employee?
- How will progress be monitored?

Define the level of authority the employee will exercise throughout the assignment.

- Should the employee carry out exact instructions?
- Should the employee bring recommendations to be decided on by the manager?
- What recommendations should the manager and new hire decide on together?
- Will the new employee have the authority to make decisions, but should inform management before acting?
- Will the new employee have the authority to make decisions, act, and then inform management of the outcome?

Let the employee know who else will be involved in the assignment.

- Who can influence success?
- Who will the employee need to consult with? (Ensure that the employee knows how to contact other colleagues.)
- Who will the employee need to get resources from, if needed?
- Identify potential issues and how they will be addressed.
- What could possibly interrupt or stand in the way of success?

Check with the employee throughout the discussion of the assignment to ensure that clear expectations are established and encourage questions. Clarify what management will do to support the employee's success. Following the completion of the first assignment the manager should discuss the outcome of the assignment, what challenges the employee faced, how their interaction with other employees went, and what could have been done differently.



26 effective and professional feedback examples

Published on March 15, 2024

Effectively communicating feedback to employees is one of the clearest tell-tale signs of good leadership. Not only does feedback help employees develop professionally, but it also allows entire teams to succeed and achieve collective goals.

Employee feedback can be a part of a more formal structure — like during planned performance review meetings or one-on-one sessions with a manager. That said, some of the most impactful employee feedback occurs spontaneously. Giving employee feedback is critical for team success; it makes effective communication come to life and is at the core of continuous performance management. Gallup reports that 80% of employees who receive weekly feedback feel more engaged.

But why is employee feedback so impactful? Approach feedback as a management tool to lead teams in the right direction. Feedback is a means for managers to intervene, focus attention, and guide employees in their performance. It shows care and dedication toward their teams. Of course, feedback doesn't just serve managers — it's a great employee asset, too. When employees share their own thoughts and experiences, it helps their leaders and peers better understand what's working well for them and see areas of improvement they may have missed. Like with all forms of communication, feedback is an art. But it's possible to navigate the intricate feedback process with ease. In this article, we outline the steps to giving great feedback and provide important tips with real-life positive and negative feedback scenarios to help you master delivery.

Types of employee feedback

Feedback lives on a spectrum! It comes in different forms — from encouraging positivity through constructive feedback to the insightful guidance of constructive feedback. By understanding the different types of employee feedback, managers can more effectively steer conversations with their teams in the right direction.

Positive feedback

Let's start with the most pragmatic type of feedback — positive feedback. Providing positive feedback is crucial in maintaining healthy relationships with team members. Positive feedback acknowledges stellar employee performance and strong contributions to team efforts, showcasing major technical and soft skills improvements. Positive feedback can also celebrate employee achievements and milestones, like work anniversaries. Not all feedback conversations need to be tough for them to be impactful.

While there is no limit to how frequently you can communicate positive employee feedback (because who doesn't love hearing that they've done something well), there should definitely be a minimum of it. Reinforcing real-time positive feedback is a great way to connect with your employees and deepen engagement.

Constructive feedback

Unlike positive feeding, providing constructive feedback (sometimes called negative feedback) can feel a little bit trickier. The approach must be more delicate, thoughtful, and practical. Managers and employees both need to remember that the aim of constructive feedback is not to discourage but to support professional development, including:

- Address performance issues
- Sharpen skills and knowledge
- Improve interpersonal communication
- Boost team collaboration

Delivering constructive feedback might feel harsh, but it is ultimately solution-driven, and it's possible to do so without demoralizing teams. As a leader, it's crucial to guide employees in improving for future opportunities, whether about new projects or team collaboration. This type of feedback is necessary to foster an accountable work environment and empowered employee experience.

Continuous feedback

Sometimes, neither positive nor negative situations require feedback. Routine feedback can be a means to nurture support and understanding and build a bond between employees and managers alike, between moments of praise and constructive criticism.

Regular feedback involves consistent communication, creating dialogue, reflection, and improvement opportunities. Regular feedback helps employees stay aligned with expectations, gain clarity, and track their progress over time. It's more than just about "checking in" — it's part of building a culture of continuous feedback and open communication, cultivating a supportive and development-focused environment where employees feel valued, seen, and encouraged to succeed.

Now, let's dive into our 26 positive and constructive feedback examples!

Positive feedback examples: Highlighting and reinforcing success

Letting employees know they've done an excellent job, whether completing a spectacular report or a presentation, can be a rewarding experience. Who doesn't love to give or receive praise?

However, how managers give employee feedback is important. Positive feedback should be genuine and personal. If positive feedback is vague without referring to specifics, employees might feel like managers aren't paying attention or are trying to hit a compliment quota.

Employee feedback examples for acknowledgment of effort

Example 1: Positive reinforcement when an employee takes the initiative

"Thank you for your extra efforts on [name a specific project or task]. You did an amazing job, and your commitment has not gone unnoticed. Keep up the good work, and let me know how I can continue to support you on future projects."

This positive feedback is effective because it's specific and lets employees know that their efforts are being recognized.

Example 2: Positive reinforcement when an employee contributes to meetings

"I really liked the comment you made during yesterday's team meeting. It was a great contribution to the discussion. Your positive attitude is felt throughout the department!"

This example lets employees know that their thoughts and opinions are valued and that they are actively contributing to a creative and dynamic work culture.

Employee feedback examples that recognize improvement

Example 3: Recognizing when an employee improves on specific skills

"I wanted to let you know that I have noticed how much you have developed your [name the specific skills]. I know it can be challenging to overcome or master [name the skill], but we can feel your drive to succeed."

This positive feedback recognizes an employee's commitment to sharpening their skills. It reinforces positive behavior and can boost morale.

Example 4: Recognizing when an employee demonstrates increased productivity

"We've noticed how focused you are lately and how well you manage your time. You're producing tremendous work; keep it up!"

This positive feedback reinforces performance. Employees who feel their hard work is being recognized will be more motivated to keep up the pace.

Employee feedback examples that celebrate achievements

Example 5: Celebrating when an employee reaches a significant milestone

"We just wanted to congratulate you on hitting your first-year 'workiversary'! We're lucky to have had you on the team for the last 12 months."

Positive feedback isn't only about recognizing when an employee hits their targets. Recognizing years of service and expressing gratitude for everything they've contributed to the company thus far is extremely important.

Example 6: Goal achievement recognition when an employee exceeds expectations

"Thank you for your extra efforts on [name a specific project or task]. You did an amazing job, and your commitment has not gone unnoticed. Keep up the good work, and let me know how I can continue to support you on future projects."

These types of positive employee feedback examples let team members know that their extra efforts are appreciated and contribute to the collective well-being and success of the company.

Employee feedback examples for recognition of teamwork

Example 7: Providing great peer collaboration acknowledgment

"I just want to say that the team feels your collaborative spirit and willingness to support your peers. Thank you for making working as a group that much easier. We're lucky to have you as a colleague!"

Acknowledging when employees work well with their peers encourages teamwork and reinforces the importance of supporting one another through the ups and downs.

Example 8: Providing positive cross-functional collaboration feedback

"I got feedback from the other department on the success of the project you were part of. You made the best out of the opportunity to work with teams we don't always have the opportunity to work with. You represented our department so well."

Recognizing positive cross-functional collaboration reinforces the value of interdepartmental teamwork. It's an important reminder that every employee in the company is part of the same wider team.

Constructive feedback examples: Specific performance feedback and improvement suggestions

Impeccable communication skills are crucial to providing constructive employee feedback. These conversations may be challenging but ultimately lead to a happier, more inclusive company culture.

The more you dwell on an issue, the trickier it will be to overcome it. Resentments may arise, leading to decreased peer collaboration and dips in employee engagement. Managers allow employees to review their actions by nipping the issue in the bud.

Pro-tip for remote teams: While providing in-person constructive feedback might not be an option for distributed teams, tricky conversations are best had through a video call over an email so that your employees can read your body language and tone. The less that is left up to interpretation, the better.

Employee feedback examples addressing performance issues

Example 9: Providing constructive criticism when an employee fails to meet deadlines

"I want to talk to you about your work on this last project because your delay impacted the team. I know you worked hard to complete your part on time, and looking back now, we can spot the roadblocks more easily. I'd love to see you be more proactive in spotting them before they impact your delivery next time. How can we make it easier for you to raise the flag on these things?"

This constructive feedback doesn't blame the employee for failing to meet the

deadline. Instead, the managers take it upon themselves to see how they can help them.

Example 10: Providing an employee with time management suggestions

"I've noticed that you've been having some challenges meeting deadlines or replying to clients promptly lately. I know we've been in a bit of a crunch these past few weeks, but my door is always open if you need help reprioritizing certain tasks. The team is always here if you need a hand."

This example doesn't judge the employee for struggling with time management. Here, the manager offers the support of other team members to help reach broader goals.

Psst! Make dealing with underperforming employees easier with concrete steps to address poor performance.

Employee feedback examples to enhance skills and knowledge

Example 11: Providing feedback when an employee is missing a critical skill

"You excel in so many areas of this job, and your contributions are invaluable. However, we notice that you could benefit from further developing your [name of skill]. We would happily provide you with additional resources to master this skill."

This constructive feedback example is supportive and solution-oriented. The onus doesn't fall on the employee for not mastering the skill. Instead, it becomes a collaborative goal between the employee and their manager.

Example 12: Providing continuous improvement suggestions to an employee

"We are so impressed with your employee profile and level of proficiency when it comes to [name of skills]. We have noticed, though, that the industry standard for your role is to be more familiar with [name of software]. With a little additional training, we know you can be an expert quickly. We would be happy to sign you up for a training session."

This feedback example is helpful because it's specific and allows your employee to grow professionally within the industry. It shows that the organization is willing to invest in their future.

Employee feedback examples to encourage better communication

Example 13: Providing an employee with feedback on communication style

"I appreciate your autonomous work style. But it could be valuable to provide more visibility to the rest of the team so that they can adjust their tasks and schedules accordingly."

Feedback conversations like this one let employees know that while they may work well on their own, no person is an island, and other team members need to be made

aware of deadlines and updates (without being judgmental of their personal work style).

Example 14: Providing an employee with feedback on collaboration

“While I appreciate your dedication to [name the project], it might be helpful to check in with the rest of the team more frequently so that we can adjust deadlines if you need more time. We would be happy to assist you on the project if you feel like you need additional support or resources. Your colleagues have valuable insights to contribute to this project.”

This example piece of employee feedback gently lets a direct report know that they can always rely on their team members for support and that their colleagues are there to provide their expertise.

Professional feedback examples: Goal setting and skill development recommendations

One of the best ways to keep your team members around for the long haul is to help them set goals and nurture their career development plans. As a leader, it's your role to ensure your employees' goals align with broader company objectives to be able to grow together.

Two main goal-setting frameworks help encourage personal and professional development:

OKRs (objectives and key results): This framework offers a great way to tie employee goals directly to company objectives. The key results component makes tracking the employee's progress over time easy.

SMART goals: This framework is most useful when setting personal development goals — like working towards a new hard or soft skill — that help employees constantly improve and grow in their roles. Its descriptive nature allows employees to set detailed, relevant, measurable goals to drive them and their team forward. Like positive or constructive feedback, you can provide feedback on goal setting and professional development shortly after a situation or challenge arises. If you work remotely, book a quick sync to let your colleague know that while you appreciate their work ethic, you feel there is room for improvement in a particular area.

It's important to note that goal setting and professional development feedback should be realistic, achievable, and tailored to the employee's skills and motivations.

Employee feedback examples to align individual goals with company objectives

Example 15: Offering guidance when employee goals are misaligned

“I would like to review your tasks and priorities. I have noticed that you are excelling at [Projects 2 and 3], but [Project 1] is a top priority for the organization. Do you feel like you have all the tools and resources to work on [Project 1]? Do you think there is work you could delegate to stay more aligned with what has to be done first?”

This piece of constructive feedback is direct but still highlights the employee's strong performance on other tasks. It provides guidance and clarity on organizational values and goals.

Example 16: Offering guidance when employees should focus on key performance indicators (KPIs)

"We have just learned from the executive team that we will be shifting gears on some of our KPIs this quarter. We will need you to refocus on certain projects that are aligned with current company goals. I know that in the past, these types of tasks have been more challenging for you, so please let me know how I can best support you."

Employee feedback examples like this can be tougher to deliver but are necessary to keep the organization running smoothly. This message is firm but supportive and lets the employees know they have a team backing them if they need extra support.

Employee feedback examples to help set SMART goals

Example 17: Offering guidance to help employees improve their goals

"I noticed that you set a new SMART goal in our dedicated platform. I have some ideas on how we can help you achieve it. Let's book some time to review where you are with this goal and where you can dedicate more of your time and energy."

These types of constructive employee feedback examples acknowledge a person's work toward achieving their long- and short-term goals. It's supportive and lets employees know the company is dedicated to seeing them succeed.

Example 18: Offering guidance when employee goals are vague

"I really like the initiative you took to review this goal. Acknowledging what is realistically achievable within our established time frame is important. Let's work together to reach this part of the goal and see how we can further develop it in the future."

Employee feedback examples like this show your team members that adaptability is an asset. Just because the goal can't be achieved within a specific time frame due to external factors doesn't mean they can't achieve it in the future with a little support.

Looking to supercharge your goal-setting approach? Check out our best SMART employee goal-setting examples for more inspiration.

Employee feedback examples that encourage professional development

Example 19: Suggesting employees pursue professional development opportunities

"I noticed that you expressed interest in taking on a more senior role and the responsibilities that come along with it. I love the initiative and would be happy to help you work on some key skills necessary to succeed in the role."

It's important to help employees reach their goals. A leader should nurture employees' drive to succeed and give them the tools to do so. This type of example exemplifies the supportive nature of a good leader.

Example 20: Encouraging employees to consider networking and mentorship

"Based on our previous conversations where you expressed interest in being paired with a leader in the industry to shadow their work, we would be happy to enroll you in the upcoming mentorship program offered by the company. This is a great networking opportunity to learn more about the field."

This example is helpful for employee development because it showcases to your direct report that you have been listening to them and taking their opinions to heart. It shows your employee that their growth is important to you.

Simple feedback examples: Supporting employees through challenges

Challenges will arise in any and every industry. Some of these challenges may be out of a manager's control, but a good leader always puts the interests of their employees first and works diligently to ensure these roadblocks can be overcome. During tough times, a leader must be able to deliver feedback that offers support and guidance and helps identify potential roadblocks. It's equally important, however, to recognize employee efforts at overcoming adversity through creative problem solving and perseverance.

The best way to address challenges with your team members is to provide feedback as swiftly as possible when the situation is fresh in everyone's minds. Deliver your thoughts and feedback in a genuine but supportive way to not discourage your employees from seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

Employee feedback examples identifying roadblocks

Example 21: Supporting an employee facing obstacles in completing a task

"Thank you for all the work you've already done on this project. I could tell you've hit a bit of a wall trying to complete the next part. How can I help you overcome this roadblock? Are there any specific resources I can offer you?"

Constructive employee feedback examples like this do not diminish a person's work on a project but offer a supportive hand on crossing the finish line. In this example, the employee is being empowered to reach their goals with extra guidance.

Example 22: Supporting employees through teamwork challenges

"I sensed the tension in our planning meeting yesterday, and I want to be sure that we address it before it impacts our productivity or happiness. We're all working towards [name a shared goal] here, and it's okay if we have different ideas than your colleagues on how to get there. What were you feeling in the meeting? What are your main concerns? Let's meet with [name of colleague] to work towards a collaborative resolution."

This example acknowledges and validates the employee's feelings while collaboratively searching for a way to reach common ground with other team members.

It's normal to hit a roadblock occasionally, but there are ways to overcome them and even prevent them altogether. Read about the four most common roadblocks for high-performing teams and how to circumvent them.

Employee feedback examples offering general support and guidance

Example 23: Providing resources to help the employee

"I know this project has evolved rapidly since we first drafted the brief. You've been doing a great job, but I just wanted to send you a few resources and documents that may help in the last leg of the project."

This example is effective because it recognizes all the work the employee has already done on the project but offers assistance in a supportive and non-condescending tone.

Example 24: Providing coaching or mentoring to assist the employee

"Your skills have grown exponentially since your last performance review. You have really taken our feedback to heart, and we see tremendous potential for a senior role. If you're interested, I would happily serve as your mentor to help get you there."

Employee feedback examples like this one reference specific actions and offer additional guidance without imposing on the employee.

Employee feedback examples that celebrate resiliency and problem-solving

Example 25: Providing employee adaptability and flexibility recognition

"I know this project has been more challenging than anticipated due to external delays. Your willingness to complete it on time does not go unnoticed. I admire your resiliency."

While it's important to celebrate the big wins, acknowledging employee resiliency is crucial in keeping engagement high. The desired outcome may not always be achieved, but this type of feedback recognizes valiant efforts.

Example 26: Providing employee initiative and proactivity recognition

"You really thought outside the box to ensure we delivered this campaign on time. I would not have devised this strategy, and I commend your creativity. Keep it up!"

This piece of feedback is effective because it celebrates the employee's creativity and problem-solving abilities. It can go a long way in boosting employee motivation and engagement.

Best practices for delivering employee feedback

Feedback shouldn't be arbitrary. For it to be useful and impactful, it has to be focused on what a person did (as opposed to who they are) and the outcome of their actions. Read on for our best practices for delivering employee feedback.

Numbers don't lie! According to Workleap Officevibe Pulse Survey data, 17% of employees say that the feedback they receive isn't specific enough. Let's fix that.

Focus on specific patterns of behavior and actions

It can be easy to overlook the actionable steps following a feedback conversation, but employee feedback must be applicable in the future for it to be worth sharing. The goal of giving employee feedback should always be to help the other person improve. Managers should remember the 3 essential components of effective feedback:

- Behavior: What the employee did and how they did it.
- Outcome: Results from the employee's behavior and the impact.
- Next steps: Suggestions on moving towards improvement.

Providing feedback is an ongoing process that helps direct reports thrive in the workplace, but knowing how to give feedback can be challenging — especially when it's negative or constructive criticism that has to be shared. A great feedback framework is the Situation-Behavior-Impact (SBI) model, which suggests giving context to the situation, identifying the behavior to be discussed, and sharing the impact that this behavior may have had.

Provide frequent and effective employee feedback

In the fast-paced modern workforce, managers must create a feedback system with their teams that goes beyond their annual performance review. Frequent check-ins and coaching have proven to be a game-changer for intrinsic motivation, employee engagement, and improved employee experience. We suggest reading more about the feedback loop method.

Officevibe Pulse Survey data shows that 25% of employees feel that the frequency of feedback they receive is not enough to help them understand how they can improve. Clearly, there's room to improve!

Don't be too one-sided: Make feedback a collaborative opportunity

Feedback should be a two-way conversation where managers and employees work collaboratively to uncover and apply learnings to future projects. This is where leadership can shine — as the role of a manager can transform into that of a coach and mentor, creating a culture of ongoing employee development and mutual support.

Managers may gain even more insights on the best way forward by being open to an employee's take on the situation and willing to hear them out. How can one ensure that? Always follow feedback delivery with an open-ended question and allow time for dialogue.

Discover positive feedback loop examples! It's a great mechanism to facilitate continuous improvement at work and spark healthy two-way conversations that give managers and employees the feedback they need to succeed.

Encourage employees to ask for manager feedback regularly

While it's crucial to provide employees with feedback, it's equally important to receive employee feedback in return so that everyone can feel that their ideas, opinions, and concerns are equally valued.

Managers should encourage employees to speak up and share their perspectives. A great way to do this is by ensuring employees can reflect on situations and come back with things to share. Pulse Surveys are also great ways to ask employees for feedback safely and anonymously.

Using technology to create a better feedback culture at work

Delivering employee feedback, whether it's positive, constructive, or continuous, should always aim to nurture employee growth. When offered in a genuine and timely manner, feedback can help identify and overcome blockers, ultimately improving employee engagement and boosting job satisfaction.

At the end of the day, it's important to remember that a true feedback culture is a two-way street. Employee feedback tools like Workleap Officevibe help managers establish open lines of communication between employees and leadership, allowing employees to share their thoughts and suggestions in a safe, judgment-free space.

By taking cues from good feedback examples to tailor your own messages and making feedback a part of your company culture, you too can foster a happier and more positive employee experience for the entire organization!

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